CSAW Intake Process

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the minimum requirement threshold for a CSAW?

CSAWs are usually best suited for acquisition requirements that are generally services-based, with a total estimated lifecycle value greater than or equal to $50 million. Requirements may also qualify if they are significantly complex or mission-critical.

What is the recommended lead time for a project under CSAW?

We prefer teams to reach out 12 to18 months prior to the desired award date. That said, we've worked with teams on shorter lead times, but we may modify our approach to provide the most effective experience for the acquisition team.

How many people should attend?

We ask that all key team members participate in every facilitated session. This typically includes, at a minimum, the Program/Project Manager, Procuring Contracting Officer, Contracting Officer's Representative(s), requirements owners, subject matter experts. It may include legal, budget, or other functions depending on the requirement.

NOTE: It is better to identify more people up front and have them excuse themselves if they don't need to be there than attempting to bring in people who aren't there and should be.

What platform is the 4-day workshop conducted, i.e., virtual or in-person. If the latter, where/when?

CSAW is offered either in-person or virtually. We have successfully facilitated virtual workshops since 2020.

We are open to doing in-person if it makes sense for both the acquisition team and the facilitation team, and with appropriate levels of leadership approval. If in-person, we will work with the requesting team to identify the appropriate space to support the facilitated session.

What are the IT requirements for a virtual workshop?

Virtual CSAW workshops are conducted via Zoom, using tools such as breakout rooms, whiteboards, and polls. If possible, it is recommended to download the Zoom application prior to the workshop. Participants should plan to be on video and actively engaged throughout the workshop.

Teams are also encouraged to set up shared folders (MS Team, Sharepoint, Google Drive) where everyone can access working documents and upload content from the workshop.

After the initial contact and application by the agency, how long does it take to start the process?

We recommend reaching out as early as possible. Once we receive the [intake form](), we will reach out to schedule an intake call with the PM, CO, and Sponsor(s) and other critical stakeholders within a few days.

Our ability to schedule a workshop depends on demand. Sometimes we are able to schedule a workshop within 30 days, but that is not guaranteed.

Who is part of the Integrated Procurement Team (IPT)?

The IPT is comprised of the both the Program and Contracting Offices and other functions and roles as needed (such as Legal or Finance)

- *Program Team*: Program/Project Manager, supporting PM(s), COR, and key SMEs. If there are significantly unique scope areas, leads from those areas are included. The Program Team focuses on requirements owners, those requesting or directly benefiting from contractor performance. This may include project managers, CORs, customers/tenants, SMEs, and stakeholders. This team is primarily responsible for gathering and documenting requirements.

- *Contracting Team*: Supervisory CO, CO, and CSs. This team is primarily responsible for supporting the acquisition and developing acquisition documentation.

Does the agency select the Program Manager for the workshop or GSA?

We expect the agency to have identified a Program/Project Manager for the requirement, but if there are questions around who it should be, we would be willing to work with your office to determine the best fit.

Who are the Project Sponsors?

Project sponsors are individuals who are supporting or sponsoring the requirement, such as a senior leader or director. For example, it could be a Center Director on the Program side and/or a Head of Contracting Activity on the contracting side, or both.

Sponsors do not always attend the CSAW. Often, participants present their work to sponsors at the conclusion of the workshop. But sponsors are welcome to attend.

Will there be subject matter experts in the workshop to assist with IT requirements, as needed?

About half of the requirements we've supported have been services acquisitions in the IT space. This includes requirements that involve Commercial Off the Shelf (COTS) products or Software as a Service (SaaS's), but the preponderance of work must be ***services***.

We have facilitators with ScrumMaster (CSM) and Scrum Product Owner (CSPO) certifications, along with Agile development experience. If additional expertise is needed, we can help identify subject matter experts (SMEs) within your agency or others who may serve as coaches.

What are the tangible documents that can be used to finalize solicitation at the end of the workshop?

The workshop is a starting point that helps teams focus requirements on outcomes rather than processes.

We provide tools for developing requirements, standards, AQLs, and surveillance methods. Most teams also reach consensus on Vision, Mission, and High-Level Objectives, which is often overlooked but highly valuable.

Workshops are customized to team needs and may include:

- Market Research
- Stakeholder Management
- Risk Management
- Evaluation Factors
- Source Selection Innovations
- Incentive Strategies
- Integrated Procurement Team (IPT) roles and responsibilities
- Developing a Project Charter
- Overview of Agile Development
- Understanding Category Management

And always include:

- Understanding Performance-Based Acquisition
- Analyzing the Current State
- Reaching Consensus on Vision & Mission
- Setting High Level Objectives
- Writing Effective Performance-Based Requirements
- Determining Acceptable Performance Levels
- Strategies for Monitoring Performance

The most tangible document that the team will walk away with is a Requirements Roadmap Worksheet (*you can find a sample document [here](#) and practical spreadsheet [here](#)*). This supports the development of the performance work statement (PWS) and solicitation package. The workshop is not intended to produce a finished PWS by the end of four days. But teams always walk away with clarity on what they have left to do.

Is the facilitator for the workshop an FTE or Contractor?

Our facilitators are Federal Employees and have been certified or are pursuing certification as CSAW Facilitator / CSAW Co-Facilitator. All facilitation team members sign an NDA and provide that to the agency CO/KO.

What is the cost of a CSAW?

There is currently no cost for the CSAW workshop itself. For in-person workshops, we do ask the sponsoring agency to provide workshop supplies (ex. Sticky notes, flip charts, etc.) and will provide a list to the agency point of contact (POC). Participant travel expenses are the responsibility of the participant's agency.

Can the CSAW team support us after the workshop?

Yes. Following the workshop, the CSAW team offers some additional coaching and facilitation. The acquisition team will need to reach back out to csaw@gsa.gov and request the additional support, and the CSAW Program will work to provide support within their capacity and the team's timeline.

Are CSAWs only for new contracts?

Most of the workshops to-date have been for re-competes, but these workshops are great for new requirements or even major task/call orders against existing contracts/blanket purchase agreements (BPAs).

Is there an agenda?

Each workshop is tailored to the team. A standard CSAW agenda typically includes:

DAY 1:

- Getting Started
- Introduction to PBA and Category Management
- Requirement Background & Current State Analysis
- Setting Vision & Mission
- Identifying Task Areas

DAY 2:

- Building High Level Objectives
- Begin Discussion of Acquisition Strategy
- Determining Market Research Needs
- Overview of Market Research Tools & Techniques
- Introduction to Writing Effective Requirements

DAY 3 & 4:

- Writing Requirements Using the ARC Method
- Introduction to Performance Standards
- Determining Acceptable Quality Levels (AQLs)
- Understanding the Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan (QASP) and effective monitoring
- Source Selection Evaluation & InnovationsReview & Close

For specialized facilitation engagements, or Facilitation as a Service (FaaS), we will work with your agency sponsor(s) to determine the purpose of the session, the specific outcomes you'd like the team to achieve, and the participants to be involved. Once our Center understands these factors, our facilitators will build a structured facilitation process and agenda.

Is there any preparation or pre-reading our team should complete to make the best use of our time together?

Teammates should be familiar with the goals of the acquisition and familiar with its requirements. In general, the workshop is designed to maximize your time without requiring pre-work. It doesn't hurt to check out our video playlist on [YouTube](#) though.

Are CLPs given for attendance to a CSAW?

Yes. Participants attending at least 95% of the facilitated workshop receive 32 Continuing Learning Points (CLPs) for a four day workshop (or else 8 CLPs per day for shorter engagements).

Important: Participants must have an active DAU or FAI CSOD account in order to receive CLPs. CLPs are awarded automatically in FAI CSOD. Please allow 4-6 business weeks for processing. For questions, email pshctraining@gsa.gov.