

## 515.304 Evaluation factors and significant subfactors.

(a) *Small business consideration.* Solicitations that are not set-aside for small business concerns should consider inclusion of a small business participation evaluation factor (see FAR [15.304\(c\)\(4\)](#)) for additional requirements for procurements involving consolidation or bundling). The small business participation evaluation factor is separate from the small business subcontracting plan required at the contract level under FAR [19.7](#). Differences between the subcontracting plan and the evaluation factor include:

(1) Small business subcontracting plan. Established at the contract level only for offerors that are other than small businesses. Prior compliance by the offeror with subcontracting plans under separate contracts will be considered by the contracting officer in determining the responsibility of the offeror for award of the contract, as required by FAR [19.705-5](#). Contracting officers are required to review the plan to ensure it meets the requirements of FAR [19.704](#). No award can be made to an offeror with an unacceptable subcontracting plan per FAR [19.702\(a\)](#).

(2) Small business participation evaluation factor. Can be used at the contract level as well as at the order level. Evaluated in accordance with the source selection or evaluation criteria. Sample evaluation factor language and further details can be found on the Small Business Topic Page on the GSA Acquisition Portal at <https://insite.gsa.gov/acquisitionportal>.

(b) *Evaluation of small business participation factor.*

(1) Small business participation evaluation considerations may include:

(i) Extent to which socioeconomic small businesses will participate throughout the life of the contract.

(ii) Extent to which specific small businesses are identified, including the products and services such firms will provide.

(iii) Extent of commitments made by the prime contractor to small businesses. Greater weight should be given to enforceable commitments such as signed Contractor Teaming Arrangements, or written pledges to pay subcontractors within a specific number of days.

(iv) Variety and complexity of the work performed by small businesses.

(2) When using a small business participation evaluation factor, responses from small business offerors should receive full credit.

(3) Contracting officers should review responses from other than small business offerors for consistency with the required subcontracting plan. Examples of evaluating the small business participation factor responses consistent with the required subcontracting plan can be found on the OSDDBU subcontracting page at <https://insite.gsa.gov/subcontracting>.

**Parent topic:** [Subpart 515.3 - Source Selection](#)