

is accepted as a sole source requirement on that basis, award may be made even though the contract price arrived at through negotiations exceeds the competitive threshold, provided that the contract price is not more than ten percent greater than the competitive threshold amount.

Example to paragraph (a)(3). If the anticipated award price for a professional services requirement is determined to be \$2.7 million and it is accepted as a sole source 8(a) requirement on that basis, a sole source award will be valid even if the contract price arrived at after negotiation is \$3.1 million.

(4) A proposed 8(a) requirement with an estimated value exceeding the applicable competitive threshold amount may not be divided into several separate procurement actions for lesser amounts in order to use 8(a) sole source procedures to award to a single contractor.

(b) *Exemption from competitive thresholds for Participants owned by Indian tribes.* SBA may award a sole source 8(a) contract to a Participant concern owned and controlled by an Indian tribe or an ANC where the anticipated value of the procurement exceeds the applicable competitive threshold if SBA has not accepted the requirement into the 8(a) BD program as a competitive procurement. There is no requirement that a procurement must be competed whenever possible before it can be accepted on a sole source basis for a tribally-owned or ANC-owned concern, but a procurement may not be removed from competition to award it to a tribally-owned or ANC-owned concern on a sole source basis.

(c) *Competition below thresholds.* The AA/8(a)BD, on a nondelegable basis, may approve a request from a procuring activity to compete a requirement that is below the applicable competitive threshold amount among eligible Participants.

(1) This authority will be used primarily when technical competitions are appropriate or when a large number of potential awardees exist.

(2) The AA/8(a)BD may consider whether the procuring activity has made and will continue to make available a significant number of its contracts to the 8(a) BD program on a non-competitive basis.

(3) The AA/8(a)BD may deny a request if the procuring activity previously offered the requirement to the 8(a) BD program on a noncompetitive basis and the request is made following the inability of the procuring activity and the potential sole source awardee to reach an agreement on price or some other material term or condition.

(d) *Sole source above thresholds.* Where a contract opportunity exceeds the applicable threshold amount and there is not a reasonable expectation that at least two eligible 8(a) Participants will submit offers at a fair price, the AA/8(a)BD may accept the requirement for a sole source 8(a) award if he or she determines that an eligible Participant in the 8(a) portfolio is capable of performing the requirement at a fair price.

§ 124.507 What procedures apply to competitive 8(a) procurements?

(a) *FAR procedures.* Procuring activities will conduct competitions among and evaluate offers received from Participants in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulation (48 CFR, chapter 1).

(b) *Eligibility determination by SBA.* In either a negotiated or sealed bid competitive 8(a) acquisition, the procuring activity will request that the SBA district office servicing the apparent successful offeror determine that firm's eligibility for award.

(1) Within 5 working days after receipt of a procuring activity's request for an eligibility determination, SBA will determine whether the firm identified by the procuring activity is eligible for award.

(2) Eligibility is based on 8(a) BD program criteria, including whether the Participant is:

(i) A small business under the SIC code assigned to the requirement;

(ii) In compliance with any applicable competitive business mix target established or remedial measure imposed by § 124.509 that does not include the denial of future 8(a) contracts;

(iii) In the developmental stage of program participation if the solicitation restricts offerors to the developmental stage of participation; and

(iv) A concern with a bona fide place of business in the applicable geographic area if the procurement is for construction.

(3) If SBA determines that the apparent successful offeror is ineligible, SBA will notify the procuring activity. The procuring activity will then send to SBA the identity of the next highest evaluated firm for an eligibility determination. The process is repeated until SBA determines that an identified offeror is eligible for award.

(4) Except to the extent set forth in paragraph (d) of this section, SBA determines whether a Participant is eligible for a specific 8(a) competitive requirement as of the date that the Participant submitted its initial offer which includes price.

(5) If the procuring activity contracting officer believes that the apparent successful offeror is not responsible to perform the contract, he or she must refer the concern to SBA for a possible Certificate of Competency in accord with § 125.5 of this title.

(c) *Restricted competition.* (1) *Competition within stages of program participation.* SBA may accept a competitive 8(a) requirement that is limited to Participants in the developmental stage of program participation, or may accept a requirement to be competed among firms both in the developmental and transitional stages of program participation.

(2) *Construction competitions.* Based on its knowledge of the 8(a) BD portfolio, SBA will determine whether a competitive 8(a) construction requirement should be competed among only those Participants having a bona fide place of business within the geographical boundaries of one or more SBA district offices, within a state, or within the state and nearby areas. Only those Participants with bona fide places of business within the appropriate geographical boundaries are eligible to submit offers.

(3) *Competition for all non-construction requirements.* Except for construction requirements, all eligible Participants regardless of location may submit offers in response to competitive 8(a) solicitations. The only geographic restrictions pertaining to 8(a) competitive requirements, other than those for

construction requirements, are any imposed by the solicitations themselves.

(d) *Award to firms whose program terms have expired.* A concern that has completed its term of participation in the 8(a) BD program may be awarded a competitive 8(a) contract if it was a Participant eligible for award of the contract on the initial date specified for receipt of offers contained in the contract solicitation, and if it continues to meet all other applicable eligibility criteria.

(1) Amendments to the solicitation extending the date for submissions of offers will be disregarded.

(2) For a negotiated procurement, a Participant may submit revised offers, including a best and final offer, and be awarded a competitive 8(a) contract if it was eligible as of the initial date specified for the receipt of offers in the solicitation, even though its program term may expire after that date.

§ 124.508 How is an 8(a) contract executed?

(a) An 8(a) contract can be awarded in the following ways:

(1) As a tripartite agreement in which the procuring activity, SBA and the Participant all sign the appropriate contract documents. There may be separate prime and subcontract documents (i.e., a prime contract between the procuring activity and SBA and a subcontract between SBA and the selected 8(a) concern) or a combined contract document representing both the prime and subcontract relationships; or

(2) Where SBA has delegated contract execution authority to the procuring activity, directly by the procuring activity through a contract between the procuring activity and the Participant.

(b) Where SBA receives a contract for signature valued at or below the simplified acquisition threshold, it will sign the contract and return it to the procuring activity within three (3) days of receipt.

(c) In order to be eligible to receive a sole source 8(a) contract, a firm must be a current Participant on the date of award. (See § 124.507(d) for competitive 8(a) awards.)