

(b) In situations where the solicitation stated that evaluation credit would be given for technical solutions exceeding any mandatory minimums, you may hold discussions regarding increased performance beyond any mandatory minimums, and you may suggest to offerors that have exceeded any mandatory minimums (in ways that are not integral to the design), that their proposals would be more competitive if the excesses were removed and the offered price decreased.

**§ 636.507 What subjects are prohibited in discussions, communications and clarifications with offerors?**

You may not engage in conduct that:

- (a) Favors one offeror over another;
- (b) Reveals an offeror's technical solution, including unique technology, innovative and unique uses of commercial items, or any information that would compromise an offeror's intellectual property to another offeror;
- (c) Reveals an offeror's price without that offeror's permission;
- (d) Reveals the names of individuals providing reference information about an offeror's past performance; or
- (e) Knowingly furnish source selection information which could be in violation of State procurement integrity standards.

**§ 636.508 Can price or cost be an issue in discussions?**

You may inform an offeror that its price is considered to be too high, or too low, and reveal the results of the analysis supporting that conclusion. At your discretion, you may indicate to all offerors your estimated cost for the project.

**§ 636.509 Can offerors revise their proposals as a result of discussions?**

(a) Yes, you may request or allow proposal revisions to clarify and document understandings reached during discussions. At the conclusion of discussions, each offeror shall be given an opportunity to submit a final proposal revision.

(b) You must establish a common cut-off date only for receipt of final proposal revisions. Requests for final proposal revisions shall advise offerors that the final proposal revisions shall

be in writing and that the contracting agency intends to make award without obtaining further revisions.

**§ 636.510 Can the competitive range be further defined once discussions have begun?**

Yes, you may further narrow the competitive range if an offeror originally in the competitive range is no longer considered to be among the most highly rated offerors being considered for award. That offeror may be eliminated from the competitive range whether or not all material aspects of the proposal have been discussed, or whether or not the offeror has been afforded an opportunity to submit a proposal revision. You must provide an offeror excluded from the competitive range with a written determination and notice that proposal revisions will not be considered.

**§ 636.511 Can there be more than one round of discussions?**

Yes, but only at the conclusion of discussions will the offerors be requested to submit a final proposal revision, also called best and final offer (BAFO). Thus, regardless of the length or number of discussions, there will be only one request for a revised proposal (*i.e.*, only one BAFO).

**§ 636.512 What is the basis for the source selection decision?**

(a) You must base the source selection decision on a comparative assessment of proposals against all selection criteria in the solicitation. While you may use reports and analyses prepared by others, the source selection decision shall represent your independent judgment.

(b) The source selection decision shall be documented, and the documentation shall include the rationale for any business judgments and tradeoffs made or relied on, including benefits associated with additional costs. Although the rationale for the selection decision must be documented, that documentation need not quantify the tradeoffs that led to the decision.