

JUSTIFICATION FOR AN EXCEPTION TO FAIR OPPORTUNITY

1. Contracting Activity: Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Office of Acquisition Operations
Technology Acquisition Center
23 Christopher Way
Eatontown, NJ 07724
2. Description of Action: The proposed action is for a firm-fixed price delivery order issued under the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement (SEWP) V Governmentwide Acquisition Contract (GWAC). An exception to fair opportunity is being utilized for this effort as it will be limited to resellers of brand name Hewlett Packard (HP) products.
3. Description of the Supplies or Services: VA, Office of Information and Technology, Service Delivery and Engineering, Information Technology Service Management, has a requirement for the procurement of 1 HP 3PAR 7400 storage array, 32 HP DL580 server memory modules, and 96 HP DL980 server memory modules to augment the existing Veterans Informatics and Computing Infrastructure (VINCI) environment support analysis of data by research professionals across VA. The HP storage array and HP server memory modules will be integrated into the established VINCI data processing and storage environment located at the Austin Information Technology Center (AIRC), Austin, Texas composed solely of HP products. The total estimated price of the proposed action is [REDACTED]. The period of performance for delivery and installation of the required storage arrays and server memory modules is 60 days from the date of award followed by three years of warranty support.
4. Statutory Authority: The statutory authority permitting an exception to fair opportunity is Section 41 U.S.C. 4106(c) as implemented by Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 16.505(b)(2)(i)(B), entitled "Only one awardee is capable of providing the supplies or services required at the level of quality required because the supplies or services ordered are unique or highly specialized."
5. Rationale Supporting Use of Authority Cited Above: This is a brand name justification in accordance with FAR 11.105, Items Peculiar to One manufacturer. Based on the market research, as described in section 8 of this document, it was determined that limited competition is available for the aforementioned HP brand name storage arrays and server memory modules among authorized HP resellers. The purpose of this acquisition is to enhance the current VINCI HP environment by acquiring additional storage capacity and server memory capacity functionality for the existing HP servers located within the AIRC. A critical function of the VINCI infrastructure is to provide backup capability of its research and development data and information to the VA Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW) which is composed solely of HP hardware and software. Therefore, the VINCI hardware and software infrastructure must "mirror" the CDW hardware and software infrastructure without deviation to assure seamless transition of data processing and storage functionality in the event of catastrophic failure. Since the CDW is based solely upon HP hardware and software, no other Original Equipment Manufacturer's (OEM) products can be utilized in the VINCI

infrastructure without significant risk of failure to transition data information and backup capabilities from VINCI to CDW. Additionally, the required memory and storage must be 100 percent compatible with the existing HP hardware and software products within the VINCI environment to allow management control of the hardware and software with existing VA tools. Specifically, the VINCI hardware and software environment utilizes the HP Systems Insight Manager (SIM) management tool to monitor performance and functionality of all hardware components, receive alerts of any hardware or software failures and/or performance issues, and provide the ability to deploy software agents. The additional storage and memory to be procured by this action will be integrated into existing HP hardware managed by the existing HP SIM management software and monitoring tools. The HP 3PAR 7400 storage array also provides the capability to load balance the VINCI data as necessary with the 11 existing 3PAR systems within the CDW and Regional Data Warehouse (RDW). Additionally, the HP 3PAR 7400 performs a 4:1/1:4 replication functionality which provides VINCI with the capability to replicate data to any of the four 3PAR systems within CDW and RDW and allows CDW and RDW to replicate their 3PAR systems data to VINCI. There are no other vendor's storage arrays that provide this critical, required capability. Based upon the extensive market research, as described in section 8 of this document, no product, other than the required HP storage array and server memory modules can be managed by the existing software, and provide 100 percent compatibility with the existing VINCI and CDW infrastructure equipment.

6. Efforts to Obtain Competition: Market research was conducted from November 2014 through May 2015, details of which are in the market research section of this document. This research did not yield any products other than HP storage arrays and server memory modules that can meet the Government's requirements. Although the Government is limiting competition as a result of specifying HP brand name storage arrays and memory modules, there are multiple authorized resellers of these brand name products that hold NASA SEWP V GWACs. In accordance with FAR 5.301 and 16.505(b)(2)(ii)(D), the resulting award will be synopsized and this justification will be made publically available on the Federal Business Opportunities website within 14 days of award. In addition, in accordance with FAR 16.505(a)(4)(iii)(A)(2), this justification will be posted with the solicitation on the NASA SEWP web site.

7. Actions to Increase Competition: In order to remove or overcome barriers to competition in future acquisitions for the requirements described herein, the agency will continue to perform market research to ascertain if there are changes in the market place that would enable future actions to be competed.

8. Market Research: Market research was initially conducted in November 2014, and reaffirmed in March 2015, by the Government's technical experts to identify the availability of a storage array and memory modules capable of meeting VA's requirements. VA's technical experts researched internet sites and contacted vendors for information on storage arrays and memory modules for the VINCI infrastructure. The market research demonstrated that no OEM, other than HP, provides storage arrays and server memory module upgrades that are compatible with and can integrate with the existing VINCI infrastructure and management tools, as well as support VINCI's

critical CDW backup function. The market research specifically reviewed products manufactured by EMC Corporation, International Business Machines (IBM), DataDirect Networks, HP, and NetApp for the storage array requirement and Dell, IBM, and ACER, Inc. for the memory module requirement. Additionally, no vendor other than HP can provide load balancing functionality between the numerous HP 3PAR SAN arrays that are already operating in the VINCI and CDW environments. Additional market research was conducted by the Contract Specialist in May 2015 through the use of the NASA SEWP V Provider Lookup Tool to identify GWAC holders offering the required brand name HP storage array and memory modules. Based upon the market research results, the Contract Specialist identified 15 authorized resellers capable of providing the required HP brand name storage array and server memory modules on the NASA SEWP V GWAC. Therefore, based upon the results of the market research on the NASA SEWP V GWAC, there is reasonable expectation that adequate competition will be available among HP authorized resellers on the NASA SEWP V GWAC.

9. Other Facts: None.