



The Innovation & Culture Assessment was released by The Department of Commerce's acquisition innovation lab, [The LAB](#), in May 2024 to assess fiscal year (FY) 2023. The assessment was released to the Department's (including all Bureaus) Acquisition Community to gather crucial feedback to better understand the Department's readiness posture for understanding and implementing innovation acquisition techniques, highlighting behavioral traits of the acquisition workforce in each Bureau and contracting organization, impediments to innovation, and other information like experience and program management innovations. The assessment was implemented Microsoft Forms, with the ability for anybody to respond within the Department. The assessment starts on the next page, however, below is the email sent by The LAB's director to the acquisition community. The message was also shared directly with the members of the [Innovation Council](#) and the Senior Bureau Procurement Officials. The plan for the FY24 assessment is to be released in Q2 FY25.



As members of the Department's Acquisition Community, you are invited to 1) help shape the future of acquisition and program management at Commerce, and 2) help the Office of Acquisition and Management (OAM), understand the priorities of our acquisition community, specifically with innovation and culture. It takes just 5-10 minutes to complete this MS Forms survey.

Your feedback is **essential** to assess and progress mission-focused and streamlined approaches being implemented throughout the Department and its Bureaus, while ensuring the Department's acquisition innovation lab (The Lab) has the data to tailor its support to each Bureau's mission. Simply put, we need responses to this 10-minute survey to further influence the direction of acquisition innovation while also consistently improving our culture throughout the Department and within each Bureau/Contracting Organization.

All responses are anonymous and non-attributional. Responses are only used for summary purposes and for detecting general patterns across groups. There will be reminder emails coming, to include metrics on which Bureau or Contracting Organization is leading in responses – a friendly competition.

Survey closes on **June 5, 2024**. Email myself or TheLab@doc.gov for any questions.

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Industry Liaison
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Assessment of Innovation & Culture at Commerce

Fiscal Year 2023

May 6, 2024

As members of Commerce's Acquisition Community, you are invited to:

- 1) inform the future of acquisition and program management at Commerce
- 2) help the Department/Office of Acquisition Management understand the preferences and priorities of our acquisition community, specifically on innovation and culture.



Introduction

Your feedback is important to further assess and progress these competencies throughout the Department and its Bureaus, while ensuring the Department's acquisition innovation lab (The Lab) has the data to tailor its support to the mission. With this 10-minute survey, you can influence the direction of acquisition innovation while consistently improving our culture throughout the Department. All responses are anonymous and non-attributional. Responses are only used for summary purposes and for detecting general patterns across groups.

Questions with an (*) require an answer. Those questions without an (*) are not required and may be skipped if you are uncomfortable answering them. Please know that there are no "right" answers to these questions. Please be candid and provide responses that are closest to your experience.

Thank you again. If you have any questions about this innovation and culture assessment, please do not hesitate to contact The Lab, thelab@doc.gov.

Demographics

1. Please identify your DOC Bureau/component:

- ☐ Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)
- ☐ Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS)
- ☐ U.S. Census Bureau
- ☐ Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- ☐ Office of the Under Secretary for Economic Affairs (OUS/EA)
- ☐ International Trade Administration (ITA)
- ☐ Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)
- ☐ National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)
- ☐ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- ☐ National Technical Information Service (NTIS)
- ☐ National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)
- ☐ U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)
- ☐ Office of the Secretary (OS)

2. Please identify your cognizant contracting organization [Dropdown/Checklist – only one option]

- ☐ U.S. Census Bureau
- ☐ Enterprise Services – Acquisition (ES-A)
- ☐ FirstNet Authority
- ☐ National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)
- ☐ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- ☐ U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)

3. Please select your acquisition career field:

- ☐ Contract Specialist/Contracting Officer
- ☐ Contracting Officer Representative (COR)
- ☐ Program/Project Management
- ☐ Procurement Attorney
- ☐ Policy/Oversight
- ☐ Other [text field]

4. Do you have a Contracting Officer Warrant?

- ☐ Level I Warrant
- ☐ Level II Warrant
- ☐ Level III Warrant
- ☐ I do not hold a Contracting Officer Warrant



5. How many years of experience do you have in your career field?

- ☐ Novice - Less than a year
- ☐ Some Experience - 1 to 3 years
- ☐ Moderate Experience - 4 to 6 years
- ☐ Significant Experience - 7 to 10 years
- ☐ Expert - 11 to 15 years or more
- ☐ Subject Matter Expert – 16 – 20 years
- ☐ Wizard – Over 20 years

6. Do you have a Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting (FAC-C) (Professional)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

7. Do you have a Federal Acquisition Certification for Contracting Officer's Representative (FAC-COR)

- ☐ FAC-COR Level I
- ☐ FAC-COR Level II
- ☐ FAC-COR Level III
- ☐ I do not have a FAC-COR certification

8. Do you have a Federal Acquisition Certification for Program and Project Managers (FAC-P/PM)

- ☐ FAC-P/PM Level I - Entry Level
- ☐ FAC-P/PM Level II - Mid-Level
- ☐ FAC-P/PM Level II and FAC-P/PM IT Specialization
- ☐ FAC-P/PM Level III - Senior Level
- ☐ FAC-P/PM Level III and FAC-P/PM IT Specialization
- ☐ I do not hold a FAC-P/PM certification

Prioritization of Traits

For the next two questions below, 10 and 11, please assign a rating of how much you feel that organizational trait is valued. Please read all 16 traits before answering. Note that it is expected that an organization will value some traits over other traits.

Please base your answers on the sum-total of first-hand impressions/experiences that you have had for FY 2023.

9. Please rate the degree to which the below organizational traits are valued (prioritized) in *YOUR OVERALL BUREAU.*

	Much less valued	Somewhat less valued	Slightly less valued	Slightly more valued	Somewhat more valued	Much more valued
<input type="radio"/> Predictable outcomes Outcomes that can be anticipated with a reasonable degree of certainty based on experience, plans, rules, data, and other known factors						
<input type="radio"/> Stability and continuity The condition of being consistent, resistant to change, uninterrupted, and maintaining a particular behavior over time						
<input type="radio"/> Order and structure The quality of being organized, arranged in a particular way, with a framework that supports elements of a system						
<input type="radio"/> Dependability and reliability The degree to which a system, product, or service can be trusted to perform its intended function consistently and without failure.						
<input type="radio"/> Innovation and change The process of introducing something novel and valuable, transitioning a system or situation to a new condition						

<input type="radio"/> Creative problem solving The process of generating innovative and effective solutions to difficult problems using a variety of techniques and methods						
<input type="radio"/> Decentralized decision-making Distributing decision authority across multiple individuals or groups, empowering them to make decisions based on their expertise and knowledge of the situation						
<input type="radio"/> New ideas Concepts, thoughts, or solutions that are original, innovative, or different from existing ones						
<input type="radio"/> Participation and open discussion A group process where members contribute toward a shared outcome, with a free and transparent exchange of perspectives						
<input type="radio"/> Employee concerns and ideas Feedback and suggestions provided by employees about various positive and negative aspects of their work environment.						
<input type="radio"/> Teamwork and cohesion Collaborative efforts of a group working towards a common objective with a sense of shared identity, mutual trust, and commitment to team success						
<input type="radio"/> Employee morale						

The overall attitude, satisfaction, and emotional well-being of employees in the workplace						
<input type="radio"/> Outcome excellence and quality The achievement of desired results, often measured, characterized by consistent performance and high satisfaction in the delivered product or service						
<input type="radio"/> Getting the job done Successful completion of a task, project, or assignment in a timely, efficient, and effective manner						
<input type="radio"/> Goal achievement The process of successfully reaching a clearly specified and desired outcome or objective						
<input type="radio"/> Doing one's best Making the greatest effort with one's level of ability and energy towards achieving a goal or task.						

10. Please rate the degree to which the below organizational traits are valued (prioritized) in the **CONTRACTING ORGANIZATION** supporting your Bureau.

	Much less valued	Somewhat less valued	Slightly less valued	Slightly more valued	Somewhat more valued	Much more valued
<input type="radio"/> Predictable outcomes Outcomes that can be anticipated with a reasonable degree of certainty based on experience, plans, rules, data, and other known factors						
<input type="radio"/> Stability and continuity						

The condition of being consistent, resistant to change, uninterrupted, and maintaining a particular behavior over time						
<input type="radio"/> Order and structure The quality of being organized, arranged in a particular way, with a framework that supports elements of a system						
<input type="radio"/> Dependability and reliability The degree to which a system, product, or service can be trusted to perform its intended function consistently and without failure.						
<input type="radio"/> Innovation and change The process of introducing something novel and valuable, transitioning a system or situation to a new condition						
<input type="radio"/> Creative problem solving The process of generating innovative and effective solutions to difficult problems using a variety of techniques and methods						
<input type="radio"/> Decentralized decision-making Distributing decision authority across multiple individuals or groups, empowering them to make decisions based on their expertise and knowledge of the situation						
<input type="radio"/> New ideas Concepts, thoughts, or solutions that are original, innovative, or different from existing ones						

<input type="radio"/> Participation and open discussion A group process where members contribute toward a shared outcome, with a free and transparent exchange of perspectives						
<input type="radio"/> Employee concerns and ideas Feedback and suggestions provided by employees about various positive and negative aspects of their work environment.						
<input type="radio"/> Teamwork and cohesion Collaborative efforts of a group working towards a common objective with a sense of shared identity, mutual trust, and commitment to team success						
<input type="radio"/> Employee morale The overall attitude, satisfaction, and emotional well-being of employees in the workplace						
<input type="radio"/> Outcome excellence and quality The achievement of desired results, often measured, characterized by consistent performance and high satisfaction in the delivered product or service						
<input type="radio"/> Getting the job done Successful completion of a task, project, or assignment in a timely, efficient, and effective manner						
<input type="radio"/> Goal achievement The process of successfully reaching a clearly specified and desired outcome or objective						



<input type="radio"/> Doing one's best Making the greatest effort with one's level of ability and energy towards achieving a goal or task.						
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11. Please add any additional comments about the values/priorities of your contracting organization and/or your Bureau. Please specify one which you are referring to.

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Procurement Statistics

12. Please specify the approximate number of procurements you were responsible for, or supported, within the past year. (If you select None, then press the Next button at the bottom of the page to advance you to the final page of the assessment.)

- ☐ None
- ☐ 1-5
- ☐ 6-10
- ☐ 11-15
- ☐ 16-20
- ☐ 21-25
- ☐ More than 25

13. What is the dollar value of the largest procurement you supported in the past year?

- ☐ Below \$10M
- ☐ \$11M - \$24M
- ☐ \$25-\$50M
- ☐ \$51-\$74M
- ☐ \$75-\$100M
- ☐ \$100M-\$500M
- ☐ Over \$500M

Innovative Procurement Techniques

For an enhanced customer experience, you can visit the PTAI PDF Playbook:

<https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2024-08/Periodic%20Table%20of%20Acquisition%20Innovations%20-%20PDF%20Playbook%20V2.0%20Final.pdf>

14. Are you familiar with the techniques found in the Periodic Table of Acquisition Innovations at <https://acquisitiongateway.gov/periodic-table>? The website was recently updated, so it may look different than it did in prior fiscal years.

- ☐ Yes, I use it regularly.
- ☐ Yes, I am aware of it but don't frequently use it.
- ☐ No, this is the first time seeing it.
- ☐ No, but I plan to use it.

15. If you implemented, or were part of an acquisition team that implemented, any of the innovative procurement techniques found on the Periodic Table of Acquisition Innovations for **Market Research**, then please indicate all levels of assistance from The Lab utilized for each technique.

Formal assistance means you had a formal coaching arrangement with The Lab.

Informal means there may have been an email, text, or chat exchange with The Lab that provided assistance.

Without means that it was done independently without any assistance from The Lab.

If you did not use the technique in FY23 in any way, then please select only the NO option.

	No	Yes. Formal Assistance	Yes. Informal Assistance	Yes. Without Assistance
Affordability: In the solicitation, provide vendors with a target price or a narrow price range. This can help reduce gamesmanship in the bid and proposal process. The government can select a vendor with a price under, in between, or over the target or range like any best value tradeoff.				
Facilitated Requirements Development Workshops: A facilitator or coach walks an integrated project team through development of the project vision/mission, high-level objectives, performance requirements, performance-based strategies for an acquisition.				
One on Ones: During the market research phase, the government meets with vendors individually to exchange information and gauge vendor capabilities.				

Share Draft Solicitation with Industry: Release draft solicitations with CLIN structure, requirements, instructions to offerors, and evaluation methodology to get early feedback from potential offerors.				
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16. If you implemented, or were part of an acquisition team that implemented, any of the innovative procurement techniques found on the Periodic Table of Acquisition Innovations for **Solicitation**, then please indicate all levels of assistance from The Lab utilized for each technique.

- **Formal assistance** means you had a formal coaching arrangement with The Lab.
- **Informal** means there may have been an email, text, or chat exchange with The Lab that provided assistance.
- **Without** means that it was done independently without any assistance from The Lab.

If you did not use the technique in FY23 in any way, then please select only the NO option.

	No	Yes. Formal Assistance	Yes. Informal Assistance	Yes. Without Assistance
Betterment: A betterment is any instance where the proposed solution exceeds the government's requirement in a meaningful way. The offeror should provide information explaining the promise to the betterment and its value to the government.				
Brief Proposal Submissions: Minimize the burden on industry and government by requesting proposals for only the most important aspects of the requirement that differentiate offerors from one another and support the contract file.				
Discovery: We want prospective offerors to fully understand our requirements before submitting full proposals (think site visits before construction bids or reading rooms before technical bids). Let the offerors ask questions in one-on-one meetings after the release of the solicitation about the requirement and the "as-is" operational landscape during a discovery session.				
Enhanced Contract Type Conversation: Ensuring the solicitation allows for the process of converting pieces of the requirement, or the whole thing, to less risky contract types, i.e., from T&M to FFP.				
Fusion Procurements: For closely related requirements, consider a single solicitation that allows for stand-alone awards to multiple vendors against multiple scopes.				
Highest Technically Rated Offeror with Reasonable Price (HTRO-OP): Only evaluate price as fair and reasonable while focusing on the technical factors. This evaluation model does not follow the rules of a best-value tradeoff.				

Modular Contracting: Breaking up large, complex projects into multiple, tightly scoped procurements to implement technology systems in successive, interoperable increments				
On/Off Ramp: Solicitation language in multiple-award contracts/agreements allows for the removal of non-performing vendors and addition of new vendors during "open seasons".				
Rates Only for Price Evaluations (ROPE): Ask vendors to submit their best hourly rates, then apply the rates to a government-developed estimate, in hours, for each labor category				

17. If you implemented, or were part of an acquisition team that implemented, any of the innovative procurement techniques found on the Periodic Table of Acquisition Innovations for **Evaluation**, then please indicate all levels of assistance from The Lab utilized for each technique.

- **Formal assistance** means you had a formal coaching arrangement with The Lab.
- **Informal** means there may have been an email, text, or chat exchange with The Lab that provided assistance.
- **Without** means that it was done independently without any assistance from The Lab.

If you did not use the technique in FY23 in any way, then please select only the NO option.

	No	Yes. Formal Assistance	Yes. Informal Assistance	Yes. Without Assistance
Comparative Evaluations: Stay in the correct FAR lane and document accordingly. Where appropriate, skip adjectival ratings, and document the comparative evaluation				
Confidence Ratings: Substitute the traditional adjectival ratings with confidence ratings to make your evaluation more than a counting exercise and to provide technical evaluators more flexibility				
Down-Selects: The government notifies low-rated offerors with little chance to receive an award prior to submission of detailed proposals, and the offeror decides to self-select out of competition or continue to the next phase.				
Oral Presentations: Substitute all or portions of a written proposal for less to read. Oral presentations can be performed in person, by video conference or by phone.				
Technical Demonstrations: Show Me, Don't Tell Me" - Let an offeror provide its product by having evaluators actually see and test the product				

18. If you implemented, or were part of an acquisition team that implemented, any of the innovative procurement techniques found on the Periodic Table of Acquisition Innovations for Award, then please indicate all levels of assistance from The Lab utilized for each technique.

- **Formal assistance** means you had a formal coaching arrangement with The Lab.
 - **Informal** means there may have been an email, text, or chat exchange with The Lab that provided assistance.
 - **Without** means that it was done independently without any assistance from The Lab.
- If you did not use the technique in FY23 in any way, then please select only the NO option.

	No	Yes. Formal Assistance	Yes. Informal Assistance	Yes. Without Assistance
Brief Decision Documents [Streamlined Evaluation Documentation]: Reduce the length and formality of evaluation plans, evaluation reports, and decision documents. Use brief, bulleted statements in consensus evaluation reports				
On-the-Spot Consensus: Don't wait days or weeks to document your evaluation of an offeror. Skip individual evaluation reports and do it right away-"on the spot"!				
Oral Debriefings/Brief Explanations: The post-award information provided to unsuccessful vendors can be done in part, or wholly, orally/virtually rather than only a written document.				
Select Best-Suited, Then Negotiate: After evaluations are complete, consider negotiating solely with the apparent awardee on issues, e.g. technical and price matters, to finalize the award. (This technique does not apply to source selections conducted under FAR 15.3)				

19. If you implemented, or were part of an acquisition team that implemented, any of the innovative procurement techniques found on the Periodic Table of Acquisition Innovations for **Post-Award**, then please indicate all levels of assistance from The Lab utilized for each technique.

- **Formal assistance** means you had a formal coaching arrangement with The Lab.
- **Informal** means there may have been an email, text, or chat exchange with The Lab that provided assistance.
- **Without** means that it was done independently without any assistance from The Lab.

If you did not use the technique in FY23 in any way, then please select only the NO option.

	No	Yes. Formal Assistance	Yes. Informal Assistance	Yes. Without Assistance
Award Term Incentives: Use additional periods of performance as award terms to motivate vendors to deliver better performance.				
Share Evaluation Documentation: As part of the debriefing/brief explanation process, sharing these documents with vendors promotes				



transparency, manages protest risk, and improves understanding for future proposal submissions.				
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- 20.** Please provide any feedback you may have experienced implementing any of the above innovative procurement techniques in the text field below. Please specify one, or multiple, which you are referring to.

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Program Management Innovation

- 21.** The same ideology that has fueled the movement of innovation in acquisition is important to the function of program/project management. The goal is to collect techniques, process improvements, best practices, or anything you have found to streamline or better the function of program management within the acquisition lifecycle.

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Barriers and Outreach

22. Please identify barriers you have encountered when trying to implement innovative acquisition techniques. (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Lack of training on how to apply the technique
- ☐ Lack of understanding of the technique
- ☐ Leadership resistance
- ☐ Lack of an executive champion
- ☐ Lack of support from legal
- ☐ Lack of support from program officials
- ☐ Lack of support from procurement officials
- ☐ Requires additional approvals
- ☐ Takes more time
- ☐ Fear of change
- ☐ Fear of failure
- ☐ Fear of protest
- ☐ Other [text field]
- ☐ None

23. Elaborate on your response above as needed. If you are leaving a response in the text field below, please refer to the barrier you selected.

24. I would like to see more of the following from The Lab to help increase my knowledge and awareness of innovative acquisition and program management techniques. (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Guidebooks
- ☐ Templates
- ☐ Events
- ☐ Other [text field]

25. How would you like to hear about innovation updates, training, and other available resources from The Lab? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Newsletter
- ☐ Email Blasts
- ☐ Website
- ☐ Innovation Council Member Representative
- ☐ Presentation
- ☐ Other [text field]

- 26.** Each Bureau within DoC is supported by a Contracting Organization (covered in question #2). Thus, all Bureaus are represented at the DOC Innovation Council with one or more Bureau Innovation Advocates (BIAs). Do you know your BIA? Answer below prior to finding the answer in this link: <https://www.commerce.gov/oam/lab/about-the-lab> (scroll to the bottom of the link). (Select all that apply)
- ☐ Yes, I have reached out to them.
 - ☐ Yes, but I have not interacted with them.
 - ☐ No, but I am expected to connect.
 - ☐ No, this information is not relevant to me.
- 27.** The Lab has a website, built to provide guidance and resources to a public facing audience: <https://www.commerce.gov/oam/lab/>. This website is undergoing a redesign to provide more resources and support to its stakeholders, but prior to seeing this link here, were you aware of the website as a resource?
- ☐ Yes, I was aware.
 - ☐ Yes, and I visit it frequently.
 - ☐ No, but I am glad I know if it now.
 - ☐ No, this information is not relevant to me.