

JUSTIFICATION AND APPROVAL
FOR OTHER THAN FULL AND OPEN COMPETITION

1. Contracting Activity: Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Office of Acquisition Operations
Technology Acquisition Center
23 Christopher Way
Eatontown, New Jersey 07724
2. Description of Action: This proposed action is for a brand name firm-fixed-price delivery order issued under the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement (SEWP) V Government Wide Acquisition Contract (GWAC), henceforth referred to as NASA SEWP.
3. Description of Supplies or Services: The proposed action is for the renewal of software support for 280 brand name International Business Machines (IBM) Kenexa Evolution Learning Content Management System (LCMS) licenses. A portion of the required support is above and beyond the services which are available from IBM Kenexa's standard software support.

The VA Office of Information and Technology, Enterprise Management Program Office has been using the Kenexa LCMS product since 2006. Kenexa is an object-based learning content development environment which offers complete content reusability, personalization, enterprise content management capability, and multi-modal output (Web, CD, Word, mobile, etc.) to support the consolidation of all training initiatives. It also ensures all content is Section 508 conformant prior to publication. VA requires continued support for its Kenexa licenses in order to maintain 280 annual licenses that VA is using to produce content on the existing Kenexa platform. Renewal of support for the Kenexa licenses will provide greater assurance that VA and Federal requirements for development and release of training and learning content are met.

The Kenexa software support services required by this procurement include software release management support, release-specific implementation support, LCMS training, testing support, and technical interchange and workshop support. Additional software support VA requires includes support for previously developed VA-specific customizations (called "Extensions), technical support to assist VA in determining which software upgrades to install/not install, support to ensure Section 508 compliance, and modification of installed viewers if necessary. The period of performance is March 30, 2017 through March 29, 2018. The total estimated value of the proposed action is [REDACTED]

4. Authority: The statutory authority permitting an exception to fair opportunity is Section 41 U.S.C. 4106(c) as implemented by the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Subpart 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: Based on market research expressed below in paragraph 8, the Government anticipates limiting competition amongst IBM Kenexa resellers to conduct this procurement as only IBM Kenexa or one of its authorized resellers can provide the required software support due to proprietary constraints. As explained above, the requirement for this procurement is continued software support for 280 IBM Kenexa LCMS software licenses already owned by VA. Additionally, VA has been using the Kenexa LCMS product since 2006. As such, a portion of the required support is above and beyond the services which are available from IBM Kenexa's standard software support that provides specific customization of Kanexa Extension that was developed for VA using IBM Kenexa proprietary code. .

The requirement discussed herein is strictly to continue support for Kenexa software currently used by VA. As such, and for the proprietary reasons discussed above, the only other acquisition strategy to consider that would fulfill the Government's requirements would be to replace the existing Kenexa product with a comparable commercial product or develop a new solution entirely. If a new product were to be selected, the current Kenexa technical platform and all the progress made in VA's LCMS arena would need to be reworked to integrate with the new product, which would result in a break in service for developing and maintaining learning content and training of VA staff. Furthermore, another product would require retraining and involve a steep learning curve for VA content developers and a delay in the ability to maintain training requirements on VA staff. Additionally, over 180 VA courses currently in Kenexa would need to be completely reworked and re-certified to be Section 508 compliant.

6. Efforts to Obtain Competition: Market research was conducted and details of which are in the market research section 8 of this document. This effort did not yield any additional sources that can meet the Government's requirements. However, it was determined that limited competition is viable among authorized resellers for this brand name item. In accordance with FAR 5.301 and 16.505(b)(2), this action will be synopsisized at award on the Federal Business Opportunities Page (FBO) and the justification will be made publicly available.

7. Actions to Increase Competition: The Government will continue to conduct 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 conducted in November 2016 through internet research to ascertain the ability of similar Kenexa support services from other than IBM. It was found that there are similar services offered by other companies with similar products such as Xyleme and Saba; however, it was determined that although these companies could provide similar support services for their competing products, they could not access proprietary Kenexa source code to fulfill VA's current requirement. Only IBM or one of its authorized resellers have the ability to install/modify/upgrade VA-specific Kenexa extensions and configure them

within the current VA Kenexa infrastructure. Additional market research was conducted by utilizing the NASA SEWP Provider Lookup tool to identify NASA SEWP resellers that could provide Kenexa support services. The search yielded 104 IBM resellers capable of providing this requirement.

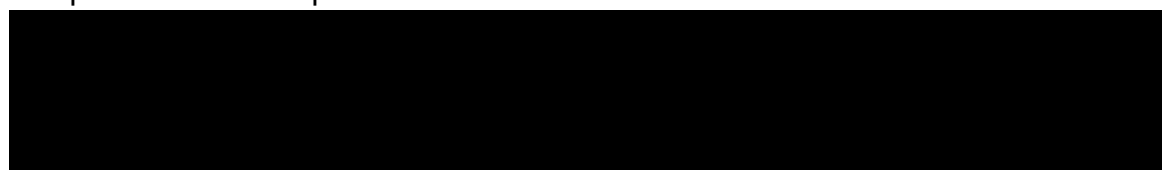
NASA SEWP is a dynamic GWAC in which products can be added on a daily basis to vendor catalogs based on customer requests; as long as the required information technology product is within scope of NASA SEWP. The requirement discussed herein has been found to be within scope of NASA SEWP in a separate determination by the Contracting Officer in February 2017. Therefore, in an attempt to meet VA's primary socioeconomic contracting goal, VA intends to issue Request for Quotation number VA118-17-Q-1869 to Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business under NASA SEWP Group B(2).

9. Other Facts: None.

10. Technical and Requirements Certification: I certify that the supporting data under my cognizance, which are included in this justification, are accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.



11. Determination of Best Value: I hereby determine that the anticipated price to the Government for this contract action will be fair and reasonable based on based on contracts awarded on NASA SEWP having already been determined to be fair and reasonable. Additionally, as there are multiple potential resellers on NASA SEWP, further price competition is anticipated. Finally, the proposed price will be compared to the Independent Government Cost Estimate.



12. Procuring Contracting Officer Certification: I certify that this justification is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. As this contract action does not exceed \$700,000, the certification below required by FAR 16.505(b)(2)(ii)(C)(1) serves as approval.

