

CHAPTER 4

PROCURING PROFESSIONAL SERVICES INDEPENDENT OF CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

4.1 RELATED STATUTORY AUTHORITY

- 4.1.1 SC Code §§ 8-13-700 through 8-13-795 of the Ethics, Government Accountability and Campaign Reform Act of 1991 establishes the Rules of Conduct for public employees.
- 4.1.2 SC Code § 11-35-2910 defines architect-engineer and land surveying services.
- 4.1.3 SC Code § 11-35-3210 requires that architect-engineer, construction management agent, and land surveying services be procured as provided in § 11-35-3220 except as authorized by §§ 11-35-1560 (Sole Source), 11-35-1570 (Emergency) and 11-35-3230 (Small Professional Services Contract).
- 4.1.4 SC Code § 11-35-3215 provides for a preference for resident design services when qualifications appear to be equal. A business responding to an invitation for design services must submit a certification with its response stating whether it is a South Carolina resident. Submission of a false certification is grounds for suspension or debarment.
- 4.1.5 SC Code § 11-35-3220 outlines the qualification base selection procedures including the criteria that shall be used by the Agency Selection Committee to evaluate the interviewed firms.
- 4.1.6 SC Code § 11-35-3230(4) prohibits breaking projects into small projects for the purpose of circumventing the provisions of § 11-35-3220.
- 4.1.7 SC Code § 11-35-3245 prohibits architects or engineers who perform design work on a project under a contract awarded pursuant to § 11-35-3220 or § 11-35-3230 from also performing construction work on that project.
- 4.1.8 SC Code § 11-35-3310 allows indefinite quantity contracts to be awarded on an as-needed basis for construction related professional services pursuant to procurement procedures set forth in §§ 11-35-3220 and 11-35-3230.
- 4.1.9 SC Code § 11-35-4210 provides information to protest a solicitation or an award. See Chapter 1 for details on the protest process including lifting the stay on further action.

4.2 DEFINITIONS

4.2.1 Architect-Engineering and Land Surveying Services

Those professional services associated with the practice of architecture, engineering, land surveying, landscape architecture, and interior design pertaining to construction. Such services include incidental services that members of these professions and their employees may logically or justifiably perform, including studies, investigations, evaluations, consultations, etc.

4.2.2 Construction Manager Agent Services

Those professional services associated with contract administration, project management and other specified services provided in connection with the administration of a project delivery method. Construction Management Services does not include construction.

4.2.3 Professional Services

As used in the remainder of this Chapter and wherever referred to in the Manual, the term Professional Services means architect-engineer (A/E), construction manager agent, and land surveying services as defined in 4.2.1 & 4.2.2 above.

4.3 SMALL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACTS (FEES OF \$50,000 OR LESS)

- 4.3.1 Small professional services contracts are for professional services where the total compensation is \$50,000 or less.
- 4.3.2 This sum includes compensation for both basic services and additional services as defined in the professional agreement. This sum does not include payments for reimbursable expenses.
- 4.3.3 The Agency may award contracts by direct negotiation and selection taking into account the following criteria:
 - A. The nature of the project.
 - B. The proximity of the firm to the project.
 - C. The capability of the firm to produce the required services within a reasonable time.
 - D. Past performance; and
 - E. Demonstrated ability to meet time and budget requirements.

- 4.3.4 Subject to the foregoing considerations, the Agency may enter into contract negotiations with the selected firm. However, the total value of fees paid to a single firm may not exceed \$150,000, excluding reimbursable expenses, for all small professional contracts awarded by the Agency to the firm in a 24-month period.
- 4.3.5 In awarding a small professional services contract, the Agency should request a firm to submit a proposal letter along with one of the following contracts:
- A. Small Professional Services Contract (SE-240)-This contract is used when the project involves construction; or
 - B. Professional Incidental Services Contract (SE-235)-This contract is used for studies, master plans, reports, or any services that do not involve construction directly.
- After executing the professional agreement, the Agency must submit a copy to OSE for information purposes using the Transmittal of Small Professional Service Contract (SE-230).
- 4.3.6 Splitting of Larger Projects Prohibited. Agencies may not break a project into small projects for the purpose of circumventing the provisions of SC Code Section 11-35-3220 and 11-35-3230.
- 4.3.7 When negotiating a Small Professional Services Contract, agencies may only negotiate with one firm at a time. Any unsuccessful negotiations must be concluded in writing before starting negotiations with another firm. Once negotiations with a firm have been concluded, negotiations may not be reopened.

4.4 LARGE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACTS

4.4.1 Selection Committee

- A. To procure professional services that cannot be established as a Small Professional Services Contract, the Agency must establish a Selection Committee (Committee). The Committee must be composed of those individuals the Agency Head determines to be qualified to make an informed decision as to the most competent and qualified firm for the proposed project. The Committee shall consist of no less than three (3) voting members. The voting members of the Committee shall be state employees or considered to be state employees. For the purpose of meeting this requirement, members of Agency Boards acting in their official capacity are considered state employees.
- B. The Committee can be comprised of voting and non-voting members. Potential members may include:
 1. End user of the project (Dean, Director, etc.),
 2. Director of Agency engineering/planning and or
 3. Director of Agency physical plant.
- C. The Agency Head or their designee sits as a permanent member of the Committee for the purpose of coordinating and accounting for the Committee's work.
- D. The Agency may invite the OSE Project Manager to sit on the Committee as a non-voting member to assist the Committee as needed.
- E. Committee members are subject to the Ethics, Government Accountability and Campaign Reform Act of 1991. Committee members should become familiar with the requirements of this act and avoid any conflict of interest.
 1. The Committee Chair (Chair) must require each member to sign the Professional Services Selection Committee - Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Policy (SE-214) stating that they have read and understand those standards of conduct and that they do not have an actual or apparent conflict of interest relating to the proposed acquisition. Other persons involved in the process must also sign an SE-214. For example, the Agency Head is not a member of the Committee but has final say over the Committee's decision, so they must sign an SE-214. The same is true for members of a Board of Trustees and administrative associates who assist in document preparation and handling.
 2. If a Committee Member has an actual or apparent conflict of interest related to a proposal under evaluation, the Chair must remove that member and, if a sufficient number of voting members do not remain, request the Agency Head to replace them with another.
 3. If a Committee Member has a current or past relationship with an Offeror but does not believe the relationship creates a conflict of interest or is not sure, the member must notify the Chair of the relationship for a determination as to whether an actual conflict of interest exists.
- F. The Committee must comply with the Freedom of Information Act; however, Committee members must not disclose confidential information derived from proposals and negotiations submitted by competing Offerors during the selection process. There is a summary of the requirements of this act in Chapter 1.

4.4.2 Selection Committee Duties

In summary, the duties of the Selection Committee are to:

- A. Develop the description of the proposed project.
- B. Determine the professional services required for the project.

- C. Prepare the formal invitation for professional services.
- D. Determine the ranking range for each of the evaluation criteria.
- E. Evaluate all timely responses and determine the list of firms to be interviewed; and
- F. Attend all interviews, evaluate the qualifications of each firm, and determine the ranking of the firms interviewed.

4.4.3 Invitation for Professional Services

- A. The Committee must prepare the Invitation for Professional Services (SE-210).
- B. At a minimum, the Invitation must include the project name, the general scope of work, a description of all professional services required for the project, the anticipated project delivery method, the submission deadline, and how interested firms may apply for consideration.
- C. If the Agency intends to use an Alternate Delivery Method, they must have approval from the State Engineer before advertising for professional services.
- D. The date for submission of information from interested firms in response to the invitation must not be less than fifteen (15) days after publication of the invitation.
- E. The Invitation should also notify all interested firms that their response must include a certification stating whether the business is a resident of South Carolina.
- F. Once the Agency is ready to advertise, it must submit the completed SE-210 to OSE for review and approval.
- G. Upon approval, OSE will submit the SE-210 to South Carolina Business Opportunities (SCBO) for advertisement. The Agency may advertise elsewhere but must advertise in SCBO.

4.4.4 Short-Listing Professionals for Interviews

- A. Upon receiving submittals in response to the SE-210, the Agency shall review them for completeness. Each submittal shall include the following information:
 - 1. Federal Standard Form 330.
 - 2. Certification stating whether the business is or is not a South Carolina resident.
 - 3. Information responsive to the selection criteria; and
 - 4. Any other information that the invitation required.
- B. Participation in a report or study for a project does not disqualify a firm from submitting for the project, unless the creation of the report or study provides the firm with a substantial competitive advantage. The Agency should provide a copy of the report or study to all shortlisted firms in preparation for interviews.
- C. In the event of an incomplete submittal, the Agency may contact the firm to obtain the required information provided the submittal due date has not passed. Firms must submit any such supplemental information before the submittal due date. The Agency may disqualify any firm that fails to supply required information before the due date from further consideration for non-responsiveness.
- D. The Committee must evaluate all submittals in accordance with the criteria listed in Section 4.4.5.E prior to conducting any interviews.
- E. When the Committee finds two firms to be equally qualified, and one is a non-resident, the Committee must rank the resident higher than the non-resident.
- F. After evaluating the submittals, the Committee shall create a short-list of firms considered most qualified for the Committee to interview.
- G. The Committee shall select a minimum of three firms for interviews.
 - 1. If fewer than three firms responded to the Invitation, the Committee should interview each firm.
 - 2. If only one submittal is received, the Committee should evaluate the firm's qualifications. The Committee may or may not conduct an interview.
 - 3. If no submittals are received, the Agency must close the procurement as follows:
 - a. Submit a Request for Concurrence in Posting Notice of Intent to Award Professional Services Contract (SE-220) to OSE with "No Submittals Received" shown as the Firm Name.
 - b. After OSE approval of the SE-220, post the Notice of Intent to Award Professional Services Contract (SE-221) with "No Submittals Received" shown as the Name of Firm Selected.
- H. The Committee must prepare a written report supporting its determination as to which firms it chose to interview using the Selection Committee Report for Interview Selection (SE-211).
- I. The Agency must post the Notification of Selection for Interview (SE-212) at the location shown in the Invitation and send the SE-212 electronically to all firms that responded to the Invitation and OSE (along with the SE-211) the same day it is posted.

4.4.5 Interviewing and Evaluating Short Listed Professionals

- A. No later than ten (10) business days before the interview date, the Committee shall send written notice of the date and location for interviews to the short-listed firms.
- B. All interviews should occur on the same day.
- C. If the Committee will be interviewing the firms in various locations, the Chair should make sure that each location is similarly equipped and furnished.
- D. Each voting member of the Committee must be present for each interview. Only members of the Committee may be present during interviews and interviews should be held in “executive session”.
- E. During the interviews, the Committee must evaluate the firms on the following criteria:
 - 1. Past performance.
 - 2. Ability of professional personnel.
 - 3. Demonstrated ability to meet time and budget requirements.
 - 4. Proximity to and knowledge of the locality of the project (application of this criterion must leave an appropriate number of qualified firms, given the nature and size of the project).
 - 5. Recent, current, and projected workloads of the firm.
 - 6. Creativity and insight related to the project.
 - 7. Related experience on similar projects.
 - 8. Volume of work awarded by the using Agency to the firm during the previous five (5) years - objective is to equitably distribute contracts among qualified firms including certified Minority Business Enterprises and firms that have not had previous state work; and
NOTE: Firms awarded more work in the last five (5) years must be scored lower than those who have been awarded less.
 - 9. Other special qualifications required by the solicitation.
- F. The Committee must not discuss fees and compensation with the firms during the interviews.
- G. After the close of all interviews, each voting member must complete an evaluation of the interviewed firms using the Professional Services Selection Committee Member A/E Evaluation (SE-215). If the sum of the scores by a voting member produces a tie between two or more firms, the voting member must re-evaluate their rankings to break the ties prior to submitting the SE-215 to the Chair.
- H. After each voting member has completed and submitted their SE-215 to the Chair, the Chair must verify the individual scoring and compile the rankings into a Committee ranking using the Professional Services Selection Committee Summary (SE-217).
- I. If the Selection Committee Summary compilation of rankings results in more than one firm receiving the same ranking, the Chair shall compare the sums of the raw scores for these firms from the SE-215s of all voting members. The firm with the highest raw score total shall be ranked above the other(s). If there is a tie in the raw score totals, it shall be broken by Committee consensus of which firm is most qualified.

4.4.6 Final Determination and Notification of Selection

- A. The Committee’s decision on the ranking of each firm is final, subject only to the Agency’s internal approval process. Once the Agency determines its ranking report is final, the Agency must prepare a Notification of Selection for Professional Services Contract (SE-219), listing the highest ranked firm.
- B. The Agency will send the SE-219 electronically to all firms that responded to the Invitation.
- C. The Agency will send the SE-219 to OSE (along with a copy of the SE-214s, SE-215s and SE-217).
- D. The Agency must support the selection of a non-resident with a written determination explaining why they selected that firm.

4.4.7 Negotiating Professional Services Contracts

- A. The Agency must negotiate with the firm having the highest ranking.
- B. If the Agency is unable to negotiate an acceptable contract with that firm, the Agency must terminate those negotiations formally and negotiate with the second highest ranked firm. See Section 4.4.8 for terminating negotiations and negotiating with another firm.

- C. Successful contract negotiations require an exchange of information. The Agency should provide the firm with the Agency's budgetary goals for the project, master plans, program data, Agency standards, and all available technical information about the project work area. This will enable the firm to estimate the design effort required for the project. Examples of technical information the Agency should provide, if available, include:
 - 1. Program (unless it is to be developed by the Professional).
 - 2. Site boundary and/or topography surveys.
 - 3. Testing and surveys for hazardous material.
 - 4. Sub-surface investigations.
 - 5. Material testing, etc.
- D. The Agency should obtain a description of the services the firm proposes to provide and determine if the proposed scope of services is adequate or excessive.
- E. The Agency should also become familiar with the standard Professional Services contracts: SCOSE versions of the AIA Document B101, B133, B132 and the OSE forms SE-235 and SE-240. During the review of the standard contract, the Agency should ask and answer any number of questions. Examples are:
 - 1. Are the insurance limits adequate to cover the potential risk on this project and if not, are we willing to bear the risk?
 - 2. If we want increased insurance limits, are we willing to pay the additional cost? (Check with the firm to see what their insurance limits are. They may already be greater than the limits stated in the contract.)
 - 3. What deliverables do we want?
 - 4. Do we have critical delivery dates for some or all of the deliverables and if so, what are they?
 - 5. Do we want digital drawings and if so what format and media?
- F. After exchanging information and agreeing on changes to the standard contract, prior to submittal to OSE for approval, the Agency is in a position to consider what would be a fair and reasonable fee for the firm's services. The OSE Project Manager should be consulted on any proposed changes to the standard contract.
- G. In addition to negotiating the Basic Services Fee, the Agency should negotiate any required Supplemental and/or Additional Services (those not covered by the scope of the Basic Services fee) and the reimbursable expenses.

4.4.8 Unsuccessful Negotiations

- A. If the Agency is unable to negotiate a contract with the highest ranked firm, the Agency may terminate negotiations.
- B. The Agency must provide the highest ranked firm with written notice of the termination of negotiations.
- C. Upon providing written notice of termination to the highest ranked firm, the Agency must prepare a new SE-219 indicating the intent to negotiate with the firm receiving the next highest ranking. The new Notice must be provided to all firms responding to the invitation, and a copy sent to OSE.
- D. The Agency may attempt to negotiate with the new firm.
- E. If the Agency is unable to negotiate with this firm, the Agency may continue the process in the same manner until the Agency is able to negotiate a contract. At no time, should negotiations include more than one firm.

4.4.9 Successful Negotiations Submittal to OSE

- A. Following successful negotiations, the Agency must submit a Request for Concurrence in Posting Notice of Intent to Award Professional Services Contract (SE-220), along with the proposed contract, to OSE for approval.
- B. If the project is a PIP, the Agency needs to have an approved Form A-1 before submitting the SE-220 to OSE.
- C. The Agency may not execute the contract or post the Notice of Intent to Award until OSE has approved the SE-220.
- D. OSE has ten (10) days to review, approve the SE-220, and return an approved copy to the Agency.
- E. If OSE does not approve the SE-220, the State Engineer will give written notification to the Agency declaring his intention to contest the proposed contract and the reasons why. The State Fiscal Accountability Authority (SFAA) will hear any such contest at its next regularly scheduled meeting after notification of the Agency. SFAA will notify the Agency in writing of its decision.

4.4.10 Posting Notice of Intent to Award

- A. After the Agency receives the approved SE-220 from OSE, they must post the Notice of Intent to Award Professional Services Contract (SE-221) and send it electronically to all firms that responded to the Invitation and OSE the same day it is posted. Refer to Chapter 1 for protest rights associated with this posting.
- B. If no protests are received within the time noted on the SE-221, the Agency may sign the contract and proceed with the project.

4.4.11 No Contract to be Awarded

- A. If the Committee determines that none of the firms that submitted are qualified to perform the work of the project, or the Committee determines that none of the firms interviewed are qualified to perform the work, the Agency must close the procurement as follows:
 1. Complete the SE-219 with “No Contract to be Awarded” shown as the Name of Firm Selected and indicate the reason under “Remarks”. Send the SE-219 to all firms that responded to the Invitation and to OSE as noted in Section 4.4.6.
 2. Submit an SE-220 to OSE with “No Contract to be Awarded” shown as the Firm Name and indicate the reason under “Remarks”. Attach the SE-211 and, if applicable, the SE-212 to the SE-220.
 3. After OSE approval of the SE-220, post the SE-221 with “No Contract to be Awarded” shown as the Name of Firm Selected and indicate the reason under “Remarks”. Send the SE-221 to all firms that responded to the Invitation and to OSE the same day it is posted.
- B. If the Agency decides, for other reasons, not to award a contract, they will follow the same procedure listed above indicating the reason under “Remarks.”

4.5 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES INDEFINITE QUANTITY CONTRACTS (IDQs)

- 4.5.1 A Professional Services Indefinite Quantity Contract (IDQ) is a contract whereby the professional agrees to provide the Agency professional services on an “as-needed” basis during the term of the contract.
- 4.5.2 Agencies procure Professional Services IDQs in the same manner as any professional service contract as set forth in this chapter. However, they do not have to obtain OSE approval of the individual delivery orders to the contract.
- 4.5.3 Chapter 9 provides guidance on procuring IDQs.
- 4.5.4 The SE-600 series forms shall be used for IDQ professional services contracts.

4.6 PROCEDURES FOR AMENDING PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACTS

- 4.6.1 The Agency should negotiate fees for changes in the scope of work using good procurement practices and in keeping with the terms of the contract.
- 4.6.2 Small Professional Services contracts:
After executing the amendment, the Agency must submit a copy to OSE for information purposes using the Transmittal of Amendment to Small Professional Services Contract (SE-232) along with Amendment Request Summary – Small Contract (SE-232, Page 2).
- 4.6.3 Large Professional Services contracts that exceed the Agency’s A/E Contract Amendment certification:
Prior to authorizing the work, the Agency must submit a completed Amendment to Professional Services Contract (SE-260) along with Amendment Request Summary (SE-260, Page 2) to OSE for approval.
- 4.6.4 Large Professional Services contracts within the Agency’s A/E Contract Amendment certification:
After executing the amendment, the Agency must submit a copy to OSE for information purposes using the SE-260, Pages 1 & 2, indicating that the change is within Agency A/E Contract Amendment Certification.

4.7 SOLE SOURCE AND EMERGENCY SELECTION OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

The Agency must make all Sole Source and Emergency procurements in accordance with Chapter 8. Prior OSE approval of such procurements is not required.

4.8 PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE

- 4.8.1 All design professionals working for the State should carry professional liability insurance.
- 4.8.2 The SCOSE AIA Document B101, B132, B133 and the OSE forms SE-235 and SE-240 set forth a recommended minimum amount of insurance. These amounts take into account the State’s limited liability under Sovereign Immunity.
- 4.8.3 The Agency should evaluate their risks associated with each project and the potential consequences and adjust the amounts accordingly.

4.9 DESIGN PROFESSIONAL ERRORS AND OMISSIONS

- 4.9.1 The Agency should notify the Design Professional whenever the Agency believes the Design Professional’s work product contains errors or omissions. The A/E must correct any error or omission without cost to the Agency.

- 4.9.2 When the Design Professional's error or omission results in costs to the Agency over those the Agency would have paid had the error or omission not occurred, the Design Professional is responsible for such additional cost. For purposes of determining costs, each error or omission constitutes a separate event.
- 4.9.3 If some or all of the increased costs due to an error are owed to a third party, such as a Contractor, the Design Professional may elect to negotiate directly with the Contractor and pay the Contractor directly.
- 4.9.4 All work added due to an omission must be negotiated through the Agency to be sure the additional work is included in the construction contract by change order.