



U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20416

GCBD

December 20, 2016

Memorandum for: Chief Acquisition Officers and Small Business Program Office Directors

Subject: 8(a) Program Digital Service Initiative

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), in collaboration with the U.S. Digital Service, is excited to announce a new tool available for use by Federal Contracting Officers to enable expeditious procurement of digital services. This initiative allows agencies to achieve cultural change to implement Digital Service Playbook and TechFAR strategies with lowered risk, try out modern technology stacks, and begin iterative development with little to no procurement lead time.

The 8(a) Program allows procuring agencies to make quick, direct awards for procurements up to \$4 million in value. This approach is particularly beneficial for digital service requirements because agencies may select the awardee through market research or capabilities briefings and award directly to the firm without further competition. Further, a sole source justification and authority (J&A) is not required for 8(a) contracts under \$4 million and direct 8(a) awards are not protestable. There are already a number of vendors participating in the 8(a) Program with significant experience implementing modern technology and digital services that can meet current needs.

This initiative is intended to maximize the use of the 8(a) Program for digital services. SBA's regulations dictate that when a procurement is awarded as an 8(a) contract, its follow-on or renewable acquisition must also be awarded as an 8(a) contract unless SBA agrees to release the requirement for non-8(a) competition. This initiative clarifies that procuring agencies which award digital services requirements through the 8(a) Program need not request release from 8(a) competition when awarding digital service developmental iterations or add-on services. SBA believes that each iteration or add-on is a distinctly new project and should be treated as a new requirement for purposes of 8(a) release requirements. As such, agencies are permitted to award contracts for additional development utilizing different acquisition strategies (to include non-8(a) strategies) without requesting release from 8(a) competition. The SBA clarifies that each acquisition involving digital service projects must fall within the strict scope as defined in the three attachments. Reference Enclosure D – Ordering Guide for additional instructions related to this scope. Digital services scope areas covered under this memo are further defined in the following attachments:

- Enclosure A - Learn the Process
- Enclosure B - Select the Tech
- Enclosure C - Build the MVP

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