

Vendor Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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VQ1. How does a company become an ESI Agreement holder?

Under ESI, the DoD leverages its aggregate buying power to establish enterprise agreements with information technology (IT) manufacturers and resellers for high demand, commercial off-the-shelf IT products and services. The ESI does not determine requirements for specific software products and services. Rather, it provides a service to the customer (program office, etc.) after they selected the most appropriate solution based on functionality, architecture, technical requirements, etc.

The process of becoming a vendor under the ESI program can be initiated by either the customer or the vendor. Either party may propose establishing an enterprise agreement. Vendor motivations are numerous and include a desire to consolidate existing agreements or group product and service offerings into more marketable packages.

To work effectively, ESI takes the time to understand the vendor's business model and to provide education regarding the ESI process. The DoD is motivated to create a strategic vendor relationship and uses the following general criteria for establishing enterprise agreements:

- The vendor provides DoD with improved terms, conditions and prices over those available under GSA schedule and similar contracts.
- There is sufficient demand for the product(s) and demand can be forecast with a relative degree of confidence. We also consider the product's existing usage or install base. The install base includes all DoD users, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Intelligence Community, and authorized Defense Contractors.
- Products are available under a GSA schedule. While this is not a firm requirement, it is desired for a streamlined acquisition process. ESI's preferred approach is to place a blanket purchase agreement (BPA) against a vendor's GSA schedule.
- The vendor agrees to our standard terms and conditions. This includes providing monthly sales and activity reports, attending semiannual program reviews, actively marketing the agreement, granting the right to deploy and reuse the license, home use, etc. (BPA samples may be downloaded from the ESI website to see examples of our terms and conditions.)
- Necessary fees are included in the product's prices and are collected and paid by the vendor on a regular basis. These fees are currently a .75% GSA industrial funding fee (IFF) and a 2% administrative, contracting and technical (ACT) fee.
- Products are compliant with appropriate standards including the DoD Joint Technical Architecture and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act related to accessibility by disabled persons.

In summary, there must be a business case established to justify the cost of awarding and maintaining an enterprise agreement. Generally, these are not mandatory contract vehicles; however, customers must follow the process described in the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Part 208.74, the DoD policy on SmartBUY, and any Defense Component unique policies. In addition, if the DoD ESI has Co-branded an Enterprise Software Agreement under the SmartBUY program, a specific Federal-wide policy on use will be issued. In all cases, the success of the agreement depends on most favorable pricing and high demand for the products and services. Vendors interested in initiating this process with the DoD ESI may contact the DoD ESI Working Group Co-Chairs or any of the other DoD ESI Working Group members listed in the ESI brochure. The brochure may be found under the "About ESI" tab located on the home page of the ESI web site <http://www.esi.mil/download.aspx?id=525> (scroll down the page and open the document labeled "ESI Points of Contact".)

Additional information may be obtained by selecting the "Vendor's Tool Kit" link on the ESI home page under "Vendor Information".

VQ2. – How do I update the information for my ESI agreement?

It is the responsibility of the SPM to ensure that the latest information for the agreements is made available on the web site. You may either contact the SPM directing using the information found on the ESI agreement or use the “Ask a SPM” feature of the ESI Web site.

To find the SPM information using the ESI agreement:

There are two ways to find an ESI Agreement on the ESI Web site: www.esi.mil:

1. Using the Search feature:
 - a. On the Home Page, enter the product you are looking for in the “Search” block. Select the “Go” button.
 - b. To the right of your search results you will see that the results can be sorted by “All”, “Agreements” or “News”. Select the “Agreements” link to see the agreements for the product you are searching for. Find the SPM point of contact information in the contract documentation provided or;
 - c. Fill out the “Questions about this Agreement” section on the right hand portion of the page and select the “Go” button. The SPM should contact you within three business days.
2. Using the Contract Vehicles tab:
 - a. On the Home Page, select the “Contract Vehicles” link. A list of all agreements will be displayed. Select the link for the product you are looking for more detail regarding the agreements for the product you are looking for.
 - b. Agreements can be sorted by “Type” (software, hardware or services) or “Agreement/Provider” by selecting the applicable underlined header.
 - c. Contracts can also be filtered by “type”, “provider” or “category” by making the appropriate selection in the drop down boxes on the right hand side of the page and selecting the “Go” button. Find the SPM point of contact information in the contract documentation provided or;
 - d. Fill out the “Questions about this Agreement” section on the right hand portion of the page and select the “Go” button. The SPM should contact you within three business days.

To use the “Ask a SPM” feature:

- a. On the ESI Web site: www.esi.mil:
 - a. Select the “Ask a SPM” tab on the Home Page of this site
 - b. Select a product Vendor from the drop down list. If the Vendor is not there, select “Not on the List.” Note – It is important to make a selection in this block to ensure that your query is routed to the correct SPM and a timely response it provided to you.
 - c. Enter your name

- d. Enter your email address
- e. Submit your request and any other pertinent information in the Question block.
- f. Select whether you are DoD Active Duty, DoD Civilian, DoD Contractor, or Other.
- g. Select the "Submit" button.

VQ3 – I've searched the web site and still need additional information on a product. How do I contact someone who can provide more information?

On the ESI Web site: www.esi.mil:

- h. Select the "Ask a SPM" tab on the Home Page of this site
- i. Select a product Vendor from the drop down list. If the Vendor is not there, select "Not on the List." Note – It is important to make a selection in this block to ensure that your query is routed to the correct SPM and a timely response it provided to you.
- j. Enter your name
- k. Enter your email address
- l. Submit your request and any other pertinent information in the Question block.
- m. Select whether you are DoD Active Duty, DoD Civilian, DoD Contractor, or Other.
- n. Select the "Submit" button.

VQ4 – How do I get a requested/recommended product to be included as an ESI agreement?

If you already have an ESI Agreement, you should contact your Contracting Officer to see if it would be appropriate to submit a Technology Refresh for the product. If you do not have an ESI Agreement already established, please see FAQ VQ1, "How does a company become an ESI Agreement Holder", to see if your product meets the requirements for an ESI Agreement.

VQ5 – How do I find policy regarding the use of ESI?

Policy related to ESI can be found by selecting the "Resource Library" tab found on the web site home page and then selecting the "Policy Corner" link.

VQ6 – How do I learn more about the SmartBUY program?

Information related to SmartBUY can be found by selecting the "About ESI" tab found on the web site home page and then selecting the "ESI SmartBUY Alliance" link. Information can also be found at the SmartBUY Overview GSA Web Page at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/105119>

VQ7 - How is it determined that an agreement will extend to all federal IT buyers under the SmartBUY program or to DoD IT buyers under the DoD ESI program?

The short answer is that the team (GSA, DoD ESI and the vendor) would need to agree for the vendor's products to be offered to all federal government organizations under the SmartBUY program. The general

criteria used to make this determination is as follow:

- 1) The vendor already has a strong presence within government agencies.
- 2) The vendor's products are available under a current GSA IT Schedule 70 and meet requisite compliance standards.
- 3) There is adequate demand for the product across the federal government.
- 4) The vendor agrees to provide adequate pricing discounts to the federal Government.
- 5) The vendor agrees to SmartBUY terms and conditions.
- 6) There is adequate government staffing available to manage a federal-wide agreement.

DoD ESI and SmartBUY discuss each program and determine if the agreement should be focused on DoD only or broadened to a SmartBUY federal-wide agreement. In either case, ESI may be selected to serve as the managing organization of the agreement.