CIO-SP3 FAQ’s

Are all of the businesses “other than small”?

No. There is a combination of small businesses and other than small businesses. To determine business size, visit the CIO-SP3 contract holder information page at [http://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/contracts/cio-sp3/contract-holders.](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/contracts/cio-sp3/contract-holders)

[Are SOW/PWS/SOO assessments available prior to submitting my requirements?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-1)

Yes. NITAAC's value-added services are available to customers anytime, including during market research. If you will be using a NITAAC vehicle for your procurement, an SOW/PWS/SOO review is available prior to submitting your requirement into e-GOS.

[Can I ensure the use of my specialized subcontractors when awarding to a prime?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-2)

Use of subcontractors is at the discretion of the prime contract holder, subject to advance consent to subcontract provisions as provided in the FAR. If you have specialized requirements, they should be included in your SOW and, if those requirements necessitate the support of a specific subcontractor, it would be incumbent upon the prime to make the necessary business arrangements with that party in order to improve their chances of obtaining an award.

[Can I modify an order once it is placed?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-3)

Yes. Modifications can be issued as long as they are within scope of the initial order. In general, if the modification does not change the nature of the work and was within the contemplation of the parties when the order was formed, the modification falls within scope of the initial order. Factors to consider that indicate in-scope changes:

* The order’s basic purpose/intent has not been changed
* The dollar magnitude of the change is proportionate to the price of the original order (disproportionate additions of work are in effect a new order)
* Competitive factors of the original solicitation are the same; hence, no additional offers would have proposed on the original order had the change been included in the original solicitation.

[Can I select multiple task areas when ordering?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-4)

Yes. The ten (10) task areas which make up the scope of the GWAC are intended to be a guide only. You can select as many task areas as needed to firmly define your requirement.

[Can I use my own past performance questionnaire?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-5)

Yes. You can use your own questionnaire. If you need guidance, however, NITAAC has tools and templates available on the website at [http://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/tools-templates.](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/tools-templates)

[Do I need to submit the required Determination and Findings (D&F) for Time and Materials (T&M) type contracts and justification for using non-DOD contracts into e-GOS?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-6)

NITAAC does not require the D&F and justification for non-DoD contracts be uploaded into the system; however, we strongly encourage you to do so for tracking and documentation purposes. You may enter them as “other” under Attachments. You must, however, make sure these documents are included in the official task order file. When you select a T&M type contract, you will be prompted to check a box indicating that you ”…verify that the CO has prepared a determination and findings per FAR Subpart 16.601(d).”

[Does NITAAC provide evaluation scoring sheets?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-7)

Yes. Remember, however, that consistent with FAR Subpart 16.505, the contracting officer for the procuring agency has broad discretion in developing ordering procedures, including the award evaluation criteria. As such, the procuring agency contracting officer would be the best suited to determine the adequacy of an evaluation scoring sheet based on the evaluation criteria established. NITAAC does, however, provide samples on its website at [http://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/tools-templates.](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/tools-templates)

[Does the Contracting Officer need to obtain a NITAAC approval letter prior to issuing a task order?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-8)

No. NITAAC does not issue approval letters. Contractors can accept task orders as long as the task order award references the Prime contractor's NITAAC contract number (ex. HHSN2639999000###I).

[How do I handle contractor wage changes during the task order period of performance?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-9)

You don’t. As with any other contract, the contractor is bound to the prices and rates bid for your requirement. So, it is incumbent on the contractor to factor in anticipated wage increases for the personnel bid. There are also pre-negotiated rate schedules for a wide variety of labor categories, and contractors have also factored in escalation to cover the same.

[How do I use options on task orders?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-10)

Use of options is covered under FAR Subpart 17.2 - Options. It is fairly common to see orders with a 5 year period of performance, structured with a 1 year base and four 1 year options.

[How is the NIH Contract Access Fee (NCAF) paid on labor hour awards?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-11)

The NCAF is paid on each obligated amount based on the funding document. If a labor hour order is incrementally funded, the corresponding fee is based on the incremental funding and not the ceiling. The contractor includes the entire fee (based on the funding of the order) on the first invoice.

[How many contract holders are on CIO-SP3?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-12)

There are 53 contract holders on the CIO-SP3 contract. A complete listing of these firms can be found on the NITAAC website at [http://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/contracts/cio-sp3/contract-holders](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/contracts/cio-sp3/contract-holders).

[How many files can I attach in e-GOS?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-13)

You can attach as many files as you like in e-GOS. There is, however, a limit of 100MB per attachment. If you need more, please contact the NITAAC Customer Support Center via email at [NITAACsupport@nih.gov](mailto:NITAACsupport@nih.gov), or call 1.888.773.6542.

[How would funding work for task orders with option periods?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-14)

Like any federal contract action, federal appropriation law and FAR guidelines govern funding of options. Primary considerations are contract type used, the Bona Fide Needs Rule, and whether the services are severable or non-severable.

[Is it possible to extend a task order with no option periods?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-15)

Yes. FAR clause 52.217-8 allows a task order to be extended for up to 6 months. A justification for an exception to fair opportunity must be prepared if the period of performance is extended beyond 6 months (refer to FAR Subpart 16.505(b)(2) for more information on exceptions to the fair opportunity process).

[Is there a maximum order limit?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-16)

No. NITAAC does not have a maximum order limit. The contract ceiling is $20 Billion.

[Is there an additional fee for scope reviews and assessments?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-17)

No. All of NITAAC services are value-added, and there is never an additional fee for SOW/PWS/SOO assessments. We return all assessments with recommendations to the customer within 24 hours, who can then choose to incorporate our comments or not. Our goal is to help our customers clarify their requirements for the best possible response from NITAAC contract holders.

[What is NITAAC’s position on performance based contracting?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-18)

NITAAC follows the guidance of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) which strongly encourages, but does not mandate, the use of Performance Based Contracting (PBC). In order to do PBC, the requirement must be defined in a manner that identifies clearly measureable outcomes and applies incentives and/or disincentives. The Statement of Work (SOW) and Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan (QASP) templates can be found on the tools/templates page of the website at [http://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/tools-templates](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/tools-templates). There is also question in e-GOS that will ask whether or not your requirement is PBC. Simply check “yes” or “no” as no justification is required.

[What is reviewed in an SOW assessment?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-19)

The NITAAC team looks at scope, contract type, periods of performance, evaluation criteria, specificity of tasking and deliverables and the deliverable schedule. We will also note whether the SOW is performance based. Of these areas of review, scope and evaluation criteria are the only areas that could stop the requirement from going out for competition: As all requirements must be in scope consistent with the task areas where the support falls, and the requirement should contain the award evaluation criteria, particularly if the anticipated value is expected to exceed $5 Million as outlined in FAR Subpart 16.5. NITAAC will provide suggestions for improving the SOW/PWS/SOO for all review areas as necessary, but the final decision on implementing any suggestions rests with the acquiring agency.

[What is the fee to use the CIO-SP3 contract?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-20)

The NIH Contract Access Fee (NCAF) for the CIO-SP3 contract is 1% with a cap of $150,000 for any task order base or optional period (not to exceed 12 months) with funding in excess of $15 Million.

[What is the period of performance on CIO-SP3?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-21)

The period of performance on CIO-SP3 is 6/1/2012 to 5/31/2022. The period of performance for each task order placed under the contract will be specified in the individual task order.  Task order options, if included at initial issuance of the task order, may be exercised after the expiration date of the GWAC; however, no task order (including task order options) may extend more than 60 months beyond the expiration of the GWAC.

[When submitting an SOW, does my contracting officer need to be involved throughout the entire process?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-22)

Yes. e-GOS is designed for easy collaboration, so both the end user and the contracting officer can remain involved. It is important to note that the contracting officer has the final selection authority for all procurements, and will be verified by NITAAC prior to any RFP or solicitation being released to the eligible contract holders.

[Where can I find labor rates for CIO-SP3?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-23)

All CIO-SP3 contract holder on-and off-site rates can be obtained by logging into e-GOS. You can also visit the contract holder information page at [http://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/contracts/cio-sp3/contract-holders](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/contracts/cio-sp3/contract-holders), select the contract holder whose rates you want to see, and click the link to their individual websites. 

[Who manages the task order once it has been awarded?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-24)

The ordering contracting officer manages the task order after award. However, NITAAC is available to assist with any questions or issues the customer may have during the task order period of performance.

[Why is there a fee to use the CIO-SP3 GWAC?](https://nitaac.nih.gov/nitaac/faq/cio-sp3#faqs-page-25)

NITAAC operates as a “Fee for Service” agency, and is required to cover its operating expenses while implementing technologies and solutions to better serve its government customers. The current NIH Contract Access Fee (NCAF) for the CIO-SP3 Small Business GWAC is 1% with a cap of $150,000 for any task order base or optional period (not to exceed 12 months) with funding in excess of $15 Million. The NITAAC strategy for recalculating the NCAF is described in its Annual Executive Agent Contract Activity Report submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The fees charged by NITAAC must be sufficient to recover the costs of managing the program over the long term, including initiatives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its ordering, financial management and internal control systems.