

Acquisition Hour:

The Vocabulary of Acquisition AND Why it is Critical to Understand

July 8 | Noon – 1:00 pm

Presented by:

Marc Violante, Wisconsin Procurement Institute





Assisting Wisconsin businesses compete in the government marketplace.

WPI is Wisconsin's APEX ACCELERATOR

The APEX Accelerators program, under management of the Department of Defense (DOD) Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP), plays a critical role in the Department's efforts to identify and engage with a wide range of businesses entering and participating in the defense supply-chain. The program provides the education and training that all businesses need to participate to become capable of participating in DOD and other government contracts.

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- Small group training – webinars and workshops including Acquisition Hours, Cyber Fridays, Evening FAR sessions, Federal Market Insights and Local Government Sales Opportunities
- Conferences the Governors Marketplace, The Contracting Academy (TCA), WEDCs Small Business Academy, Wisconsin Federal Contractor Forum [DC and in-state], Government Opportunities Business Conference GOBC) with WI military bases, End of Year Federal Contractor Update, Annual DOD Contract Management Update, and more.....

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WPI OFFICE LOCATIONS

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- *Technology Innovation Center*

- **MADISON**

- *FEED Kitchens*
- *Dane County Latino Chamber of Commerce*
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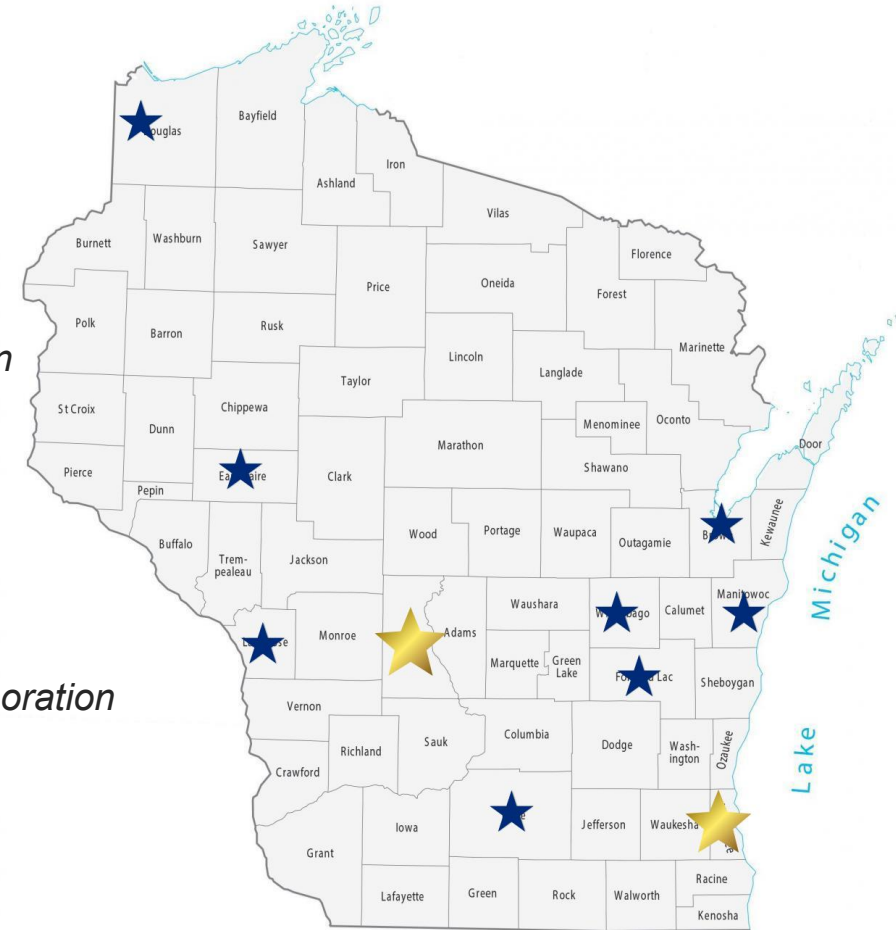
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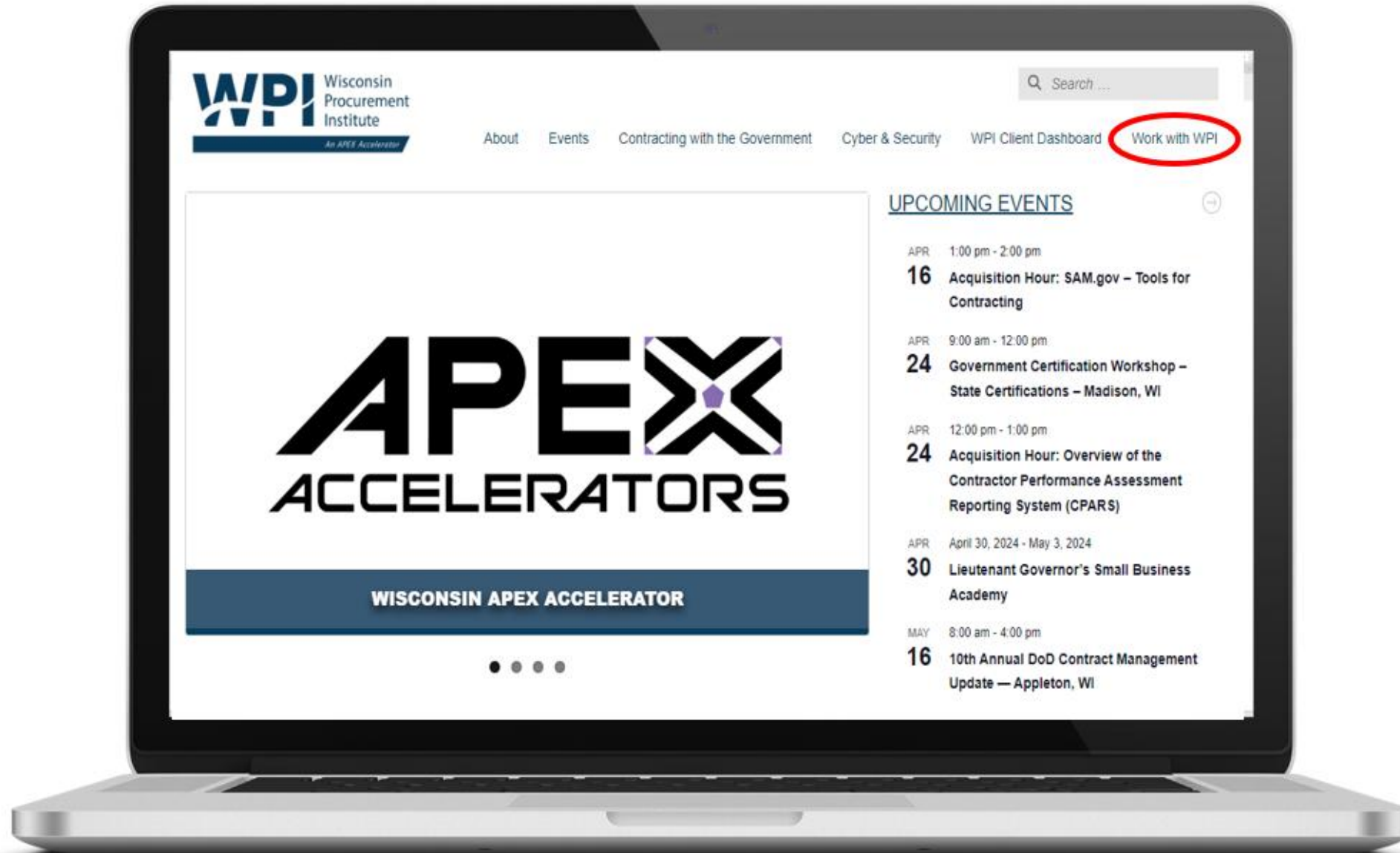
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- *Greater Oshkosh Economic Development Corporation*

- **SUPERIOR**

- *Small Business Dev Center; UW Superior*





The Vocabulary of Acquisition AND Why it is Critical to Understand

Wisconsin Procurement Institute

Marc Violante

July 8, 2026

Why Federal Contracting Feels Confusing and seems difficult

- Foreign Language
- New processes
- New procedures
- It requires taking everything we know and do and converting our knowledge and skills to align with government requirements.
- It also requires learning of a new and complex language.

Vocabulary

- a list or collection of words or of words and phrases usually alphabetically arranged and explained or defined : lexicon
- a sum or stock of words employed by a language, group, individual, or work or in a field of knowledge
- a list or collection of terms or codes available for use (as in an indexing system)

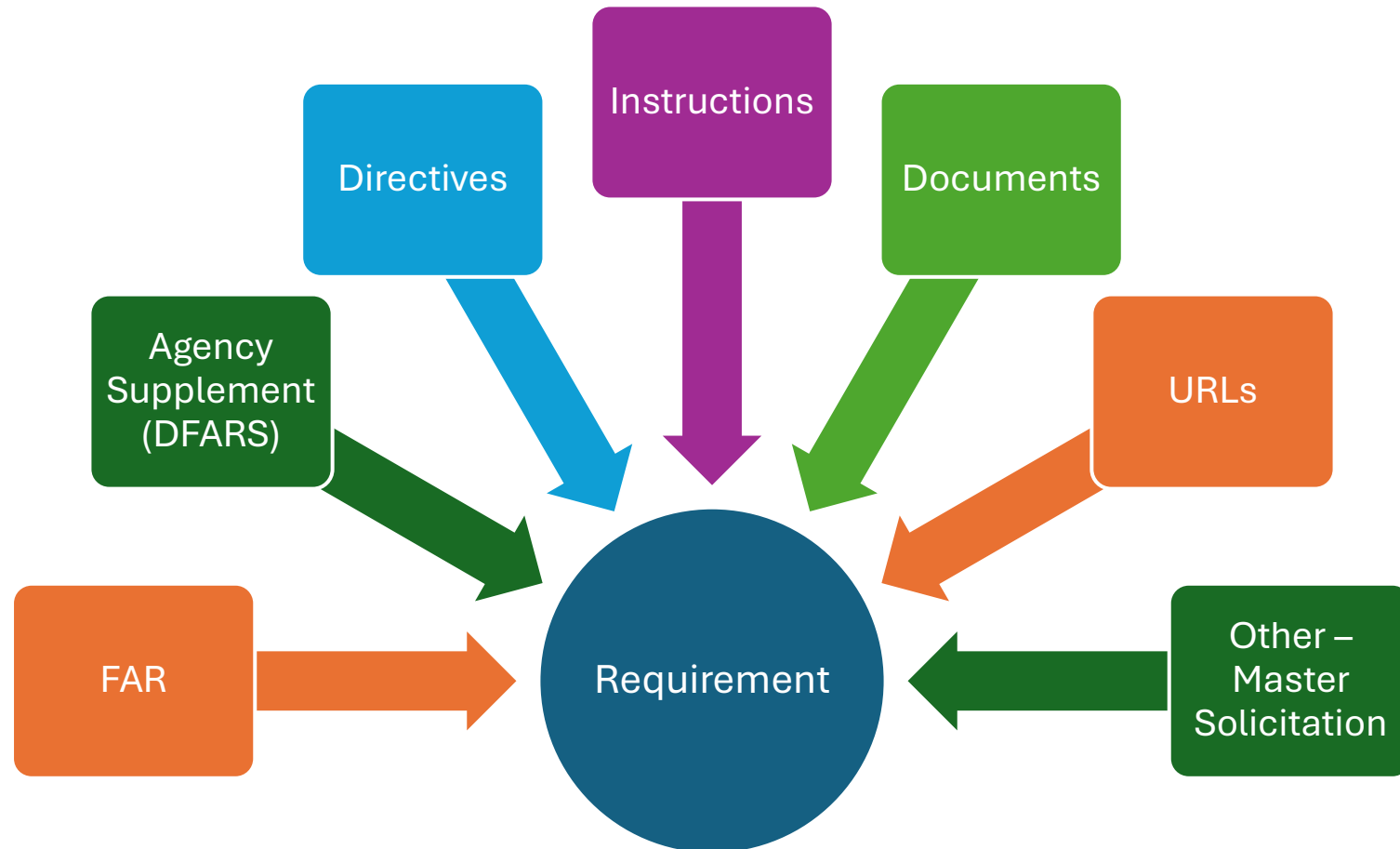
RFP **RFQ** **RFI** **SSN**
SAM **UEI** **CAGE** **FedConnect**
DFARS **FAR** **Capability Statement** **Unison**
Clause **PCO** **SBS**
Provision **ACO** **TCO** **White Paper**
COTS **COR** **Quad Chart**
Commercial Product **Commercial Service** **Flowdown** **Past Performance**
NAICS **PSC** **IDIQ** **BPA** **Amendment**
Shall **Must** **May** **Should**

Federal Contracting Vocabulary

- Words/Terms
- Phrases
- Numbers
- Acronyms
- URLs
- References – e.g. NIST 800-171 **r2** v. NIST 800-171 r3

R2 ≠ R3

A single Dictionary doesn't exist, resources do



An acquisition tells a story

- Market Research – preface
- Presolicitation – introduction
- Solicitation – the narrative
- Contract – the conclusion

Acquisition/Procurement – A story

- What is needed
- Who is buying it
- When it is needed by
- Where it needs to be delivered
- The general industry
- The type of Product/Service
- What type of procurement vehicle will be used
- Information requirements – cybersecurity, export controlled, etc

Parts of the story

- The solicitation is on SAM
- The solicitation number is
- There solicitation has been amended
- It is a small business set-aside
- The NAICS code is
- There is CUI
- CMMC – requires C3PAO

Combination of
information, codes
and clues

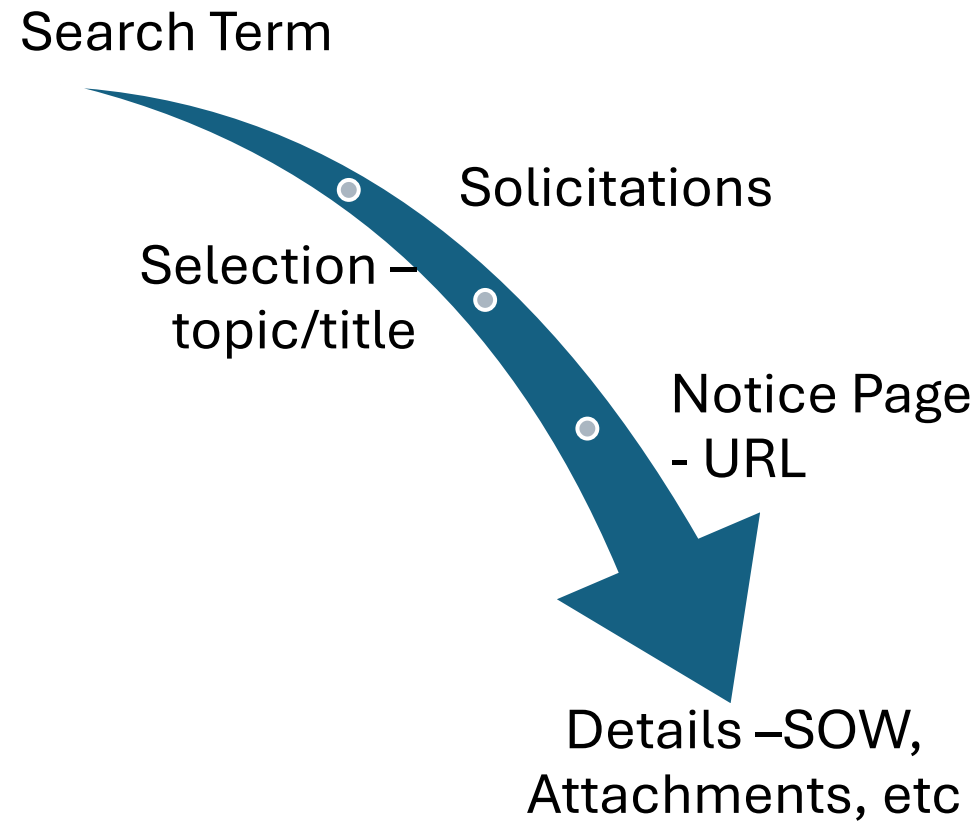
FAR Part 2 – Definitions of Words and Terms

- A word or a term, defined in this section, has the same meaning throughout this chapter (the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR)) unless the context in which the word or term is used clearly requires a different meaning or another FAR part, subpart, or section provides a different definition for the particular part or portion of the part. ...
- Affiliates means associated business concerns or individuals if, directly or indirectly either one controls or can control the other; or third party controls or can control both, except as follows:
 - (1) For use in subpart 9.4, see the definition at 9.403.
 - (2) For use of affiliates in size determinations, see the definition of "small business concern" in this section.

What's needed to excel

- Know
- Know where/how to locate
- Understand
- Know how to apply

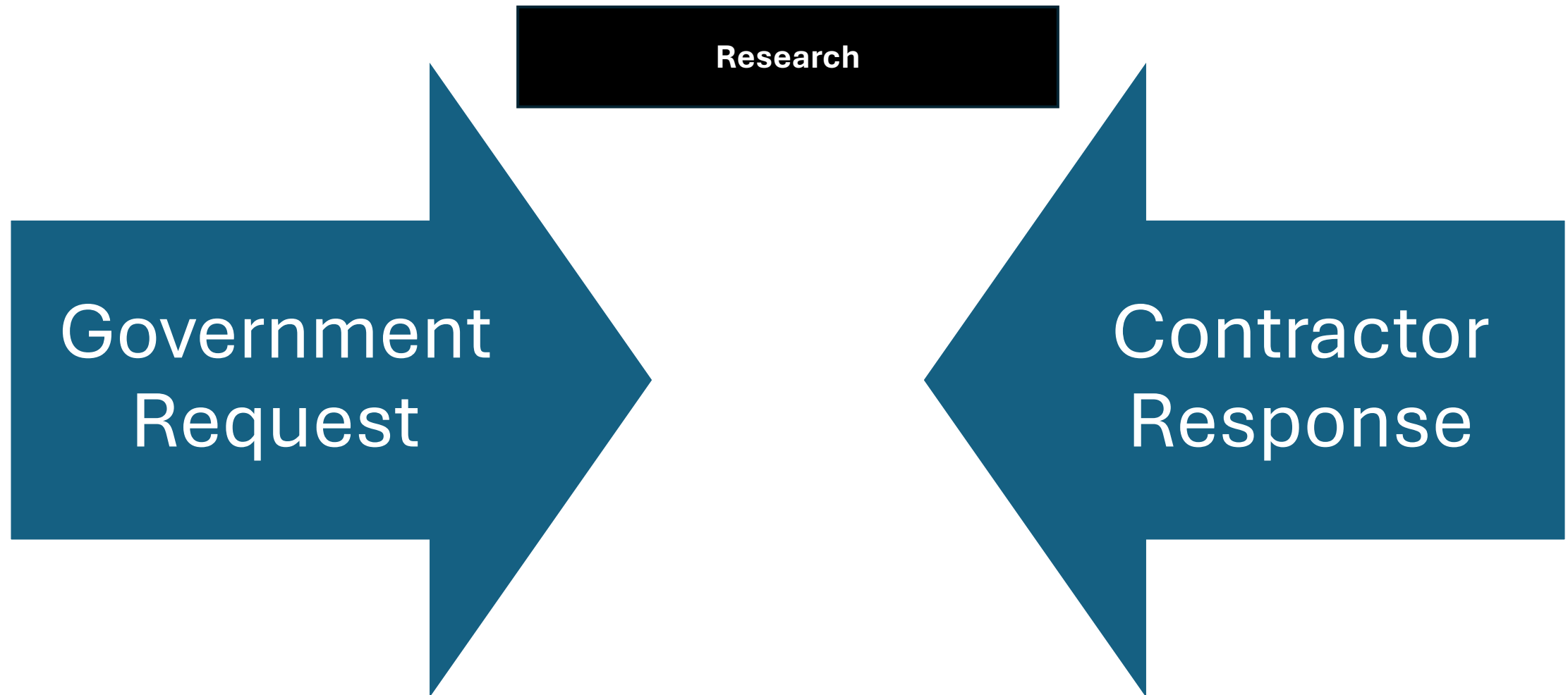
Drilling down -



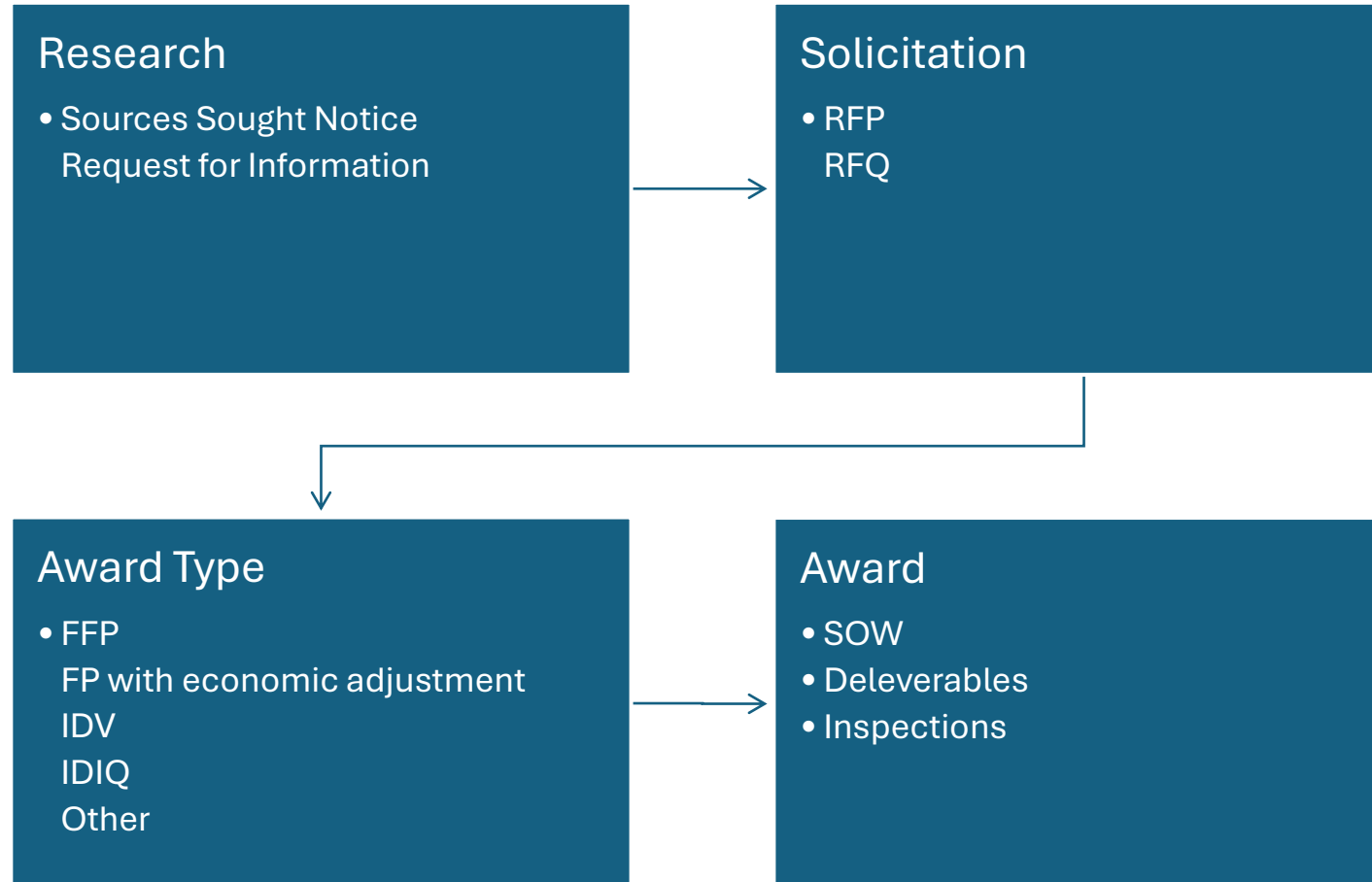
Contracting

- Contracting is often viewed as performing
- Contracting is more so an exercise in effective two-way communication
- Contracting defined in general terms
 - A promise to do something
 - An agreement
 - Meeting of the minds
 - Limited to the 4 corners of the document ~ if it is not in the document it doesn't exist

Mirrored communications at each phase



The bigger picture



Information flow

Government

- Defines
- Describes
- Requests
- Documents
- Inspects
- Approves

Contractor

- Responds
- Communicates value
- Performs
- Documents

Common elements required for a contract

- Need
- Offer – specific, clear and submitted as an offer (proposal)
- Acceptance
- Consideration
- Capacity
- Legal
- In general: If a proposal is submitted in response to a RFP and it is accepted, there is a contract. What happens with a RFQ?

But what about a RFQ – Request for Quote

- **13.004 Legal effect of quotations.**
- (a) A quotation is not an *offer* and, consequently, cannot be accepted by the Government to form a binding contract. Therefore, issuance by the Government of an order in response to a supplier's quotation does not establish a contract. The order is an *offer* by the Government to the supplier to buy certain *supplies* or services upon specified terms and conditions. A contract is established when the supplier accepts the *offer*.
- (b) When appropriate, the *contracting officer may* ask the supplier to indicate acceptance of an order by notification to the Government, preferably *in writing*, as defined at [2.101](#). In other circumstances, the supplier *may* indicate acceptance by furnishing the *supplies* or services ordered or by proceeding with the work to the point where substantial performance has occurred.
- (c) If the Government issues an order resulting from a quotation, the Government *may* (by written notice to the supplier, at any time before acceptance occurs) withdraw, amend, or cancel its *offer*. (See [13.302-4](#) for procedures on termination or cancellation of *purchase orders*.)

Critical, Critical Terms

- Contracting Officer – can be generically used
 - Procuring Contracting Officer
 - Administrative Contracting Officer
 - Termination Contracting Officer
- COR – Contracting Officer’s Representative
- COTR – Contracting Officers Technical Representative
- Understand roles, authorities and responsibilities – “woe to those who don’t!” When in doubt, ask. Train staff, identify POCs to act and only those individuals represent the company.

Specificity is key – an example

~Meeting of the Minds

- Provide hot coffee – part of a catering services SOW

? What defines hot

? What size cup

? Self-serve, carafe, wait staff

? Number of cups

? Blend - Roast

? Caffeinated or DeCaf or Blend

Definitions – create a common understanding

Research and Development – stages

- **1. Basic research.** Experimental or theoretical work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundations of phenomena and observable facts.
- **2. Applied research.** Original investigation undertaken in order to acquire knowledge.
- **3. Experimental development.** Creative and systematic work, drawing on knowledge gained from research and practical experience, which is directed at producing new products or processes or improving existing products or processes.

Research and Development - characteristics

- Research and experimental development activities are defined as creative and systematic work undertaken in order to increase the stock of knowledge—including knowledge of people, culture, and society—and to devise new applications using available knowledge.
- R&D must have each of the 5 characteristics
 - Novel
 - Creative
 - Uncertain
 - Systematic
 - Transferable and/or reproducible

R&D Characteristics defined

- Novel: Advances current knowledge or creates new knowledge
- Creative: Focuses on original concepts and hypotheses
- Uncertain: Outcomes are not completely determined at the outset of a project
- Systematic: Projects are planned and budgeted
- Transferable/Reproducible: Methodology and results are transferable to or reproducible in other situations and locations

Required elements of a “Cost”

- Allowable
- Allocable
- Fair and Reasonable

Cost Reasonableness

- (a) A cost is reasonable if, in its nature and amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person in the conduct of competitive business. Reasonableness of specific costs must be examined with particular care in connection with firms or their separate divisions that may not be subject to effective competitive restraints. **No presumption of reasonableness shall be attached to the incurrence of costs by a contractor.** If an initial review of the facts results in a challenge of a specific cost by the contracting officer or the contracting officer's representative, the burden of proof shall be upon the contractor to establish that such cost is reasonable.
- (b) What is reasonable depends upon a variety of considerations and circumstances, including-

19.202-6 Determination of fair market price.

- (a) The *fair market price* shall be the price achieved in accordance with the reasonable price guidelines in [15.404-1](#)(b) for-
 - (1) Total and partial small business set-asides, and reserves (see [subpart 19.5](#));
 - (2) *HUBZone* set-asides (see [subpart 19.13](#));
 - (3) Contracts utilizing the price evaluation preference for *HUBZone* small business concerns (see [subpart 19.13](#));
 - (4) Set-asides for SDVOSB concerns eligible under the SDVOSB Program (see [subpart 19.14](#));
 - (5) Set-asides for EDWOSB concerns and WOSB concerns eligible under the WOSB Program (see [subpart 19.15](#)).
- (b) For 8(a) contracts, both with respect to meeting the requirement at [19.806](#)(b) and in order to accurately estimate the current *fair market price*, contracting officers shall follow the procedures at [19.807](#).

Provision v. Clause

- *Solicitation provision or provision* means a term or condition used only in *solicitations* and applying only before contract award.
- *Contract clause* or "clause" means a term or condition used in contracts or in both *solicitations* and contracts, and applying after contract award or both before and after award.

Solicitation Provision - example

- By submission of this offer, the Offeror represents that it will implement the security requirements specified by National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Special Publication (SP) 800-171 “Protecting Controlled Unclassified Information in Nonfederal Information Systems and Organizations” (see <http://dx.doi.org/10.6028/NIST.SP.800-171>)
 - DFARS 252.204-7008

Words and other requirements

- Shall/Must – imperatives, required, absolute
- Should/May – permissives

Hints: DARPA Heilmeier Catechism

- What are you trying to do? Articulate your objectives using absolutely no jargon.
- How is it done today, and what are the limits of current practice?
- What is new in your approach and why do you think it will be successful?
- Who cares? If you are successful, what difference will it make?
- What are the risks?
- How much will it cost?
- How long will it take?
- What are the mid-term and final “exams” to check for success?

<https://www.darpa.mil/about/heilmeier-catechism>

Mix of terms, acronyms and codes

- The presence of cui is indicated by the inclusion of standard text object (STO) rd002 (covered defense information applies) or rq032 (export control of technical data).
- in addition, during CMMC phased rollout, solicitations will designate the required CMMC certification levels as follows:
- Inclusion of STO RD004 will require a CMMC level 2 self-assessment certification by Nov 10, 2028.
- Inclusion of STO RD005 will require a CMMC level 2 certified third-party certification by Nov 10, 2028.

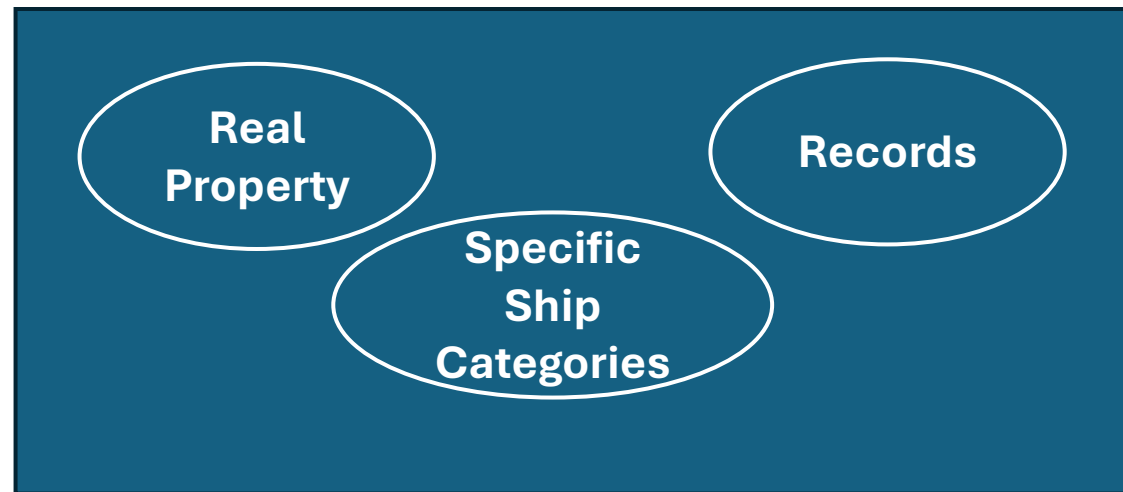
Importance to Compliance

- (m) Subcontracts. The Contractor shall—
 - (1) Include this clause, including this paragraph (m), in subcontracts, or similar contractual instruments, for operationally critical support, or for which subcontract performance will involve covered defense information, including subcontracts for commercial products or commercial services, without alteration, except to identify the parties.
- 

Definitions may not always be obvious

- *Personal property* means property of any kind or interest in it **except** real property, records of the Federal Government, and naval vessels of the following categories:

- (1) Battleships;
- (2) Cruisers;
- (3) Aircraft carriers;
- (4) Destroyers; and
- (5) Submarines.



Responsible

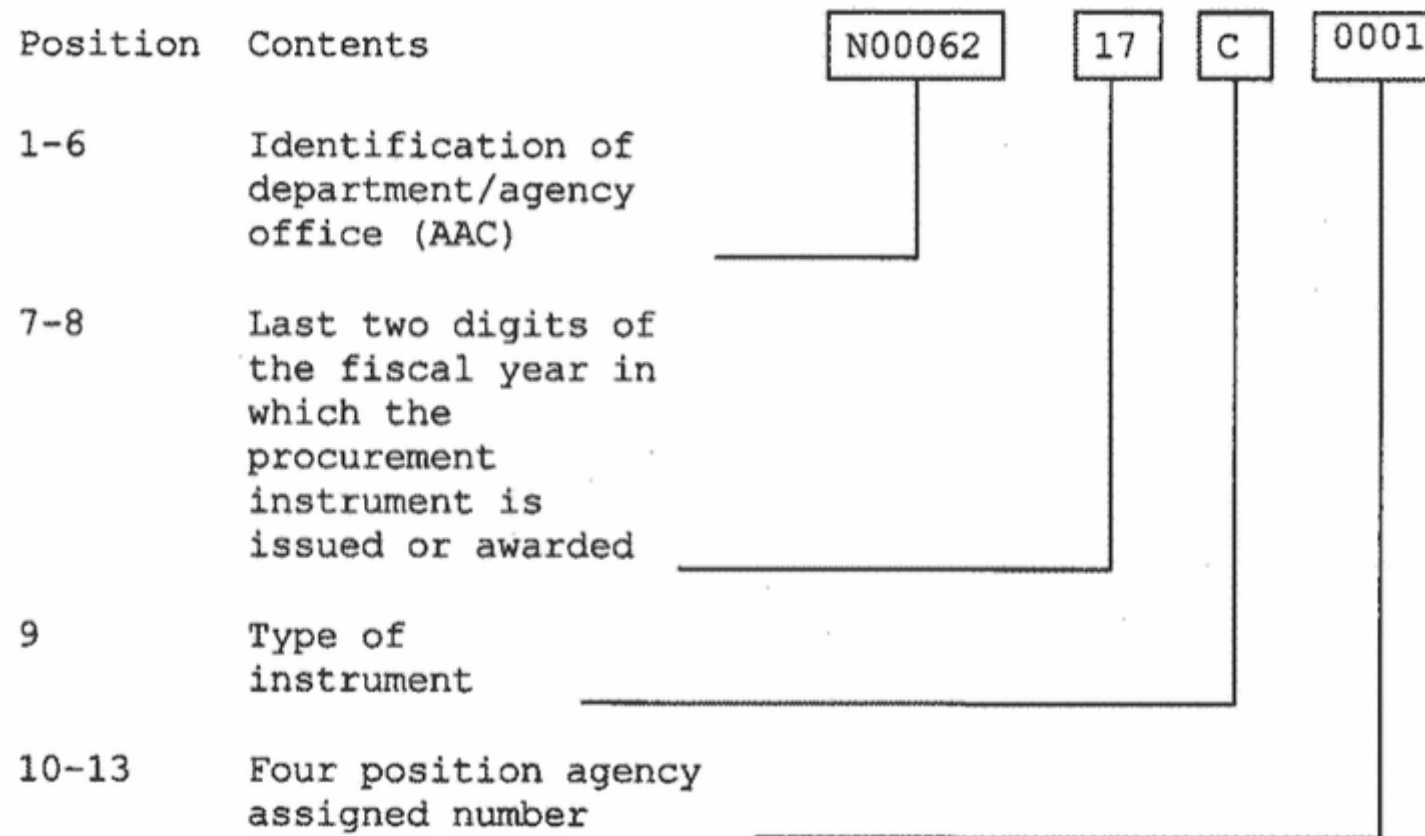
- (a) Purchases shall be made from, and contracts shall be awarded to, responsible prospective contractors only.
- (b) No purchase or award shall be made unless the contracting officer makes an affirmative determination of responsibility. In the absence of information clearly indicating that the prospective contractor is responsible, the contracting officer shall make a determination of nonresponsibility. ...

“To be determined responsible, a prospective contractor *must*-”

9.104-1 General standards.

- (a) Have adequate financial resources to perform the contract, or the ability to obtain them (see [9.104-3\(a\)](#));
- (b) Be able to comply with the required or proposed delivery or performance schedule, taking into consideration all existing commercial and governmental business commitments;
- (c) Have a satisfactory performance record (see [9.104-3 \(b\)](#) and [subpart 42.15](#)). A prospective contractor *shall* not be determined responsible or nonresponsible solely on the basis of a lack of relevant performance history, except as provided in [9.104-2](#);
- (d) Have a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics (for example, see [subpart 42.15](#));
- (e) Have the necessary organization, experience, accounting and operational controls, and technical skills, or the ability to obtain them (including, as appropriate, such elements as production control procedures, property control systems, quality assurance measures, and safety programs applicable to materials to be produced or services to be performed by the prospective contractor and subcontractors). (See [9.104-3\(a\)](#).)
- (f) Have the necessary production, *construction*, and technical equipment and facilities, or the ability to obtain them (see [9.104-3\(a\)](#)); and
- (g) Be otherwise qualified and eligible to receive an award under applicable laws and regulations (see also inverted domestic corporation prohibition at [9.108](#)).

PIID - Procurement Item Identifier



Instruments – E, J, K, M, W, X, and Z reserved for future use; I and O not used; very common R – RFP, Q – RFQ, P – Purchase Order. See 4.16 03 for full list

Examples: search term Janitorizl

- **Solicitation (RFQ)**
 - **WAF Janitorial Service Ironton Ranger District**
 - 12444326Q0040
 - UIC: 124443 Unit Identification Code / DoDAAC – DoD Automate Address Code
 - FY (funding): 26
 - Type – Q: RFQ
 - Serial: 0040
- Award notice
 - **Canyon Lakes RD- Vault Toilet Facility Cleaning**
 - Award: **1240LP26P0067** - P – Purchase Order
 - Related – RFQ: **1240LP26Q0063**

Contracting Office ID: 124443 FY: 2025

SAM DATABANK

NAICS Code	NAICS Description	Count of NAICS Code	Sum of Dollars Obligated
115310	SUPPORT ACTIVITIES FOR FORESTRY	68	\$1,552,822.56
212312	CRUSHED AND BROKEN LIMESTONE MINING AND QUARRYING	8	\$166,414.39
221320	SEWAGE TREATMENT FACILITIES	2	\$34,696.00
237310	HIGHWAY, STREET, AND BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION	2	\$52,100.00
238220	PLUMBING, HEATING, AND AIR-CONDITIONING CONTRACTORS	2	\$17,591.16
238290	OTHER BUILDING EQUIPMENT CONTRACTORS	2	\$8,456.12
238990	ALL OTHER SPECIALTY TRADE CONTRACTORS	2	\$0.00
321999	ALL OTHER MISCELLANEOUS WOOD PRODUCT MANUFACTURING	1	\$0.00
333315	PHOTOGRAPHIC AND PHOTOCOPYING EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURING	1	\$0.00
336212	TRUCK TRAILER MANUFACTURING	1	\$12,500.00
337211	WOOD OFFICE FURNITURE MANUFACTURING	1	\$0.00
424950	PAINT, VARNISH, AND SUPPLIES MERCHANT WHOLESALERS	6	\$174,544.62
531320	OFFICES OF REAL ESTATE APPRAISERS	8	\$0.00
541191	TITLE ABSTRACT AND SETTLEMENT OFFICES	1	\$0.00
541620	ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING SERVICES	5	\$30,222.07
541720	RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES	3	\$0.00
561730	LANDSCAPING SERVICES	20	\$108,261.64
561790	OTHER SERVICES TO BUILDINGS AND DWELLINGS	3	\$39,809.00
562111	SOLID WASTE COLLECTION	1	\$4,720.00
562112	HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION	3	\$35,035.00
562910	REMEDIATION SERVICES	15	\$542,625.00
562991	SEPTIC TANK AND RELATED SERVICES	7	\$111,737.50
621999	ALL OTHER MISCELLANEOUS AMBULATORY HEALTH CARE SERVICES	2	\$12,185.00
712120	HISTORICAL SITES	1	(\$315,000.00)
811310	COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT (EXCEPT AUTOMOTIVE AND ELECTRONIC) REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE	2	\$4,400.00
813312	ENVIRONMENT, CONSERVATION AND WILDLIFE ORGANIZATIONS	1	\$0.00

NAICS Selection

- Determining the appropriate NAICS codes for the solicitation.
- (1) Unless required to do otherwise by paragraph (b)(2)(ii)(B) of this section, contracting officers shall assign one NAICS code and corresponding size standard to all solicitations, contracts, and task and delivery orders. The contracting officer shall determine the appropriate NAICS code by classifying the product or service being acquired in the one industry that best describes the principal purpose of the supply or service being acquired. Primary consideration is given to the industry descriptions in the U.S. NAICS Manual, the product or service descriptions in the solicitation, the relative value and importance of the components of the requirement making up the end item being procured, and the function of the goods or services being purchased. A procurement is usually classified according to the component that accounts for the greatest percentage of contract value.

QUESTIONS?

We'd love to hear from you.



Image: MS Copilot

Contact Information

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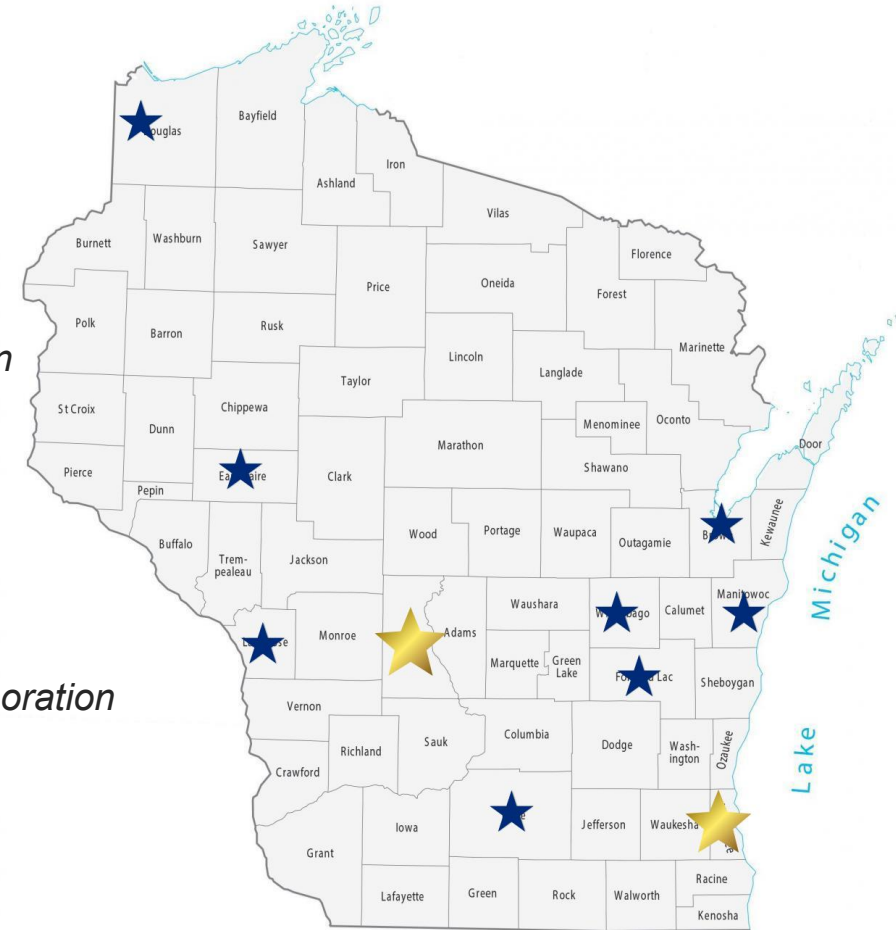
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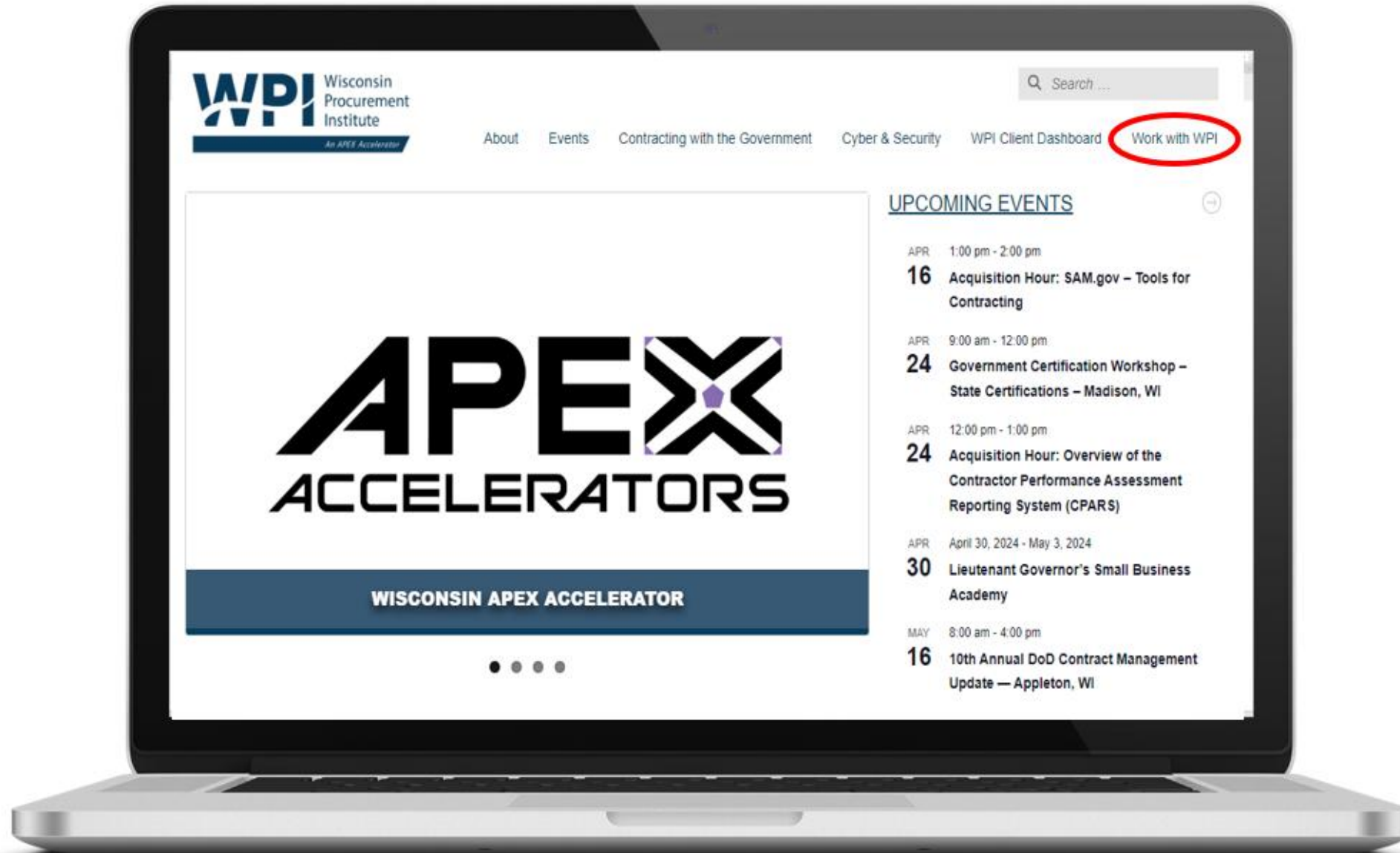
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Upcoming Events



Cyber Thursday

Cyber Friday is a series of one-hour webinars focusing on critical topics for DOD contractors and subcontractors in cyber security, data security, and CMMC. Attendees receive 1 CPE credit for attending.

- July 16 – A Guide to Strong Supporting Documentation
- August 27 – Determining Your Real CMMC Compliance Responsibilities

...More information and registrations at wispro.org/events

Acquisition Hour

The Acquisition Hour webinar series covers a range of topics from market entry, sales growth, small business certifications, compliance, and more. Attendees receive 1 CPE credit for attending.

- July 22 - Using Data to Validate and Refine Your Go/No-Go Criteria
- August 5 - AI Adoption in Federal Work: Benefits, Risks, and Realities
- August 19 - The Spend to the End: Are You Prepared for the End of the Federal Fiscal Year?

...More information and registrations at wispro.org/events

U.S. Department of Transportation National Small Business Matchmaking Series

Milwaukee, WI

July 23, 2026 @ 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

The National Small Business Matchmaking Series is a premier initiative designed to bridge the gap between local small businesses and the federal marketplace. Our mission is to empower American entrepreneurs by providing the tools and connections necessary to succeed in federal contracting.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- Direct engagement with Federal procurement officials
- Expanded access to federal contracting opportunities
- Learn how to increase your participation in USDOT procurement opportunities



...More information and registrations at wispro.org/events

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1 CPE credit**

**To receive a certificate of completion, contact
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PRESENTED BY

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