

JUSTIFICATION
FOR AN EXCEPTION TO FAIR OPPORTUNITY

1. Contracting Activity: Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Office of Acquisition Operations
Technology Acquisition Center
1701 Directors Blvd
Austin, TX 78744
2. Description of Action: The proposed action is for a brand name firm-fixed-price delivery order to be issued under the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Solutions for Enterprise Wide Procurement (SEWP) V Governmentwide Acquisition Contract (GWAC).
3. Description of the Supplies or Services: VA, Office of Information and Technology, National Data Center Program (NDCP) requires Cisco hardware and software updates to two-brand name FlexPod Converged Virtualization Infrastructures (CVI), to include installation, configuration services. The purchase will be used to augment, refresh and give greater capacity to the existing Region 2 and 3 Veterans Health Information Systems & Technology Architecture (VistA) applications through the current data center, Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) Defense Enterprise Computing Center (DECC) in St. Louis, MO. NDCP had recently procured hardware and software in an effort to update, augment, and refresh this and two other data centers. The procurement of this additional equipment is needed to replace preexisting equipment that became damaged during the effort and to add equipment that was not initially anticipated. VistA applications are the core operating systems of VA hospitals across the nation. The need to maintain reliable up to date systems is of utmost importance and serves a great value to our main customer, the Veteran. The total estimated price of this proposed action is [REDACTED], to be delivered, installed, and configured within 90 days of award.
4. Statutory Authority: The statutory authority permitting an exception to fair opportunity is Section 41 U.S.C. 4106(c)(2) as implemented by the 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: Based on market research, as described in paragraph 8 of this justification, it was determined that limited competition is available among authorized resellers for the procurement of brand name Cisco equipment. DISA DECC currently utilized Cisco brand hardware for the existing two FlexPod CVI storage systems. The FlexPod environment was created with Cisco hardware and software products for a complete solution, and require the same original equipment manufacturer's hardware to operate at maximum capacity when updating. For example, the Cisco base operating system software feature product is the only operating system available for Cisco hardware, no other product exists to operate the hardware. Additionally, only Cisco brand name Unified Computing System (UCS)

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servers can meet the Government's technical requirements. Within the Cisco Validated Design FlexPod platform, the Cisco UCS servers communicate with the NetApp disk array enclosures storage hardware using Cisco Fabric Interconnects (FI). The use of another brand name server other than Cisco will not be interoperable or compatible with the existing infrastructure/servers currently in place. The Cisco FI is a core part of the Cisco UCS, providing uniform access to both networks and storage as an aggregation point. No other connection methods are supported or can be implemented with full integration for the existing FlexPod environment because it is a proprietary Cisco protocol. If VA were to utilize any other brand name hardware and software, it would not operate in the current infrastructure due to the proprietary constraints. Procurement of any other brand of hardware would invalidate the Cisco Validated Design certification, and could potentially cause latency and stability issues to the existing systems.

6. Efforts to Obtain Competition: Market research was conducted, details of which are in section 8 of this justification. 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 resellers for these brand name items. In accordance with FAR 5.301 and 16.505(b)(2), this action will be synopsized 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 learn if there are changes in the marketplace that would enable future actions to be competed.

8. Market Research: VA technical experts conducted market research in January 2017, to ascertain the ability of any other manufacturer being able to meet VA's requirements. The research consisted of the evaluation of virtualized solutions as well as solutions utilizing hardware sourced by other vendors, such as [REDACTED]. Based on the market research conducted by VA's technical experts, it has been determined that only Cisco items are able to meet the Government's needs. Only Cisco brand hardware and software are able to be interoperable with the existing Cisco CVI hardware platform currently in place.

The Contract Specialist (CS) conducted market research in November 2017, by using the NASA SEWP V GWAC Market Research tool and found several NASA SEWP V GWAC holders that are both capable of meeting the full requirement and authorized Cisco resellers.

9. Other Facts: None.

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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.

[REDACTED]

Date: 11/15/2017

Systems Analyst –ITA

Signature: [REDACTED]

11. Fair and Reasonable Cost Determination: I hereby determine that the anticipated price to the Government for this contract action will be fair and reasonable because NASA SEWP GWAC prices have previously been determined fair and reasonable. Additionally, price competition is expected among authorized resellers for this action. Additional price analysis may be performed in accordance with FAR 15.404-1(b).

[REDACTED]

Date: 11/15/2017

Procuring Contracting Officer

Signature: [Handwritten Signature]

12. Procuring Contracting Officer Certification: I certify that this justification is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

[REDACTED]

Date: 11/15/2017

Procuring Contracting Officer

Signature: [Handwritten Signature]