



## **2026 Achievement of Excellence in Procurement® Award Application**

***Application Deadline: Friday, May 15, 2026 by 5:00pm CST***

### **Part I: Application Instructions**

**ONLY ONLINE APPLICATIONS ARE ACCEPTED. APPLICATIONS MUST BE ENTERED THROUGH THE AEP APPLICATION PORTAL ON OR AFTER JANUARY 1 AND NO LATER THAN 5:00PM CST ON MAY 15, 2026. THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS APPLICATION IS INTENDED TO SUPPLEMENT THE ONLINE APPLICATION PROCESS. IF THERE ARE ANY DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN THIS DOCUMENT AND THE ONLINE APPLICATION, THE ONLINE APPLICATION WILL PREVAIL.**

The Achievement of Excellence in Procurement® Evaluation Team is responsible for the evaluation of the applications. The applicant will be advised of the results by mid-August 2026 and will be provided access to the official scorecard. Please share the scorecard with your procurement team to identify areas for improvement in future applications. The decision of the Achievement of Excellence in Procurement® Officer is final. By applying, you are giving permission for NPI to use the submitted documents to promote the program and the public procurement profession.

Additional information about the AEP program is available at [www.npi-aep.org](http://www.npi-aep.org). Questions concerning the Achievement of Excellence in Procurement® Program should be addressed to:

Carrie Mathes, MPA, FNIGP, CFCM, NIGP-CPP, CPPO, C.P.M., CPPB, APP, FCCM, Achievement of Excellence in Procurement Officer, at [aep@npiconnection.org](mailto:aep@npiconnection.org).

# The Achievement of Excellence in Procurement® Program Partners

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The 31st annual Achievement of Excellence in Procurement® award recipients will be recognized at the National Procurement Institute's Annual Conference. The National Procurement Institute also provides the list of recipients to Sponsor organizations for recognition at their conference.

Your trophy will be shipped directly to your agency (physical address only, no PO box) to the person listed as "Procurement Official".

## Part II: Submittal Instructions

Payment of the non-refundable application fee must be made electronically by credit card or procurement card when the application is submitted. Payment may be made in advance by check by contacting [executivedirector@npiconnection.org](mailto:executivedirector@npiconnection.org). The application fee is \$495 for NPI members and \$695 for non-members. Membership in NPI costs only \$130. Visit [www.npi-aep.org/membership](http://www.npi-aep.org/membership) for details.

**Registering:** Each agency will register on the new platform with an e-mail address and unique password. If you have an existing login on the NPI website, we recommend that you use your existing login. If you have multiple individuals who work on the application throughout the year, the registered applicant will have the ability to assign additional logins.

**Log-in:** You can log-in as often as you like to review uploaded information until the time you make your final submission.

**Tabs:** The tabs at the top will navigate you through the program.

Please note that once you make your submission final the application is locked and cannot be accessed.

### DIRECTIONS FOR UPLOADING FILES TO THE APPLICATION:

- Create a **single PDF file** with a unique file name for each criteria. Upload only one file for each criteria. ***If you are not applying for points for a particular criteria, do not upload any documentation for that criteria.***
- Ensure the submitted screen shots are clear, concise and easy to read.
- Ensure the documents are all facing the same direction and oriented for reading.
- File size is limited to 20 MB; however, it is recommended that files be minimized.

## Part III: Criteria

To receive the Achievement of Excellence in Procurement® award, the applicant must successfully demonstrate a total of at least 100 points. **It is critical to check the submittal requirements as they may change annually.** Date parameters have been updated and all documentation requiring dates must fall within the established parameters to receive points.

The point value of each criteria is either 5 or 10. All criteria are pass/fail. That is, you receive all the points allocated per criteria (i.e., 5 or 10) or none. If the evaluation team determines that the total points add up to at least 100, the application is successful. It is recommended that you determine the chances of success by completing the Self-Scoring worksheet (attached) before submitting the application. Once you make your submission final, the application is locked and cannot be accessed. You will be able to make changes and add or delete files up until final submission.

Submitting false information will result in disqualification of the application and may disqualify an agency from submitting future applications.

Narratives and/or annotations are required on each of the criteria to clearly explain and demonstrate to the evaluation team what is being submitted. The application should be professional, clear and concise. If the examples/screenshots provided are not legible or if the narrative and annotation information is not provided or is unclear, points will not be given. Model submittals per criteria are available to NPI members on the website after you log in, in the AEP Award dropdown links.

*Documents (policies, procedures) should have effective dates on their cover page or footers or should be accompanied by evidence of adoption (such as council minutes).*

Some criteria will reference providing a link or a screenshot. *Screen shot(s) should be dated to validate they meet the date requirement.* For these criteria, you may provide a link in your pdf document in lieu of actual screenshots. Make sure to test the link prior to submitting. Links must be public facing (not on an internal network) to allow the evaluation team to access. Links pointing at the incorrect documentation or links that do not work will not receive points for that criteria. If the link points to a multi-page document, reference the correct page number(s) in the narrative.

*Changes to the requirements for 2026 are italicized.*

## 1. Establishment of a “Procurement Ethics” policy (5 pts)

Procurement Ethics policy must be issued by the Chief Procurement Official at a minimum, and specifically address procurement ethics. A procurement ethics policy embedded in a procurement manual **is** acceptable but the policy or the manual must be posted publicly online to receive points.

There must be evidence that this policy was adopted by the Chief Procurement Official of the agency at a minimum, not just posted, to receive points for this criteria. Inclusion of the policy in the agency’s official procurement manual satisfies this requirement.

Membership in a procurement association, which has an ethics policy, **is not** in and of itself an acceptable documentation of an ethics policy, unless the agency adopts said policy as its own.

- **Submit:** Narrative statement explaining where the policy is published or can be found. The policy must be publicly available online to satisfy this criteria. Provide a link to or a screenshot of the online posting; and
- **Submit:** A copy of or link to the procurement ethics policy and evidence of its establishment as official procurement policy by your agency.

## 2. Publishes an electronic procurement manual or guide for internal use (5 pts)

Manual must be comprehensive, addressing multiple procurement activities and not limited to specific issues (e.g., P-Card or M/WBE program). Manual or guide must be electronically posted on a shared drive, the internet or agency intranet and must have been updated in the last 5 years.

- **Submit:** Provide a link to or a screenshot of the web pages or shared drive information that electronically posts your procurement manual for use by internal customers. Please explain through narrative and annotation how your internal customers access this information. Demonstrate that the manual is comprehensive and provide the date of the most recent revision; and
- **Submit:** The cover page and index of the procurement manual or screen shots of the electronic contents. Please **do not** submit the entire manual; but only those pages that substantiate the contents. Submission must include date substantiating the manual was updated after *January 1, 2021*.

## 3. Established a procurement staff “professional development” program (10 pts)

The intent of this criteria is to recognize agencies that have a planned and deliberate approach to continuing education. There must be an established, clearly defined continuous, formal professional development program in place to receive points.

Training shall be on procurement issues. Participation in professional association sponsored seminars and webinars, internal and external procurement related training are all acceptable. Client/customer (i.e., user) training programs do not satisfy the criteria. The program must include all full-time professional procurement staff. Professional staff are defined as those staff involved in the traditional procurement/contracting functions, e.g., buyer, contract officer, procurement agent, specifications writer, contract administrator, purchasing manager, etc.

Dedicated funding for professional development is considered optimal; however, webinars and other free or low-cost training are encouraged to meet this criteria for agencies with limited budgets.

Attending an occasional webinar, conference or class does not on its own constitute a formal program.

Submissions must demonstrate:

- a) The agency has a formal professional development program that is supported, and;
  - b) There is a planned and deliberate approach to professional development and continuing education.
- **Submit:** Narrative explaining the professional development program established for training professional procurement staff members. Narrative must demonstrate a planned and deliberate approach to continuing education; and
  - **Submit** three separate lists to support the training program:
    - A list of all full-time professional procurement staff members. *Any professional staff who were hired or left employment during the timeframes prescribed below should be listed with a clear delineation of when they were hired or departed your agency.*
    - A training list by staff member name delineating the training received *for the period of January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025. Training list should be inclusive of all professional staff employed during the timeframe prescribed.*
    - A training list by staff member name for planned training in 2026. *Training list should be inclusive of all professional staff employed during the timeframe prescribed.*

Each record in the training lists must begin with the name of the staff member, a description of the training, and the date of the training for each training event. Each professional staff member must have at least one training listed in both lists.

For conferences and webinars, the description must include a title(s) or specific sessions substantiating that training was procurement related.

#### 4. Maintains a “continuous improvement” program comprised of the following:

##### a. Formal survey of procurement performance, completed by internal (department) customers (5 pts)

The intent of this criteria is to solicit feedback on the operations of the procurement function. Survey results should be used to develop processes or procedural improvements in procurement. The survey may cover a specific time period and shall be completed by internal customers on multiple procurement topics. *A generic “how are we doing” link in an email signature does not satisfy the criteria.*

A survey of a presentation made to customer departments is not acceptable. A general agency survey does not qualify unless there is a specific section designated to procurement that covers multiple procurement issues.

**A link to a generic survey sent out after a completed procurement is not acceptable. The survey needs to be a specific, formal survey directly related to procurement operations.**

- **Submit:** A narrative explaining the purpose of the survey, how (e.g., e-mail) and when (date) the survey was distributed, who it was sent to, how many individuals received it, and the number of responses received; and
- **Submit:** A summary tabulation of the results that substantiates the survey was conducted on or after *January 1, 2024*; and

- **Submit:** A list of suggested process improvements related to the survey results. For example, internal department states that it takes too long to process PO's. What is your plan to address these concerns and improve future survey results? Be specific in your response.

**b. Formal survey of procurement customer service, completed by external customers (vendors/contractors) (5 pts)**

Survey of external customers (vendors/contractors) needs to be on multiple procurement issues. Some examples of topics are efficient bid procedures, customer service, equity, website, etc.

A link to a generic survey sent out after a completed procurement is not acceptable. The survey needs to be a specific, formal survey directly related to procurement operations.

To demonstrate this survey is comprehensive, the agency must demonstrate that the survey was distributed to at least 25 current vendors/contractors.

- **Submit:** A narrative explaining how (e.g., email) and when (date) the survey was distributed and the number of responses to the survey is required. If your agency can quantify the number of vendors/contractors that received the survey, please include this information. The agency must demonstrate that at least 25 vendors/contractors were sent the survey;
- **Submit:** A summary tabulation of the results that substantiates the survey was conducted on or after *January 1, 2024*; and
- **Submit:** A list of suggested process improvements related to the survey results. For example, what changes will be implemented considering the survey results? Be specific in your response.

**c. Formal internal (user departments) customer training within the past year (5pts)**

Training must be comprehensive and cover multiple procurement subjects and not limited to a specific topic (procurement cards, internal automation, software training, etc.). It may be acceptable if an agency can demonstrate training workshops on multiple topics were scheduled and presented on a rotating basis for end users throughout the previous year. Training must be multi-departmental. Web-based training is acceptable as long as the training meets all the other requirements of this criteria. Workshops or training may have the same program agenda offered on different dates.

- **Submit:** A narrative explaining the purpose of the training;
- **Submit:** The training agenda with date that substantiates the training was conducted on or after *January 1, 2025*. Do not include the entire presentation; and
- **Submit:** Dated roster or dated sign-in sheet of attendees including their department/division/function. If training is web-based, submit proof of attendance.

**d. Formal vendor training within past year with scheduled and agendized workshop (5 pts)**

Training needs to be comprehensive and not limited to a few specific contracts or pre-bid meetings. Training specifically needs to address "how to do business" with your agency.

A "vendor fair" limited to a "table" only, is not acceptable. There must be an agenda specifically listing your agency as a presenter of training on "how to do business" on a comprehensive basis. Joint vendor training should clearly identify your agency as a presenter on the agenda. Web-based training is acceptable as long as the training meets all the other requirements of this criteria.

- **Submit:** A narrative explaining the purpose of the training, the audience and your agency's role and participation in the training; and
- **Submit:** The training agenda with date that substantiates the training was conducted on or after *January 1, 2025*; and
- **Submit:** Dated roster or dated sign-in sheet of vendor attendees. If training is web-based, submit proof of attendance.

**e. Performance measures specific to procurement function (10 pts)**

The performance measures should be in multiple procurement areas. This criteria requires that you provide at least three measurements, the purpose of each measurement, and the action plan on what you will do as a result of the data collected.

Fundamental purpose for having performance measures is to improve how procurement performs: to learn, to motivate, and to recognize achievement and areas of weakness.

Evaluation processes consist of two variables: organizational performance data and a benchmark that creates a framework for analyzing that data.

The action plan should be specific to the data provided and not generalized.

- **Submit:** A narrative explaining the performance measures, the purpose for each of the measurements and the time period the measurement covers; and
- **Submit:** A copy of performance measures and the results for the most recently completed fiscal or calendar year and the prior year data for comparison; and
- **Submit:** An analysis of the data. (What does the data indicate? Can you make improvements based on the findings?). Provide a detailed action plan on how the results of the analysis will be used to improve efficiency and effectiveness within your agency.

**5. Centralized procurement authority based in law (statute, ordinance, charter or adopted policy, if applicable) (10 pts)**

Centralized procurement is a function within the organization that has the sole authority to buy goods and services for the entire organization and may also operate other core services such as warehousing and surplus. For this function to operate effectively, it is imperative that there be central leadership to provide strategic direction, consistency and cohesion. It is not required that all of the day-to-day procurement functions be performed directly out of the central office, rather it is anticipated that the Chief Procurement Officer will delegate a portion of his or her authority to professional staff across the organization. Centralization is evident when the responsibility for the procurement process rests with a single department. **Centralization is NOT evident when procurement only provides the “rules” and “oversight” and others outside of the procurement department perform the procurement function.** Centralization is not defined by financial approvals or contract approvals which may extend beyond the department to the governing body.

- **Submit:** A narrative summarizing the law and explaining how this provides your agency centralized authority. If governing law does not specifically state that procurement is “centralized,” please include explanatory narrative that demonstrates how the written law satisfies this requirement; and
- **Submit:** Section of the actual statute/ordinance charter/adopted policy or other form of written legally binding document establishing central procurement authority. The language specific to

centralized procurement authority must be highlighted or otherwise annotated to receive points, and the source of the statute/ordinance/charter/adopted policy must be evident (e.g., resolution adopted by governing board, section of code identified). Do not submit entire statute/ordinance/charter/policy.

## 6. Procurement Organizational Structure (5 pts)

This criteria recognizes agencies that place the procurement function at a high level in the organizational structure. This ensures sufficient authority, independence, and resources to foster the goals and objectives of the procurement function. As an example, Procurement and Accounting can both report to the Chief Financial Officer but Procurement should not reside in a lower managerial level than an Accounting or Budget Director. It is recognized that many agencies are structured differently. In order to receive points, an organizational chart showing where Procurement is located in the organization is required. In addition, a narrative explaining how your organization meets this criteria is necessary.

- **Submit:** A narrative explaining the organizational structure of your agency and where Procurement is in the organizational structure as compared to other department heads. Explain which agency official Procurement reports to directly; and
- **Submit:** An organization chart of the agency delineating:
  - the highest administrative position,
  - the placement of Procurement,
  - the placement of other department director level positions, and
  - any intermediate organizational levels.

Clearly identify the Procurement reporting structure by either highlighting or including a cover sheet explaining the relationship between Procurement and top management. *Highlight the Accounting or Budget Director to show its position/level in the organization, in relation to Procurement.*

## 7. Utilization of eProcurement and Automated Technology to Improve Efficiencies

### a. Internal Procurement Automation (10 pts)

Internal procurement automation refers to an automated requisitioning system designed to facilitate the procurement process within your organization. The system must provide for electronic entry of requisitions, routing, and status inquiries. Once approved, the system must also generate a digital PO which *is* automatically emailed to the vendor or is routed to the vendor through Electronic Data Interchange (EDI). Points will not be awarded if manual emailing of the digital PO occurs.

- **Submit screenshots of:**
  - A purchase requisition
  - A step where an approver has approved the requisition
  - The resulting PO; and
- **Submit:** Screenshot(s) identifying how the system will electronically send the resulting PO.

NOTE: Requisition and PO must have been created on or after *January 1, 2025*.

**b. Electronic Sourcing (10 pts)**

To streamline the application process for criteria 7b and 7c, we have vetted and approved several eProcurement solutions as AEP® Certified. Applicants that utilize the following AEP® Certified systems are only required to submit one screenshot *and a link to their web page* for each criteria showing the system they use and a statement certifying that they meet the requirements of the criteria. Access a listing of the AEP® Certified e-procurement solutions at <https://www.npi-aep.org/aep-certified-eprocurement-providers>

To meet the requirements for this criteria, the entity must show evidence of electronic sourcing, which includes online vendor registration, automatic vendor notification, posting of the solicitation, and posting of the resulting solicitation tabulations and award documentation.

- **Submit:** A narrative describing the type of electronic sourcing system you have, whether it is supported by your entity or a third-party system, and how a vendor would access the system; and
- **Submit:** A link where the evaluators can confirm your use of the identified system; and
- **Submit:** Screenshots demonstrating system use or entity's process for all of the following:
  - Online vendor registration and automated notification of solicitations
  - Online posting of solicitations and how vendors access
  - Online posting of tabulations **and** award documentation and how interested parties can view

NOTE: The solicitation, tabulation and award information must have been posted on or after *January 1, 2025*.

**OR:** Submit one screenshot showing the main screen of the AEP® Certified system in use at your agency and a statement certifying that your agency meets all the requirements of the criteria.

**c. Electronic Evaluations and Automated Scorecard (10 points)**

To streamline the application process for criteria 7b and 7c, we have vetted and approved several eProcurement solutions as AEP® Certified. Applicants that utilize the following AEP® Certified systems are only required to submit one screenshot *and a link to their web page* for each criteria showing the system they use and a statement certifying that they meet the requirements of the criteria. Access a listing of the AEP® Certified e-procurement solutions at <https://www.npi-aep.org/aep-certified-eprocurement-providers>

To meet the requirements of this criteria, agencies must demonstrate *the active use of an online, centralized system* that provides for:

1. Review and scoring of proposals
2. Notice of required evaluations and deadlines
3. Digital scorecards that automatically calculate individual scores, provide comments and notes, and provide a means to qualify and/or rank respondents.

(Manual spreadsheet-based scoring is not considered qualifying for this criteria.)

- **Submit:** A narrative describing the system being used and how evaluations are completed; and
- **Submit:** Screenshots showing the application and distribution of the scorecard to evaluators and process for reviewing/scoring submissions; and
- **Submit:** Screenshots showing *all* individual scorecards for each evaluator, notes, and the resulting consolidated scorecard.

Note: The elements of this criteria should be from the same solicitation and must have been posted on or after *January 1, 2025*.

**OR:** Submit one screenshot showing the evaluation page of an AEP Certified system in use at your agency, *for a solicitation posted on or after January 1, 2025* and a statement certifying that your agency meets all the requirements of the criteria.

## 8. Procurement Card System

### a. Uses a Comprehensive Procurement Card (P-Card) System and publishes an electronic P-Card manual for internal use (5 pts)

The intent of this criteria is to identify procurement card programs that are comprehensive (i.e., include policies, procedures, training, and monitoring of transactions) with systems in place that provide proper financial controls. This program should be a supplemental tool used for efficiency and in addition to good procurement practices. P-Cards limited to travel expenses do not qualify. Having a credit card available for purchases, without having proper controls, policies and procedures in place would not qualify.

A P-Card manual must be electronically posted (e.g., on a shared drive, the intranet or the internet site) for internal use. Please do not submit the entire manual.

- **Submit:** Narrative including current screen shots of the link, web pages or shared drive information that demonstrates that you electronically post your P-Card manual for use by internal customers; and
- **Submit:**
  - The cover page
  - An index of the P-Card manual or if you do not have an index, screen shots of the electronic contents and those pages that substantiate the contents and demonstrates the comprehensive nature of the program including
    - Policies;
    - Procedures;
    - Training or information on your training program; and,
    - Oversight.

**b. Formal Procurement Card Program Audit/Review OR a staff member with a current CPCP (Certified Purchasing Card Professional) certification from the Institute of Commercial Payments (IOCP) (5 pts)**

**While there are two options for earning points under this criteria, a maximum of five points will be awarded.**

A successful P-Card program includes a combination of best practices: dedicated resources, multi-faceted program management, training and retraining, continuous monitoring, and timely interfaces with the financial accounting system. For many agencies, Procurement is responsible for issuing cards and managing the overall program, while Finance is responsible for processing payments (receiving the receipts and monthly statements from the cardholders). Auditing this program and making improvements and corrections is a good practice. This should be done by a source outside of the card program administration (e.g., Finance or external auditors) and the review should include the whole program, from the initial card request, to training, and to viewing actual expenditures.

- **Submit:** Narrative explaining what role Procurement has in the P-Card Program, who performed the comprehensive audit (outside of the p-card program administration) and any findings; and
- **Submit:** An executive summary/certification letter from the auditor substantiating that a comprehensive management audit of the pCard program reviewing the policies and procedures, training, monitoring of transactions and financial controls was completed on or after *January 1, 2024*. An analysis or audit limited to transactions or an organization wide audit with a limited general reference to the P-Card program **is not** acceptable. The audit or review must have been completed on or after *January 1, 2024*.

**OR**

- **Submit:** A legible copy of the current certification CPCP (Certified Purchasing Card Professional) certification from the Institute of Commercial Payments (IOCP). In lieu of a copy of the certification, you may attach a copy of the issuing organization's web page or an official letter from the organization that validates current certification. To be eligible for points, certification must be obtained by *January 1, 2024* and remain in current status as of *May 15, 2026*; and
- **Submit:** An organizational chart showing the staff's position as part of the procurement department.

**9. Use of requirements contracts (annual or term also known as blanket orders) for at least 30% of total dollar commodity and services purchases (5 pts)**

The purpose of this criteria is to demonstrate that your agency has leveraged spend through establishing and/or utilizing requirement (term, annual, blanket, IDIQ) contracts for at least 30% of the total procurement spend. Requirements contracts improve efficiency and provide an opportunity to save through negotiated pricing contracts. Provide the basis of your analysis, including where the spend totals came from. The requirements contracts amount should be the actual expenditure on the contract, which may not be the same amount the term contract was issued for. Documentation should indicate that at least 30% (percentage should be rounded up to the nearest whole percentage (i.e., 29.5 = 30%; 29.4 = 29%)) of total procurement spend is based on requirements contracts. *Total procurement spend must include all contract spend and non-contract spend.*

- **Submit:** A narrative providing the basis for your analysis (explain where the total procurement spend came from (e.g., Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR), actual expenditure report). Narrative should identify the fiscal year period (month, day, year to month, day, year). Define how the total is calculated (e.g., details from the ACFR, addition of one-time purchase orders, expenditures on contract, direct payment, p-card, and cooperative expenditures). **The agency must provide justification of the totals provided.** Agency should define total spend based upon their ability to utilize requirements contracting for certain types of procurements and include that spend in total calculation and percentage of use. For example – agency has statutory authority to utilize requirements contracts for construction related professional services (design) but must bid all construction. Agency would include construction related professional services (design) spend in the total spend calculation and percentage of total purchases on requirements contracts. Agency would exclude construction spend in these calculations; and
- **Submit:** A list of requirements contracts including the expenditure against the contracts. This list should **not** include one-time purchase orders. The data must be from the most recently completed fiscal year. Each spend report must include a total. For long reports only submit the first and last page of each report provided which displays the total expenditures being reported; *and*
- **Submit:** A summary page in spreadsheet or table format that shows (1) total actual procurement spend, (2) total annual requirement contract expenditures, and (3) the percentage of requirements contract purchases as it relates to the total annual procurement spend (actual expenditures). Summary must match dollar values being provided in the *spend* reports or provide a clear justification as to the difference in the values provided.

## 10. Professional Certification

- a. **Current Certified Professional in Supply Management (CPSM), Certified Purchasing Manager (C.P.M.), Certified Public Purchasing Officer (CPPO), Certified Professional Contracts Manager (CPCM), Supply Chain Management Professional (SCMP) or NIGP Certified Procurement Professional (NIGP-CPP) designation earned by Chief Procurement Official (10 pts)**

*Please note that only the specific certifications listed above satisfy this criteria.*

- **Submit:** Narrative or organization chart clearly stating the name and title of the Chief Procurement Official. Explain any differences in names on certifications (e.g., maiden name, married name); and
- **Submit:** A legible copy of one current certification. In lieu of a copy of the certification, you may attach a copy of the issuing organization's web page or an official letter from the organization that validates certification.

- b. **Current Certified Professional in Supply Management (CPSM), Certified Purchasing Manager (C.P.M.), Accredited Purchasing Practitioner (A.P.P.), Certified Public Purchasing Officer (CPPO), Certified Professional Public Buyer (CPPB), Certified Professional Contracts Manager (CPCM), Certified Contract Management Associate (CCMA), Supply Chain Management Professional (SCMP) or NIGP Certified Procurement Professional (NIGP-CPP) designation earned by at least 75% of eligible professional staff (10 pts)**

*Please note that only the specific certifications listed above satisfy this criteria.*

- **Submit:** Narrative providing details on entire professional staff including titles that are part of the procurement organization or an organization chart with the professional staff clearly highlighted. Eligible staff are those that have been in the public procurement field for three or more years. Professional staff are those staff members involved in the traditional procurement/contracting functions (e.g., buyer, contract officer, procurement agent, specifications writer, contract administrator, purchasing manager, etc.). If you are considering a position as professional staff that is not typically recognized or if you are excluding one that is typically recognized, you must provide a narrative explaining why this position is / is not recognized as professional procurement staff in your organization. The total number of professional staff includes the Chief Procurement Official; and
- **Submit:** A table that shows all procurement staff members. Table should include employee name, title, certification, certification issue date, certification end date and indicate if this employee is considered as professional staff per the above. Provide the total percentage of professional staff that hold one of the certifications listed above. It must be clear to receive points; and
- **Submit:** Legible copies of current certifications, one per staff member. In lieu of a copy of the certification, you may attach a copy of the issuing organization's web page or an official letter from the organization that validates certifications. Please provide the certifications in the order they are listed in the table with all certifications oriented in the same direction.

## 11. Education

### a. A bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited university or college earned by the Chief Procurement Official (5 pts)

- **Submit:** Narrative or organization chart clearly stating the name and title of the Chief Procurement Official. Explain any differences in names on diplomas (e.g., maiden name, married name); and
- **Submit:** Name of the university or college, degree, and graduation date. Include a **legible** copy of the highest earned diploma or evidence from the conferring institution that a degree was received. If providing a copy of a transcript, the name of the Chief Procurement Official, the degree earned, and the date must be highlighted.  
**OR**, an official, signed letter from the agency's Human Resources Director (or top employment official) certifying the individual holds the stated degree is acceptable.

### b. A bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited university or college earned by at least 75% of the professional staff (5 pts)

- **Submit:** A narrative providing details of entire professional staff including titles that are part of the procurement organization *and* an organization chart with the professional staff clearly highlighted. Professional staff are defined as those staff involved in the traditional procurement/contracting functions (e.g., buyer, contract officer, procurement agent, specifications writer, contract administrator, purchasing manager, etc.). If you are considering a position as professional staff that is not typically recognized or if you are excluding one that is typically recognized, you must provide a narrative explaining why this position is / is not recognized as professional procurement staff in your organization. The total number of professional staff includes the Chief Procurement Official; and
- **Submit:** A table that shows a listing of all professional procurement staff members, indicating name, title, the university or college, degree, and graduation date. Provide the total

number and percentage of professional staff that have a bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited college or university. The documentation provided must be clear to receive points; and

- **Submit:** Legible copy of the highest earned diploma for each listed individual or evidence from the conferring institution that a degree was received. If providing a copy of a transcript, the name of the individual, the degree earned, and the date must be highlighted. Please provide the diplomas in the order they are listed in the table with all diplomas oriented in the same direction.

**OR**, an official, signed letter from the Chief Procurement Officer or the agency's Human Resources Director (or top employment official) certifying the individuals hold the stated degrees is acceptable. **For organizations with more than 10 professional staff members, submit an official letter in lieu of all the diplomas.**

## 12. Professional staff member with a leadership position in a professional procurement association or service as an AEP Evaluator (10 pts)

Professional procurement staff member with a leadership position of officer, board member, director or committee chairperson in a national, regional, provincial, territorial or state recognized procurement association such as an AEP sponsoring organization; or a position of Officer or Board of Directors of a chapter of a national, state, provincial, territorial or regional procurement association such as NPI, NIGP, FAPPO, CAPPO, TxPPA, NAEP, or CPPC qualifies. Committee chairpersons at the local chapter level do not meet the intent of this requirement and are not acceptable. Regional procurement association must be multi-organizational or multi-jurisdictional and must be at least state/province wide. Board, committee or advisory council members of cooperative organizations are not acceptable. *Service as an AEP Evaluator for the prior year's application evaluation cycle is acceptable.* The central purpose of the organization must be public procurement and must be for the benefit of multiple jurisdictions/agencies. Professional staff are defined as those staff involved in the traditional procurement/contracting functions, e.g., buyer, contract officer, procurement agent, specifications writer, contract administrator, purchasing manager, etc.

- **Submit:** Narrative about the association, the name of the staff member in a leadership position, the leadership position, and the term of the position. The staff member must be acting in the leadership position as a representative of the agency submitting the application; and
- **Submit:** Independent documentation (e.g., association brochure, program, website screen shot, *or AEP Evaluation team roster*) with date(s) supporting the association position. The position must have been actively served on or after *January 1, 2025*.

## 13. Participation at a national, state, provincial, territorial, or regional conference or a seminar as a presenter or co-presenter on a public procurement topic OR author of a published article on public procurement topic (10 pts)

The intent of this criteria is to encourage continued research and presentation (either oral or written) to our professional peers on a procurement related topic. To receive points for this criteria it must be clearly demonstrated that the staff member prepared and presented on a specific procurement topic. Facilitating or moderating a session does not qualify. "How To Do Business with the Agency" presentations for vendors do not qualify (covered under 4.d)

- **Submit:** Narrative providing the name of the presenter, the national, state, provincial/territorial or regional conference or seminar where the staff member presented, the topic and the date. The presenter must be acting as a representative of the agency submitting the application; and

- **Submit:** A copy of conference or seminar program or other independent documentation naming the presenter and topic is required. Regional conference or seminar must be multi-organizational or multi-jurisdictional. A webinar with a potential national participation is acceptable. A presenter at a workshop meets the intent. If a staff member is the author of a published article, enclose a copy of the published article with documentation on the source, date and clearly identified author. The article must be on a public procurement topic and educational in nature or researched based. The presentation or article must have occurred on or after *January 1, 2024*.

## 14. Adoption of statute, ordinance or policy that allows for Best Value procurements for your agency (10 pts)

“Best Value” means a technique in a competitive solicitation process which emphasizes value over price and permits the evaluation of criteria such as qualifications, experience, and performance data to determine the best overall value to the agency.

Agency must demonstrate authority to solicit through a best value procurement method for a broad range of purchases of services and commodities (not limited to professional services or technology) as it deems to be in the best interest of the agency. Best Value solicitations for construction (Construction Manager at Risk, Job Order Contracting, and Design Build) could also qualify for this criteria.

- **Submit:** A narrative explaining how your agency meets this criteria. Narrative should detail the statute, ordinance or policy authorizing your agency to do best value procurements; and
- **Submit:** The law, ordinance or policy establishing best value procurement authority; and
- **Submit:** Solicitation documents published/posted after *January 1, 2025*.
  - Solicitation cover page with the publication or issue date of the solicitation or the schedule from the solicitation demonstrating when it was issued to the public (not the solicitation due date). Evaluation criteria page(s) from the solicitation detailing the assigned points or weights demonstrating that points and weights were visible to the vendors during the solicitation process prior to the due date. No points will be awarded for ordinal evaluation methodology. *Do not include the entire solicitation document, only the pertinent pages that show the solicitation publication/issue date and the evaluation criteria.*
  - Evaluation matrix or scoring summary comprised of the criteria, weights and evaluators’ scores demonstrating the use of best value evaluation. A blank evaluation matrix or sample is not sufficient to provide documentation of use. *Do not include the entire evaluation report, only the pertinent pages that show the criteria, weights, and evaluators’ scores.*

## 15. Sustainable Procurement

The objective of this criteria is to demonstrate that the agency has implemented a strategic sustainable procurement program. Strategic sustainable procurement programs integrate within an agency’s existing strategic procurement processes, addressing prioritized environmental, social and/or economic impacts and opportunities of that agency’s purchased goods and services. Sustainable procurement programs have been shown to provide value to agencies in areas such as reduced cost of goods and services, reduced administrative costs, reduced supply chain risk, and increased supply

chain resiliency. Programs limited to single areas such as recycled materials, green cleaning products or energy conservation do not qualify. Program or policy must be broad and address multiple environmental, social and/or economic impacts and opportunities.

NOTE: Agencies can receive points by meeting either criteria a) and/or criteria b).

#### **a. Formal sustainable procurement policy OR formal sustainable procurement program (5 pts)**

The policy or program must secure executive-level commitment; identify a program lead; and allocate the resources needed for implementation.

- **Submit:** A copy of the formal sustainable procurement policy or program; and
- **Submit:** A copy of the document, website, policy, etc. that established the formal policy or program and/or that defines the program structure and plan; and
- **Submit:** Evidence of executive-level commitment (ex. policy release history, signed letter, etc.), program lead and resource allocation.

#### **b. Implementation of best practices (5 pts)**

Submission must include at least one best practice from the following:

- Set relevant environmental, social, and economic priorities
- Goals & Metrics
- Staff Engagement & Accountability
- Goods/Services Evaluation & Transparency
- Supplier Engagement, Transparency, & Accountability
- Supplier Development & Innovation
- Communications & Sustainable Purchasing Transparency

For the submitted best practice(s) to qualify, agencies must demonstrate implementation of at least **50%** of the relevant requirements described in the [Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council's Maturity Model Inventory Checklist](#)

- **Submit:** A narrative describing your implementation of each best practice; and
- **Submit:** Documentation supporting your claims (e.g., a website displaying your sustainable procurement goals & metrics; copies of sustainable goods/service requirements or preferences included in solicitations); and
- **Submit:** The SPLC Checklist completed indicating what practices were implemented.

### **16. Cooperative Procurement Strategy (5 pts)**

The intent of this criteria is to demonstrate that the agency has implemented a comprehensive cooperative procurement strategy. Cooperative procurement programs are designed to provide value to agencies in areas such as reduced administrative costs, accelerated service delivery, lower pricing or opportunities for increased standardization. The appropriate use of cooperatives should also take into consideration such things as an agency's social, economic, or local business goals. Having a proper cooperative procurement strategy in place can ensure procurement professionals properly analyze the available contracting tools including many differing types of cooperatives.

- **Submit:** Narrative identifying your agency's strategy for the use of cooperative procurement. Submission must include a complete narrative **and at least two separate components** (sample list below) that demonstrate the agency's strategic approach to their use of cooperative procurement.

Supporting documentation that can be submitted and considered under this criteria include but are not limited to:

- Formal checklist or list of questions that is used to evaluate a cooperative program, the vendor and the contracting opportunity.
- Methodology of determining what contracts will be solicited by the agency or considered for a cooperative contract.
- Serving as a Lead Agency for a cooperative/joint procurement contract (provide documentation from that solicitation as well as names of other agencies that used the contract such as proof of purchase or contract authorization/award by the other agencies). Solicitation must have been published on or after *January 1, 2025*.
- Serving as a Lead Agency for a cooperative organization (such as, but not limited to: NASPO ValuePoint, Omnia Partners, National Cooperative Purchasing Alliance (NCPA), et al). Provide documentation from the solicitation confirming the contract award. Solicitation must have been published on or after *January 1, 2025*.
- Procurement staff attendance at training sessions or webinars related to cooperative procurement and the evolving trends and solutions. Provide list of training and attendees. Training must have been completed on or after *January 1, 2025*.
- Documentation (data) indicating percentage of total annual spend utilizing cooperative purchasing options. Data must be from most recently completed fiscal or calendar year and compared to prior year(s) for evaluation.

A policy or approval to use cooperatives does not meet the intent of this criteria unless it is supported by two or more of the above examples.

## 17. Authority of the Chief Procurement Official to Solicit and Award Contracts (5 pts)

The purpose of this criteria is to demonstrate that an elected body cannot overturn the professional judgment of the Chief Procurement Official. The agency has enacted a procurement code, directive, or policy to allow the Chief Procurement Official to solicit and award all competitively bid contracts for goods and non-professional (non- Architecture/Engineering) services without limits for items that have been approved in the adopted budget, without agency governing body (e.g., Mayor and Council, Board of Supervisors, School Board, etc.) approval for specific contract award (source selection). This criteria covers those procurements that have competitive specifications, multiple sources, and formal bidding processes. If it is not clearly demonstrated in your submittal that your Chief Procurement Official has unlimited authority to award contracts, you will not receive points for this criteria.

- **Submit:** A narrative explaining how your agency meets this requirement as stated above. Narrative must include an affirming statement that no policies exist which require higher level approval in any instances; and
- **Submit:** A copy of statute, ordinance or adopted policy establishing authority of the Chief Procurement Official to solicit and award contracts **without the governing body's approval** for goods and non-professional services and an explanation of how your agency meets this requirement. Highlight policy excerpt which specifically addressed unlimited **award** authority.

## 18. Continued Pursuit of Excellence (10 pts)

Demonstrate a performance improvement **over and above any criteria** listed in this application. What new program/procedure/innovation/process improvement did you enact? Did it solve a problem? How did it improve the performance or efficiency of your agency? Did it save you money or find ways to utilize new resources? How were the results measured?

- **Submit:** Narrative explaining the project, action plan or innovation which must be procurement related. Narrative must clearly identify the problem and explain the solution, action plan or innovation. Only submit one project. Project must have been completed or action plan implemented on or after *January 1, 2025*; and
- **Submit:** Provide **clear and measurable performance results** of the project, action plan or innovation and demonstrate how this improved the performance of your agency.

## SELF-SCORING WORKSHEET

<b>Part III – Criteria</b>	<b>POINTS</b>	<b>SELF-SCORE</b>
1. Procurement Ethics Standards	5	
2. Electronic Procurement Manual	5	
3. Professional Development Program	10	
4a. Internal Department Customer Service Survey	5	
4b. External Vendor Customer Service Survey	5	
4c. Internal Customer Department Training	5	
4d. Formal Vendor Training	5	
4e. Performance Measures	10	
5. Centralized Procurement Authority	10	
6. Organizational Structure	5	
7a. Internal Procurement Automation	10	
7b. Electronic Sourcing	10	
7c. Electronic Evaluations and Automated Scorecard	10	
8a. P-Card System / Electronic P-Card Manual	5	
8b. Comprehensive P-Card Program Audit or Certification	5	
9. Use of Term/Requirements Contracts	5	
10a. Certification/Chief Procurement Official	10	
10b. Certification/Professional Staff	10	
11a. Education/Chief Procurement Official	5	
11b. Education/Professional Staff	5	
12. Association Leadership Position	10	
13. Presenter/Panel Member/Author	10	
14. Adoption of Best Value Procurement Method	10	
15a. Sustainable Procurement Policy/Program	5	
15b. Sustainable Procurement Best Practices	5	
16. Cooperative Procurement Strategy	5	
17. Contract Award Authority	5	
18. Continued Pursuit of Excellence	10	
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>200</b>	