

**Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services**

**Strategic Partners Acquisition Readiness Contract (SPARC)**

**Task Order - Ordering Guide**

**Version 3.0**

**March 7, 2019**

# Record of Changes

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Version** | **Date** | **Author / Owner** | **Description of Change** |
| 1.0 | September 13, 2018 | Richard Hebbel/DICM | Initial draft |
| 2.0 | October 12, 2018 | Richard Hebbel/DICM | OAGM Updates |
| 3.0 | March 7, 2019 | Richard Hebbel/DICM | OIT Updates |

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# SPARC Introduction (CMS/HHS)

# SPARC Background

SPARC is an Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract vehicle that provides a refined pool of highly qualified partners to perform work for HHS and its agencies. Services are procured amongst the IDIQ partners as individual Task Orders (TO). By using these pre-qualified partners, the SPARC procurement timeline is shortened and more flexible compared to the traditional full and open competition. Customers have the additional advantages of reduced paperwork, cost-effective rates, no administrative fee and competitive bids on each TO solicited.

This Ordering Guide outlines each of the processes HHS agencies and personnel (including the Contracting Officer’s Representative (COR), Government Task Lead (GTL), Contracting Officer (CO), and Contract Specialist (CS) should follow when seeking to issue a new TO under SPARC.

Please refer to the following documents on the SPARC website when using this guide (Link below):

* Sample Market Research Report/Sources Sought
* Sample Statement of Work (SOW)/Statement of Objectives (SOO)
* Sample IGCE
* Sample Acquisition Plan
* SPARC Templates and Best Practices

**Link:**

<https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/CMS-Information-Technology/SPARC/how.html>

**AGX AP Guidelines:**

<https://intranet.hhs.gov/abouthhs/contracts-grants-support/acquisition-policies-guidance/acquisition-worktools/directive-acquisition-planning/index.html>

Each section of this guide will reference the ordering process for either CMS, HHS, or both, if applicable.

# General Policy for Issuing a Task Order

CMS requires new work to be competed among the SPARC partners with the exception of TOs meeting the exceptions for Fair Opportunity described in FAR 16 (to be discussed with your CO). Small TOs under $4M can be set-aside for 8(a) contractors on a sole source basis. The process is the same for the requesting agency’s standard processes for placing TOs under an existing competitively awarded IDIQ contract. The requesting business unit that is utilizing SPARC should utilize lean methodologies and the United States Digital Services (USDS) Playbook guidance to maximize the use of agile contracting best practices ([https://playbook.cio.gov](https://playbook.cio.gov/)).

**Tech FAR handbook:**

<https://techfarhub.cio.gov/handbook/>

# SPARC Task Order Types (CMS/HHS)

SPARC is a multiple-award, IDIQ contract and permits the use of any type of pricing arrangement for TOs.

SPARC includes provisions for various pricing arrangements including, but not limited to:

* + - Cost-Plus-Fixed-Fee (CPFF)
		- Cost-Plus-Award-Fee (CPAF)
		- Cost-Plus-Incentive (CPI)
		- Firm-Fixed-Price (FFP)
		- Firm-Fixed-Price-Award-Fee (FPAF)
		- Fixed-Price-Incentive (FPI)
		- Time-and-Materials (T&M)
		- Labor-Hour (LH)

# SPARC Types of Competition

The Government utilizes various competition types for awarding work to contractors in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). The SPARC IDIQ contract is divided into two pools, a small business pool and an unrestricted pool, so a portion of the task orders can be reserved for small business participation. The competition types are listed below along with the limitations on competition:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Competition Type:** | **Vendors that Can Bid:** |
| Unrestricted | All vendors can bid |
| Restricted | Only small business vendors may bid |
| Small Business set aside  | Set-aside for specific small business socioeconomic categories |
| Sole Source 8(a) only if total acquisition is under four million dollars. | Only the selected vendor may bid |

**Restricted Procurements Specific Set-asides Types:**

A “set-aside for small business” is the reserving of an acquisition exclusively for participation by selected small businesses. The results of market research help the acquisition team set up the procurement accordingly. SPARC offers the following set asides:

* + - * Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Set-aside (when there are two or more capable contract holders)
			* Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned (SDVO) Set-aside
			* HubZone Set-aside
			* 8(a) Set-aside

**Note:** Any SPARC task order estimated to be under 29 million for all optional years and services (based on the IGCE) will need to be issued under SPARC as a Restricted/Small Business procurement. For any unrestricted TO, the TO CO will include the small business participation element as an evaluation factor for large business contractors.

# Task Order Ordering Process (CMS/HHS)

* CMS Follow Section 2.1
* HHS Follow Section 2.2

# CMS Task Order Ordering Process

The requesting office (business component) will be responsible for providing a COR to coordinate the TO activities with the Contracting Officer (CO) and Contract Specialist (CS). The CO/CS will be responsible for TO terms and conditions, updates to task requirements, certification of funds, TO issuance and administration, payment of invoices, TO close-out, and contractor performance reports.

**COR Manual:**

[https://agx.cms.gov/epm#/project-preview/16#76d497cf-ff15-463b-85ee-003fbdc2bf02](https://agx.cms.gov/epm#/project-preview/16)

**CMS Sprints:**

Sprint 1: CMS SPARC IDIQ Scope

Sprint 2: CMS Market Research (FAR Part 10)

Sprint 3: CMS Requirements

Sprint 4: CMS Solicitation and Award

Sprint 5: CMS Debrief /Post Award Notification

# Sprint 1: CMS SPARC IDIQ Scope

SPARC encompasses a broad range of IT services to meet user requirements. As stated above the scope of the SPARC contract includes the following major task and capability areas:

* + - * Initiation, Concept, and Planning Services
			* Database Services
			* Requirements Services
			* Design Services
			* Development Services
			* Testing Services
			* Security Control Assessment (SCA) Services
			* Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V) Services
			* Maintenance Services
			* Support Services
			* Data Request Services
			* Help Desk Support Services

The COR for the requesting office shall work with their respective CMS CO/CS to ensure the services are covered by the broad scope of SPARC.

# Sprint 2: CMS Market Research (FAR Part 10)

The overall goal of market research is to determine the most suitable approach to acquiring, distributing, and supporting services required by the Government. Market research will also provide information on sources capable of performing the work. There are two types of market research commonly used under SPARC:

1. **Request for Information (RFI):** A RFI is issued to SPARC partners to gauge their interest and capability in the work. The information gathered during the RFI process can help the procurement team best craft the Request for Proposal (RFP)/Request for Quotation (RFQ) to generate the optimal responses/bids. The information received in the responses can also be useful to the agency as it may contain information that can be used to shape the requirements.
2. **Sources Sought Notice (SSN) (procurements that are not set-aside):** Sources sought can be used as a market research tool to determine availability of small business contractors capable of performing the work. A SSN is used to solicit interest in a project and determine vendor capabilities; it is not a request for proposals or invitations to bid.

The COR and CO should consult with the small business analyst (SBA) about the kind of market research that is reasonable.

**Process:**

* + - * COR checks Market Research as a Service (MRaaS) tool (see link below) to see if there is usable market research.
			* If there is no usable market research information on MRaaS, the COR will work with the CO/CS to develop their own market research.
			* If required, CMS prepares and issues SSN to small businesses.
			* Vendors submit written response back to CMS for RFI/SSN.
			* CMS evaluates the responses from vendors and develops a report.
			* CMS determines the procurement strategy based on the findings in the report such as if the procurement should be restricted or unrestricted.

**Market Research as a Service (MRaaS) Tool:**

The Office of Information Technology (OIT) has developed the MRaaS tool that sorts prior SSN information which can be used for up to 18 months. If the size, scope and complexity of the work matches the prior market research it may be possible to skip sending out the SSN or RFI (COR is required to work with CO/CS to verify). The link has been provided below:

<https://share.cms.gov/Office/OIT/ICPG/MRAAS/SitePages/LandingPage.aspx>

# Sprint 3: CMS Requirements

There are several requirement documents needed to issue a RFQ under SPARC. They are as follows (Templates are found in the link under Section 1.1):

* + - * Acquisition Plan (AP)
			* SOW/SOO
			* Independent Government Cost Estimate (IGCE)
			* Funding such as Capital Acquisition Management System (CAMS) Requisition (Real Funds or Pending Availability of Funds with APP Number from the CO/CS that aligns with the CAMS Funding)

**Process:**

* Develop requirements documents (SOW/SOO, IGCE, AP).
	+ - * Submit documents to the Office of Acquisitions and Grants Management (OAGM) for review.
			* Submit AP for signatures.
			* Submit CAMS requisition with SOW/SOO, IGCE and AP.

**Acquisitions & Grant Exchange (AGX) useful links:** <https://agx.cms.gov/Categories/CategoryDetails.aspx?CategoryID=4&CategoryItemID=3253>

**Guidance and Tips:**

The requesting component’s COR/GTL should finalize the SOW/SOO and IGCE along with any other documents that pertain to the effort then work with his/her leadership to ensure that the SOW/SOO incorporates all necessary changes and revisions or updates.

Upon determination and receipt of the SOW/SOO/attachments and IGCE the COR/GTL should work to start the AP process utilizing the OAGM AGX website for AP guidance.

Upon AP full execution with signatures, the COR/GTL will submit all applicable documents through CAMS. The COR will need to ensure that the IGCE matches the dollar value in CAMS and that funding is obligated and available.

Once the CO/CS has approved all necessary documents, the solicitation can be issued on SPARC.

For CMS orders, the requesting office CO or CS will prepare the HHS 653 (Small Business Review Form) and submit to the cognizant small business representative for approval if required by agency procedures.

# Sprint 4: CMS Solicitation and Award

During this step the RFP/RFQ is sent to the vendors (the type of procurement will determine which vendors receive the RFP/RFQ) so that they can prepare the proposals. There are several key dates listed below that are part of the process:

**Process:**

* + - * Draft RFP/RFQ issued to vendors by OAGM (issuing a draft RFP/RFQ is optional; the draft RFP gives CMS time to address questions and update documents prior to the final RFP being issued).
			* RFP issued to vendors by OAGM.
			* Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) formed by CMS management specific to functional area.
			* Questions pertaining to RFP/RFQ sent to CMS from vendors.
			* Responses drafted by COR/GTL and updated RFP/RFQ is sent to vendors by CO and CS.
			* Notice of Intent (NOI) sent to CMS (optional, but informs CMS on potential number of proposal submissions for planning purposes).
			* Proposals due to CMS from vendors.
			* TEP Kickoff training provided by panel chair and CO.
			* Technical proposals evaluated by TEP.
			* Section 508 reviewed by 508 Subject Matter Expert (SME); findings sent to TEP for approval.
			* Business proposals evaluated (possible to do concurrent with technical).
			* TEP chair sends report on behalf of TEP to CO/CS for review.
			* TO award or updated request for proposals, sometimes known as Best And Final Offer (BAFO).

**Guidance and Tips:**

While awaiting the proposal submissions, the requesting COR/GTL should:

* Gather names of people involved for the Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) and ask if there are any other CMS departments or groups which need to be included on the TEP; the business owner (component) will determine whether any Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) should be included in the TEP.
* Upon proposal receipt by OAGM, the CO and CS will review offerors for responsiveness, and prepare to send to the COR or Procurement Lead for dissemination to the panel members.
* The CO or CS shall provide a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) which everyone on the TEP and any leadership who want to be involved in the procurement, must read and sign. The CO/CS will ensure/determine TEP members do not have a conflict of interest with any of the offerors.
* The TEP Chair (procurement lead within requesting division) will schedule the TEP kick-off and include all TEP members and participating SMEs; the meeting is usually within one day of proposal submission.
* The COR or Procurement Lead within the component performing the work will work with OAGM throughout the procurement process.

There are typically two parts to the proposal evaluation; the Technical Volume and the Business Volume. Sample evaluation factors are in Appendix A in this document.

# Sprint 5: CMS Debrief /Post Award Notification

After the task order award is made, debriefs are then provided to offerors that requests a debrief within the allowable timeframe. The requesting offeror is then provided information pertaining to the award decision is given to the offeror. The CO runs the debriefs. FAR section 15.506; <https://www.acquisition.gov/content/15506-postaward-debriefing-offerors>.

* + - * + Offeror has a five day window after an award is made to request a debrief.
				+ An offeror can file a protest with a stay of performance (stop work) within five days of the debrief.
				+ An offeror can file a protest without a stay within 10 days after the debrief.
				+ If there is a protest, OAGM and the Government Accountability Office (GAO) will provide instructions/guidance on how to resolve.

# HHS OPDIVS Ordering Process (Non CMS)

The task order process for SPARC follows the HHS OPDIVS normal procurement process while using the SPARC vendors. The requesting office shall reach out to their CO and CS for the TO award at their agency as soon as the need for a procurement is known. The CO, with assistance from the COR, will be responsible for modifications to task requirements, certification of funds, TO issuance and administration, payment of invoices, TO close-out, and contractor performance reports.

**Steps:**

Sprint 1: HHS SPARC IDIQ Scope SPARC

Sprint 2: HHS Market Research (FAR Part 10)

Sprint 3: HHS Requirements

Sprint 4: HHS Solicitation and Award

Sprint 5: HHS Debrief /Post Award Notification

# Sprint 1: HHS SPARC IDIQ Scope

SPARC encompass a broad range of IT services to meet user requirements. As stated above the scope of the SPARC contract includes the following major task and capability areas:

* + - * Initiation, Concept, and Planning Services
			* Database Services
			* Requirements Services
			* Design Services
			* Development Services
			* Testing Services
			* Security Control Assessment (SCA) Services
			* Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V) Services
			* Maintenance Services
			* Support Services
			* Data Request Services
			* Help Desk Support Services

The COR for the requesting office must work with their respective agency CO/CS to ensure the services are covered by the broad scope of SPARC.

# Sprint 2: HHS Market Research (FAR Part 10)

The overall goal of market research is to determine the most suitable approach to acquiring, distributing, and supporting supplies and services. Market research will provide information on sources capable of performing the work. There are two types of market research commonly used under SPARC:

1. **Request for Information (RFI):** A RFI is issued to SPARC vendors to gauge interest and capability of the work. The information gathered during the RFI process can help the procurement officer best craft the Request for Proposal (RFP) or Request for Quotation (RFQ) to generate the best responses/bids. The information received in the responses can also be useful to the agency as it may contain information that can be used to shape the requirements.
2. **Sources Sought Notice (SSN) (non-set aside procurements):** Sources sought can be used as a market research tool to determine availability of small business contractors capable of performing the work. A SSN is used to solicit interest in a project; this is not a request for proposals or invitations to bid.

**Process:**

* + - * COR from requesting agency works with the CO/CS to prepare and issue SSN to vendors (CO/CS submit notice).
			* Vendors submit written response back to CO/CS for review.
			* Requesting Agency acquisition team evaluates the responses from vendors and provides a report to the CO/CS.
			* Acquisition team determines procurement strategy based on the findings of the market research.

# Sprint 3: HHS Requirements

Agencies are required to have several key documents for issuing a TO under SPARC; they are as follows (All templates are found in the link under Section 1.1):

* + - * Acquisition Plan (AP)
			* SOW/SOO
			* Independent Government Cost Estimate (IGCE)
			* Funding such as Capital Acquisition Management System (CAMS) Requisition (Real Funds or Pending Availability of Funds)

**Process:**

* Develop requirements documents (SOW/SOO, IGCE, AP); templates are found in the link
	+ - * Link: <https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/CMS-Information-Technology/SPARC/index.html>
			* Submit to CO/CS for review

Once the CO/CS has approved all necessary documents, the solicitation can be issued on SPARC.

*For HHS/Non CMS orders*, the requesting office CO or CS will prepare an HHS 653 (Small Business Review Form) and submit to the cognizant small business representative for approval, if required by agency procedures.

# Sprint 4: HHS Solicitation and Award

During this step the RFP/RFQ is sent to the vendors so that they can prepare the proposals. There are several key dates listed below that are part of the process:

**Process:**

* + - * Draft RFP/RFQ issued to vendors by the requesting agencies CO/CS (issuing a draft RFP/RFQ is optional; the draft RFP gives CMS time to address questions and update documents prior to the final RFP being issued).
			* RFP/RFQ issued to vendors by CO/CS from requesting agency (CO/CS from request agency to request SPARC distribution list from SPARC resource mailbox).
			* TEP Panel formed by requesting office COR and/or PMO.
			* Questions pertaining to RFP sent to agencies CO/CS from vendors.
			* Agencies COR/CO/CS/PMO draft responses and update RFP to be sent to vendors by CO/CS.
			* Notice of Intent (NOI) sent to CO/CS and informs the CO/CS of the offerors who may bid.
			* Proposals due from vendors.
			* Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) kickoff training provided by panel chair from respective agency.
			* Technical proposals evaluated by TEP and agency’s 508 team.
			* Business proposals evaluated (possible to do concurrent with Technical).
			* Report sent to CO/CS for review.
			* TO award (or updated proposals).

While awaiting the proposal submissions, the COR from the requesting agency should:

* Gather the names of people involved in the TEP.
* The CO or CS shall provide a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) which everyone on the TEP, and any leadership who want to be involved in the procurement, must read and sign.
* Upon proposal receipt by the CO/CS, the CO and CS will review offerors for responsiveness, and prepare to send to the COR or Procurement Lead for dissemination to the panel members.
* The TEP Chair (Procurement Lead within requesting agency) will schedule the TEP kick-off and include all TEP members and participating SMEs; the meeting is usually within one day of proposal submission.
* The COR or Procurement Lead within the agency will work with the CO/CS throughout the procurement process.

There are typically two parts to the proposal evaluation, the Technical Volume and the Business Volume. Sample evaluation factors are located in Appendix A of this document.

# Sprint 5: HHS Debrief /Post Award Notification

# After the task order award is made, debriefs are then provided to offerors that requests a debrief within the allowable timeframe. The requesting offeror is then provided information pertaining to the award decision is given to the offeror. The CO runs the debriefs. FAR section 15.506; https://www.acquisition.gov/content/15506-postaward-debriefing-offerors.

* + - * + Once the award is made, debriefs are provided to all offerors that request a timely debrief. Information pertaining to the award decision is given to offerors (see FAR section below). The CO runs the debriefs. Offeror has a five day window after an award is made to request a debrief,
				+ An offeror can file a protest with a stay of performance (stop work) within five days of the debrief,
				+ An offeror can file a protest without a stay in 10 days after the debrief,
				+ If there is a protest; OAGM and the Government Accountability Office (GAO) will provide instructions/guidance on how to resolve.

# Appendix A: Sample Technical Evaluation Factors:

As part of the solicitation technical evaluation, factors, or criteria, are used to evaluate offerors and are included in solicitation. There are many, however, the most common are listed below along with sample instructions.

**Technical Understanding/Approach:** The Government will evaluate the offeror’s understanding of the requirements and approach for delivery of services, including continuous improvement thereof, to assess the degree to which it demonstrates understanding of the requirements and the merits of the approach to successfully meet the requirements/goals/objectives of the solicitation. If a SOO is used the TEP will also evaluate the Performance Work Statement (PWS) that is submitted by the offeror.

**Past Performance**: CMS will evaluate the offeror and the proposed significant subcontractors past performance information which is expected to demonstrate the likelihood that the prospective TO will be performed successfully. CMS reserves the right to limit its review of past performance information to what the agency has determined to be both recent and relevant. The contract holder is advised that the Contracting Officer may consider past performance information regarding contracts performed for the U.S. federal government to be more relevant than those performed for other than the U.S. federal government. Furthermore, CMS may use sources of past performance information other than an offeror’s response (e.g., CPARS assessments, award fee determinations, interviews with personnel familiar with the past performance information, requests from federal agencies for corrective actions in connection with contract performance, etc.).

**Section 508 Compliance:** In accordance with the terms of the Provision entitled "Electronic and Information Technology (EIT)" HHSAR Provision No. 339.2, the Government is seeking to determine that EIT products and services proposed support applicable Section 508 accessibility standards <http://www.section508.gov/>

Offerors will be evaluated on the following factors: Ability to demonstrate compliance with the established EIT accessibility standards. Please describe tools and methodology/process which the offeror team will use to make self-originated print deliverables 508 compliant, and identify the experienced staff who will be responsible. Please describe offeror team knowledge, abilities, tools and processes to test, verify, and ascertain if third-party contractor deliverables are fully 508- compliant as per requirements. If third-party-originated content is not compliant, how will this be mitigated or corrected? Please describe offeror team knowledge and skillsets which can be utilized by the program office to test and make, and assure portals, websites, and webpages are 508 compliant. Completion of requested Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT (2.0)) form in a satisfactory manner.

**Management Approach:** Offerors must demonstrate the ability to manage the effort. This may include narrative, diagrams, project management teams, Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) and plans. In this section, the offeror shall discuss the company’s system maturities certifications and statuses.

The offeror shall discuss tools, processes, procedures, organizations, and disciplines developed, acquired, and purchased, and which will be employed to address performance monitoring, and managing of the work. Offerors will list and describe software tools to be deployed.

This may also include a Quality Assurance and Control Plan. The offeror shall describe their proposed quality assurance planning, staffing, and operations.

**Business proposal.** The proposal should include staff classification and personnel level, materials, travel, overhead, and other direct costs:

* + - * + The estimated average direct labor rates for each staff classification and personnel level proposed for the TO should be included. The hours and average rates must be appropriate for the skill mix proposed.
				+ Any applicable indirect loadings and fees must be applied.

Proposed travel (if applicable) should be broken out into number of trips, number of travelers, and duration of trip (including transit time) for each destination. Cost detail must be shown for all items—including commercial transportation, daily per diem rates, personal mileage, and daily car rental.

* + - * + An explanation and basis must be provided for each item of “Other Direct Cost” proposed, such as subcontractor usage, hardware or software purchases, and other materials.
				+ Any conflict of interest should be included. Identify any potential, actual, or apparent conflicts of interest and propose mitigation strategies.

**Sample Evaluation Criteria for a SOO/PWS with Solution Exercise**

The Government will review and evaluate the Offeror’s proposals using an adjectival rating methodology. The Government will evaluate the Offeror’s technical proposal for strengths, significant weaknesses, deficiencies, and risks.

Technical Factors (“in descending order of importance” or “are of equal importance”):

* Solution Exercise
* Performance Work Statement (PWS)

The following factors will be evaluated for compliance and acceptability:

* Business Ethics, Conflicts of Interest and Compliance
* Section 508 Product Accessibility Template (PAT)
* Assumptions, Conditions, Exceptions

The Government will select the offer based upon an assessment of the offeror’s technical and business proposals that, in the Government’s estimation, provides the best value (i.e., is most advantageous to the Government; technical, cost/price and other factors considered). The Government seeks to award this task order to the offeror(s) who gives the Government the greatest confidence that it will best meet or exceed the requirements for a fair and reasonable price. The Government will use a tradeoff process to determine which offerors provides the best overall value to the Government. The “Tradeoff Process” could involve awards to other than the lowest priced offerors or to other than the offerors with the highest ranked technical proposal. **CMS considers the non-cost evaluation factors (Technical Factors), when combined, to be significantly more important than cost or price.** However, as the degree of technical equality increases between proposals, cost/price will become more important. The Government will perform a price analysis to determine if the Offeror’s proposal demonstrates an understanding of the requirement.

The Government intends to award this order based on initial proposals. Therefore, the offeror’s initial proposal should contain the offeror’s best terms from a price and technical standpoint. The Contracting Officer reserves the right to seek additional discounts or if the Contracting Officer later determines them to be necessary.

**Volume 2 - Section 1 - Solution Exercise**

The Solution Exercise will be evaluated to determine the Offeror’s capability and suitability to perform the work required in the Statement of Objectives.

The Solution documents will be assessed to determine the ability of the Offeror in relation to:

* Technical Aptitude: Understanding of and ability to meet the technical requirements expressed in the solicitation, including but not limited to scalability, high-availability, automation, zero downtime deployments, infrastructure as code, and continuous monitoring and improvement.
* Problem Solving and Critical Thinking: CMS wants to fully understand the contractor’s overall critical thinking ability and devotion to finding optimal solutions to the problems and issues that come up during development. A lot of focus is given to pure technical solutions and code writing but not enough given to the full project and individual solutions.
* Instruction Interpretation: The ability for a contractor to fully understand the business and system needs when it comes to a feature or an implementation is important. CMS wants to fully understand the contractor’s ability to interpret instructions and tailor an appropriate solution.
* Documentation and Communication: The ability for a contractor to communicate the complete implementation plan for a system change and document it with the appropriate visuals is critical. Insufficient or unclear documentation and communication can lead to a misunderstanding of the final product.

**Volume 2 - Section 2 - Performance Work Statement (PWS)**

The Government will evaluate the extent to which the Offeror’s approach reflected in their PWS demonstrates an understanding of the complexity of the effort and the feasibility of the approach to successfully fulfill the objectives in the SOO. The Government will evaluate the approach on the level of alignment and mapping to the overall needs of the objectives outlined within the SOO. Additionally, the Government will evaluate:

1. The staffing of each Sprint Team to determine how well the Offeror’s proposed labor mix is an accurate reflection of the technical understanding of the requirement.
2. The Government will evaluate the rationale for the proposed performance standards and performance measurement methodology and assess whether the total solution will ensure that the performance standards are met.
3. (specific to requirement, fill in as necessary)