NCDIT | NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

IT Procurement Process Playbook / Training Guide

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Version History

Date	Description
1/12/2023	Document updated to reflect process and Sourcing Tool enhancements
2/3/2023	Added Additional FAQs to Helpful Links
3/9/2023	Updated formatting and incorporated enhancement to Step 3 tasks
4/27/2023	Updated to include enhancements made to NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool
5/26/2023	Updated to include launch of NC eProcurement Contracts Tool
6/30/2023	Updated to include eVP replacement of IPS as of 7/10/2023
8/3/2023	Updated to include enhancements to NC eProcurement Sourcing and Contracts Tools
9/7/2023	Updated to reflect change in name from Statewide Admin to Procurement Guidance Team
9/20/2023	Updated to include enhancements to NC eProcurement Sourcing and Contracts Tools
10/19/2023	Updated to include change in Step 08 tasks

11/16/2023	Updated to include adding 'Required' to certain tasks in Contracts Tool
3/8/2024	Updated Planning Meeting hours

A. Executive Summary

The North Carolina Department of Information Technology (NCDIT) collaborated with state agency representatives and NCDIT reviewer representatives to redesign the end-to-end IT procurement process to reduce the overall cycle time, increase visibility to status of active IT procurements, improve quality of solicitation and contract amendment documents, and ensure compliance to applicable statutes and rules.

This document is intended to help state agencies and NCDIT resources understand and follow the streamlined IT procurement process that is enabled through the North Carolina eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools.

A series of Design Thinking sessions conducted with IT procurement process stakeholders helped identify multiple opportunities for improvement across the people, process and technology dimensions.

People: Need to reduce time for Agency Business and Agency Procurement resources to understand and follow the IT procurement process so they can spend more of their constrained time supporting mission-oriented activities.

Process: Need to reduce duplication of activities, decrease cycle times for NCDIT reviews, and improve stakeholders' visibility of status of procurements throughout their lifecycle.

Technology: Need to better coordinate, and reduce where possible, the applications in use to support the IT procurement process. There is currently limited tracking and reporting of metrics regarding review cycle times, planned versus actual schedules, and identified savings.

- The Touchdown system is used to manage IT Projects throughout their lifecycle, from initiation to closeout.
- The NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool is used by state agencies to conduct the formal procurement process, and the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool can be used by state agencies to manage contract amendments and renewals.
- SharePoint is used to help track status of IT procurements and for the submission of certain required forms (e.g., Privacy Threshold Analysis).

When redesigning the IT procurement process, NCDIT and the stakeholders adhered to the following guiding principles:

1. Focus on upfront collaboration and planning between state agencies and NCDIT to develop a mutually agreed upon approach, schedule, and resource plan to help deliver IT solutions that meet the state agencies' business needs and timing requirements. With a solid plan that incorporates perspectives and experiences of state agency and NCDIT professionals, the resulting steps in the IT procurement process can focus on efficiently and effectively executing the plan.
2. Use a common process and the NC eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools during the IT procurement process to allow for improved visibility of status, tracking of turnaround times for reviews and resubmissions, and to reduce the administrative burden of

submitting, routing, reviewing and tracking documents. Where possible, have the IT procurement process and tools be consistent with the non-IT categories to make it easier for agency procurement staff.

3. Avoid duplication of information across applicable systems (e.g., the NC eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools and Touchdown), and use links to point users to master versions of applicable documents where needed between systems.

4. Configure tasks in the NC eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools to be optional where possible to give state agencies the flexibility to perform only activities that are relevant and value-added for each specific IT procurement.

5. Foster an environment of continuous improvement to support identification and pursuit of additional opportunities to streamline the IT procurement process and tools to deliver sustainable targeted benefits to users.

The streamlined IT procurement process was initially piloted with a small group of Executive Branch State Agencies starting in September 2022 to collect feedback from real IT procurement activity. The streamlined IT procurement process enabled through the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool was then deployed to the other Executive Branch State Agencies in January 2023. The IT streamlined IT contract amendment process enabled through the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool was rolled out in May 2023 to all Executive Branch State Agencies using the NC eProcurement system.

B. IT Procurement Process Overview

The IT procurement process in state agencies starts with the identification of an IT-related business concept or need.

The key first step is for state agencies to determine if the IT-related business concept or need is considered an IT Project as defined by the NCDIT Enterprise Project Management Office (EPMO). This important first step helps to make sure that IT Projects are identified early in the process so that the proper analysis and documentation can be captured to set up the IT Project for success and ensure state agencies are in compliance with applicable IT Project Management Statutes (see Applicable IT Project Management Statutes box for details).

State agencies should work with the NCDIT EPMO to determine if the IT business concept or need is deemed an IT Project. They can go to this link to identify their assigned NCDIT EPMO Project Management Advisor.

If NCDIT EPMO determines it an IT Project

If the IT procurement is deemed an IT Project by the NCDIT EPMO, then the state agency is required to first follow the IT Project Management Process. This fully documented and ISO 9001 compliant process starts with completing the Initiation Phase and the Business Case Decision Point. If after completing the Business Case Decision Point it is determined that an IT procurement is needed, then the state agency can complete the streamlined IT procurement process. For more details on the IT Project Management Process, forms and available support resources, please visit the NCDIT EPMO's website: Project Approval & Oversight (EPMO) | NCDIT.

If the IT procurement is not an IT Project

If the IT procurement is not deemed an IT Project, the state agency can immediately start to follow the streamlined IT procurement process.
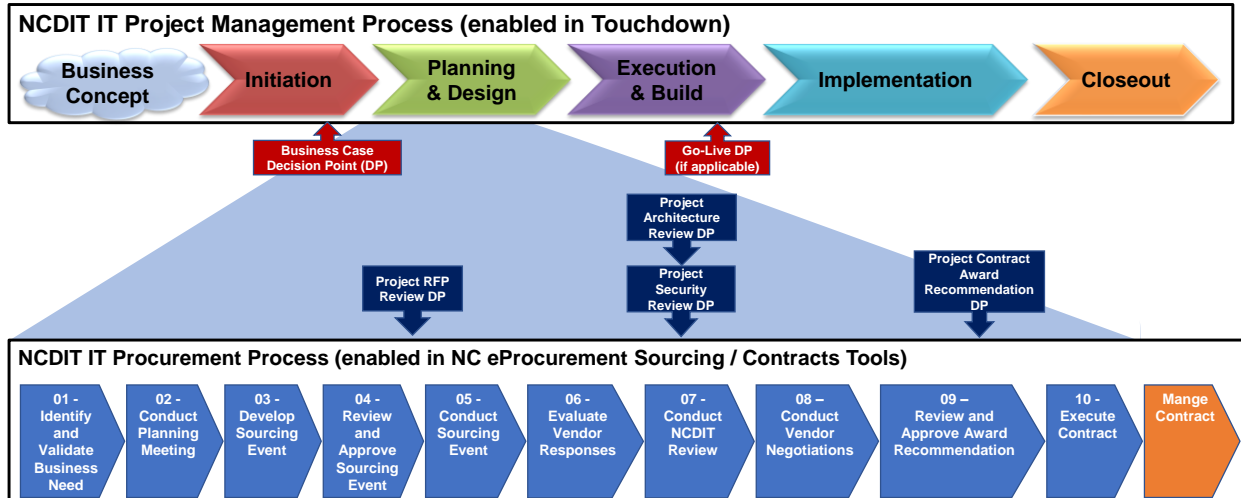
Please see Figure 1 for an overview of the streamlined IT procurement process and how it aligns with the IT Project Management Process when applicable.

Figure 1: **Streamlined IT procurement process**

Applicable IT Project Management Statutes

NCGS § 143B-1340 (a). Project management. Overall Management. – All information technology projects shall be managed through a standardized, fully documented process established and overseen by the State CIO. The State CIO shall be responsible for ensuring that participating agency information technology projects are completed on time, within budget, and meet all defined business requirements upon completion. For separate agency projects, the State CIO shall ensure that projects follow the Department's established process and shall monitor schedule, budget, and adherence to business requirements.

NCGS § 143B-1341 (a). Project management standards. The State CIO shall establish standardized documentation requirements for agency projects to include requests for proposal and contracts. The State CIO shall establish standards for project managers and project management assistants. The State CIO shall develop performance measures for project reporting and shall make this reporting available through a publicly accessible Web site.

Figure 1: NCDIT IT Project Management Process and IT Procurement Process

To reduce duplication of information across multiple systems, certain approvals obtained in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool (shaded in dark blue in Figure 1) will serve as evidence for the four IT Project Management Decision Points that occur during the Planning & Design Phase.

C. IT Procurement Process Step-by-Step Details

The streamlined IT procurement process (see Figure 2) is enabled through the NC eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools. The first ten steps start with the identification of an IT business need and end with the execution of a contract(s) with the awarded vendor(s). The last step addresses the management of the awarded contract throughout its lifecycle.

Figure 2: **Streamlined IT procurement process**
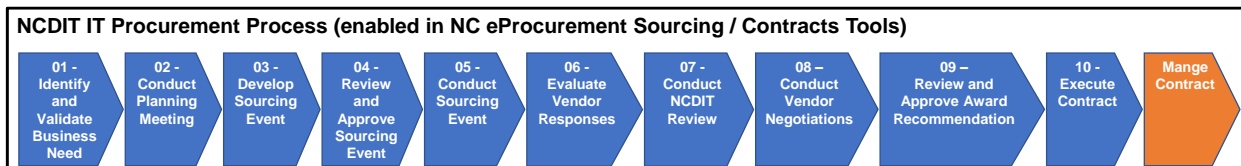
Each step is described in detail below, and includes the following:

- Description of the purpose of the step
- Typical Inputs and Outputs of the step
- Key stakeholders involved in the step and their role (Accountable (A) and Responsible (R) stakeholders are **bolded** to highlight these key roles)
- Applicable Statutes and Administrative Codes to explain why some tasks are included
- Key activities performed during the step
- NC eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools tasks for the step
- Helpful Tips

Process flow and key stakeholders

The Appendix of this document contains a process flow that shows the key stakeholders that are typically involved in each step and the activities they perform during the step. It may be helpful to print out the pages in the Appendix and refer to them as you read through Section C.

C.1 01 – Identify and Validate Business Need

Step Name	01 – Identify and Validate Business Need
Purpose	The IT Procurement Process begins with a State Agency identifying an IT business concept or need. Ideally, this is done in conjunction with the State Agency developing their overall Business Plan and supporting IT Plan for a multi-year period. This enables the identification of IT solutions that are needed to support the successful delivery of the State Agency's Business Plan and mission to serve North Carolinians. In the first step, the Agency Business works with NCDIT EPMO to determine if the IT business concept or need is deemed to be an IT Project.
Inputs	• Description of business need / problem • Determination if IT business concept or need is deemed to be an IT Project
Outputs	• IT Project Determination • Draft Privacy Threshold Analysis • Completed IT Procurement Intake Form • Submitted Procurement Requisition
Stakeholders and Roles **A = Accountable** **R = Responsible** **C = Consulted** **I = Informed**	• **Agency CIO (A)** • **Agency Business (Product Owner) (R)** • Agency IT (C) • Agency Budget (C) • Agency PMO (C) (to help determine if an IT Procurement submitted by Agency Business is considered an IT Project) • **NCDIT EPMO (R) (to help determine if an IT Procurement submitted by Agency Business is considered an IT Project)** • NCDIT Enterprise Architecture (I) • Statewide IT Procurement Office (C)
Applicable Statutes and Administrative Codes	- NCGS § 143B-1340 (a). Project management. Overall management. – All information technology projects shall be managed through a standardized, fully documented process established and overseen by the State CIO. The State CIO shall be responsible for ensuring that participating agency information technology projects are completed on time, within budget, and meet all defined business requirements upon completion. For separate agency projects, the State CIO shall ensure that projects follow the department's established process and shall monitor schedule, budget and adherence to business requirements. - NCGS § 143B-1341 (a). Project management standards. The State CIO shall establish standardized documentation requirements for agency projects to include requests for proposal and contracts. The State CIO

	shall establish standards for project managers and project management assistants. The State CIO shall develop performance measures for project reporting and shall make this reporting available through a publicly accessible Web site.
	- Pursuant to NCGS § 143B-1377, agencies must complete the necessary security, risk and/or data classification assessment for each request. Agencies should use the Privacy Threshold Analysis form to assist with this effort.
Key Activities	- **Agency Business (Product Owner)** consults with Agency PMO and NCDIT EPMO if needed to determine if IT business concept or need is deemed to be an IT Project. If it is deemed to be an IT Project, then Agency Business (Product Owner) would follow the NCDIT IT Project Management Process to complete the Initiation Phase and pass the Business Case Decision Point. Once Business Case Decision Point approval has been obtained, Agency Business (Product Owner) would engage with Agency Procurement to begin the IT procurement process.
	- **Agency Business (Product Owner)** completes the IT Procurement Intake Form to document details about the IT business need. This includes completing an electronic Privacy Threshold Analysis (PTA) form at this link and providing a link to the completed PTA in the IT Procurement Intake Form. The PTA is required by NCDIT ESRMO and has the State Agency identify WHAT data will be housed in ANY State IT System (e.g., PHI, PII, FTI).
	- **Agency Business (Product Owner)** completes a Purchase Requisition (PR) in NC eProcurement Buyer, attaches the completed IT Procurement Intake Form to the PR and submits the PR for processing.
	- **Agency Budget** receives the PR and confirms funding / budget availability.
	- **Agency Procurement** receives and reviews the submitted PR, follows up with Agency Business (Product Owner) to address any missing or incorrect information, and then selects the appropriate option from below to meet the IT business need. - **Use existing IT statewide term contract**: If an IT statewide term contract is able to meet the IT business need, Agency Procurement determines if the IT statewide term contract requires an SOW process (e.g., 920S). If so, Agency Procurement creates a Sourcing Project in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool and selects the Vehicle Solicitation type as IT: SOW on the Overview tab. Agency Procurement then continues to complete the tasks in Step 01 – Define and Validate the Business Need. If the IT statewide term contract does not require an SOW process, Agency Procurement can follow the defined process to purchase off an IT statewide term contract. This includes following defined process for contract purchases above any designated abnormal quantity threshold. See Statewide IT Procurement Office's website for more details on

abnormal quantity thresholds and process by IT statewide term contract.

- **Use existing agency contract**: If an agency contract is able to meet the IT business need, Agency Procurement can follow the defined process to purchase off an existing agency contract.

- **Conduct formal procurement process**: If the estimated cost to address the IT business need is <u>greater than</u> the established formal procurement dollar threshold (e.g., $25,000), Agency Procurement creates a Sourcing Project in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool and continues to complete the tasks in Step 01 – Define and Validate the Business Need.

- **Conduct informal procurement process**; If the estimated cost to address the IT business need <u>is less than</u> the established formal procurement dollar threshold, Agency Procurement follows their agency informal procurement process to identify the best value vendor.

- **Agency Procurement** routes completed IT Procurement Intake Form to NCDIT for approval through the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool workflow.

- **Procurement Guidance Team** reviews the submitted IT Procurement Intake Form to confirm it is complete. Assuming correct form was submitted and contains sufficient details of IT business need, Procurement Guidance Team approves the task.

- **Statewide IT Procurement Office** is the next approver in the approval workflow. Statewide IT Procurement Office reviews the task and assigns a Statewide IT Procurement Office staff member in the Statewide IT Procurement Office Contract Tracker SharePoint site, and then approves the task.

- **NCDIT EPMO** is the next approver in the approval workflow. NCDIT EPMO reviews the submitted IT Procurement Intake Form in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool and provides feedback to the Agency in their response. NCDIT EPMO checks to see if the IT business need is an IT Project.

  If it is deemed an IT Project, NCDIT EPMO will confirm that it has successfully gone through the Initiation Phase of the IT Project Management Process and passed through the Business Case Decision Point. NCDIT EPMO should also determine if the IT Project is an 'Enterprise' or 'Lite' type IT Project, and indicate this in the comments field when completing the approval task in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.

  If everything looks good for the IT Project, or if the IT business need is not considered an IT Project, NCDIT EPMO will provide their approval. If it is deemed an IT Project and it has not successfully passed the Business Case Decision Point, NCDIT EPMO will deny the approval task and provide what the Agency needs to do in the Comments field of the approval task.

- **The Procurement Guidance Team** is the next approver in the workflow. The Procurement Guidance Team adds the assigned Statewide IT

	Procurement Office staff member to the end of the approval workflow, and then approves the task.
	- The **assigned Statewide IT Procurement Office staff member** may then contact Agency Procurement to review the Sourcing Project and develop mutually agreed upon target completion dates for key milestones along the IT procurement process. The agreed upon target completion dates are then entered into a tracking file by Statewide IT Procurement Office staff member to support managing the Sourcing Project. The Statewide IT Procurement Office staff member then approves the task.
	- **Agency Procurement** will receive notification of the approval of the IT Procurement Intake Form and must then make sure that the initial template question in the Overview tab in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool, which asks if the Sourcing Project is for an IT Project, is answered correctly based on NCDIT EPMO's response to the IT Procurement Intake Form approval task. This is critical to make sure that the review and approval tasks in subsequent steps of the IT procurement process include the appropriate NCDIT Reviewers (e.g., NCDIT EPMO, OSBM) for IT Projects.
NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Tasks	▼ ➠ **01 - IDENTIFY AND VALIDATE BUSINESS NEED** ⌄ 🕒 Submit IT Procurement Intake Form to NCDIT Reviewers for Approval * ⌄ 🕒 Validate Answer to 'Is this an IT Project?' Template Question on Overview tab Matches NCDIT EPMO's Determination * ⌄
Helpful Tips	- **Confirming funding.** Confirming the availability and source of funding is critical in this first step to prevent the state from consuming highly constrained business, IT and procurement resources to work on a procurement that cannot ultimately be executed due to lack of funding.
	- **Leveraging IT solutions and existing processes**. Options to meet the identified IT business need may not always involve the procurement of new IT goods and/or services. They could include the reengineering of existing processes or leveraging IT solutions already operating in the NC environment.
	- **Identifying desired features and budget needs.** Although conducting an RFI is an option in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool, it does not always provide the expected results. If done during the market research phase of the process before a procurement strategy has been selected, state agencies can conduct individual information gathering sessions with specific vendors, other state agencies, or other organizations to help identify desired features and budget needs.
	- **Collecting information needed for the Sourcing Event.** The IT Procurement Intake Form is available in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Library. **Agency Procurement** can provide this form to their Agency Business stakeholders to help collect the information needed to begin developing the Sourcing Event and solicitation document(s).

- **Providing detailed information.** When providing the requested information in the IT Procurement Intake Form, **Agency Business (Product Owner)** should be as detailed as possible. This includes:

  - Describing the current IT problem / opportunity that needs to be addressed, the key desired or needed features, any market research conducted to date, and known timing or budget constraints (e.g., funding will expire on a specific date, Federal Partner review is required of Sourcing Event, solicitation document(s), security exceptions and award recommendation).

  This information will help Agency Procurement and possibly NCDIT to collaboratively develop the best approach to meet the business need within the constraints of the Agency Business environment (where possible).

- **Submitting PRs early for IT needs.** To help ensure sufficient time to complete the IT Procurement Process within the Need by Date, **Agency Business (Product Owners)** are encouraged to submit PRs for IT needs as far in advance of the Need by Date as possible. This helps Agency Procurement and NCDIT efficiently plan their resources to be available to conduct the appropriate IT procurement process and award a contract to the best-value vendor in advance of the Need by Date.

  To help with planning, the recommended minimum lead time is:

  - 120 calendar days to complete the end-to-end IT procurement process using an IFB / RFQ
  - 180 calendar days to complete the end-to-end IT procurement process using an RFP.

  These are general guidelines and assume that all involved stakeholders complete their assigned activities within a reasonable amount of time. Actual time needed may be depending on complexity of need, availability of Agency and NCDIT resources, level of knowledge of State resources on industry trends and solutions and if Federal Partners are involved in the review process.

- **Completing important agency activities.** Once agencies complete their IT strategy and identify where IT procurements may be needed, agencies are strongly encouraged to:

  - Create Sourcing Projects in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool for all identified IT procurements.
  - Create IT Procurement Intake Forms for each IT procurement.
  - Submit the IT Procurement Intake Forms to NCDIT for review.

  Included in the Sourcing Project must be the Target Contract Award Date for each IT procurement to help NCDIT manage demand for their services and track progress of IT procurements towards the target contract award dates.

- **Using Sourcing Project status field. Agency Procurement** can place a Sourcing Project in one of the following statuses in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool using the Project Status field:

Status	Definition
Planned	Sourcing Project has been identified, but has a planned start date in the future
Active	Sourcing Project has started and is in progress
On Hold	Sourcing Project has been placed on hold (e.g., while State Agency completes required IT Project Management Process steps), but is expected to resume in the future
Completed	Sourcing Project has been completed and a contract has been awarded to one or more vendors
Cancelled	Sourcing Project was cancelled, and is not expected to resume in the future

C.2 02 – Conduct Planning Meeting

Step Name	02 – Conduct Planning Meeting
Purpose	The second step of the IT Procurement Process focuses on making sure that the right group of Agency and NCDIT staff are able to collaboratively understand the Agency's IT business need, evaluate potential options to address the business need, and then develop best approach, team, and timeline to obtain the best-value solution. If the State Agency determines that a focused meeting will efficiently achieve this objective, Agency Procurement will schedule time during the established recurring meeting on Tuesdays between 4:00 PM and 5:00 PM with NCDIT Reviewers to have the collaborative discussion.
Inputs	• IT Procurement Intake Form
Outputs	• Updated IT Procurement Intake Form with outputs from Planning Meeting • Target Contract Award Date
Stakeholders and Roles **A = Accountable** **R = Responsible** **C = Consulted** **I = Informed**	- **Agency CIO (A)** - **Agency Business (Product Owner) (R)** - Agency IT (C) - Agency Procurement (C) - Agency IT Security (C) - Agency Privacy Office (C) - Agency Legal (C) - NCDIT ESRMO (C) - NCDIT Enterprise Architecture (C) - NCDIT EPMO (C) (if IT Project) - Statewide IT Procurement Office (C)

	- Statewide DOJ Legal (C)
Applicable Statutes and Administrative Codes	- None
Key Activities	- **Agency Business (Product Owner)** and **Agency Procurement** determine if having a Planning Meeting with Agency and NCDIT resources is value-added. - If so, **Agency Procurement** goes to the **IT Procurement Planning Meeting scheduling site** and schedules an available 60-minute time slot in the weekly meeting with NCDIT Reviewers on Tuesdays between 4:00 PM and 5:00 PM. Agency Procurement provides Agency Name, a brief description of IT business need, and the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Project Number (e.g., AANNNNNNNNN) for the Sourcing Project that was created in Step 01 – Identify and Validate Business Need. - **Agency Procurement** receives Planning Meeting Invitation email with Teams link and forwards the scheduled Planning Meeting invite to applicable State Agency staff. This should include the Agency Business (Product Owner). - **NCDIT Reviewers** review the IT Procurement Intake Form submitted in Step 01 – Identify and Validate Business Need. - If Planning Meeting was scheduled by the State Agency, NCDIT Reviewers attend the meeting and collaborate with Agency attendees to identify the best approach, resources to support the development and review of the Sourcing Event, solicitation document(s), and overall timeline to conduct the procurement process and award a contract to the best-value vendor. - Listed below is the recommended Agenda to guide the Planning Meeting

Topic	Planned Duration (in minutes)
Conduct Introductions	4
Provide Summary of IT Business Need / Problem Statement / Need by Date	12
Discuss Options	20
Select Recommended Procurement Approach	4
Determine if Agency-Specific Terms & Conditions Apply	2
Develop Target Schedule, including specific target dates for following major milestones: • Agency to Submit Draft Solicitation to NCDIT • NCDIT to Provide Approval to Post • Receive Federal Approval to Post (if applicable)	10

	• Vendor Initial Responses to Be Submitted • Agency to Submit Leading Vendor Solution to NCDIT • NCDIT to Provide Approval to Award • Receive Federal Approval to Award (if applicable)	
	Confirm Resources	4
	Discuss HUB Vendor Engagement Strategy	4

- **Agency Procurement** documents the outputs from the Planning Meeting in Table 2 of the IT Procurement Intake Form and uploads the updated IT Procurement Intake Form into the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool under the applicable Sourcing Project.

- **Agency Procurement** adds or updates the 'Target Contract Award Date' field in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool with NCDIT to Provide Approval to the Award date that was mutually agreed upon during the Planning Meeting. This field is used to track actual schedule versus planned schedule.

NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Tasks	▼ ⇨ **02 - CONDUCT PLANNING MEETING** ⌄ 🕒 Schedule and Conduct Procurement Planning Meeting ⌄ 🕒 Update IT Procurement Intake Form based on Planning Meeting Outputs ⌄
Helpful Tips	- **Providing sufficient detail in the Intake Form.** The **Agency Business** should provide as much detail as possible in the IT Procurement Intake Form that is sent to NCDIT Reviewers to help them understand the IT business need, determine if it is deemed an IT Project, and reduce the time during the Planning Meeting to communicate background information. This allows the actual Planning Meeting time to be focused more on clarifying business needs, identifying viable options to meet the business needs, and determining the resources and realistic timeline to identify and select the best-value solution. - **Attending the Planning Meeting.** Having the **Agency Business (Product Owner)** attend the Planning Meeting is critical to enable a detailed discussion of the business need and agency context with NCDIT. - **Determining appropriate Bid Type.** When determining the appropriate bid type to use, **Agency Procurement** can refer to the following guide: <table><tr><th>Type</th><th>Description</th></tr><tr><td>RFI</td><td>The Request for Information (RFI) can be used to gather information from the vendor community during the market research step in the general procurement process.</td></tr><tr><td>RFP</td><td>The Request for Proposal (RFP) is generally used in more complex procurement for services, goods or for a combination of services and goods.</td></tr><tr><td>IFB</td><td>The Invitation for Bid (IFB) is normally used for procurements of goods or simple, common services.</td></tr></table>

| | RFQ | The Request for Quote (RFQ) is normally used in non-advertised, sole source, and waiver of competition procurements to ensure that the vendor agrees to the NCDIT Terms and Conditions. |
| | SOW | The Statement of Work (SOW) is normally used for procurements under certain Statewide IT Term Contracts (e.g., 920S, 920M) that require additional competition at the specific project level. |

- **Avoiding misalignment across stakeholders.** With a mutually agreed upon approach, team, and timeline, the State Agency and NCDIT can move forward together with a focus on executing the plan with reduced chance of having to change direction or perform rework due to misalignment across stakeholders.

- **Documenting Planning Meeting attendees. Agency Procurement** should be sure to document in the IT Procurement Intake Form in the Comments field the individuals that participated in the Planning Meeting.

C.3 03 – Develop Sourcing Event

Step Name	03 – Develop Sourcing Event
Purpose	The third step of the IT Procurement Process is when the State Agency develops the proposed Sourcing Event and solicitation document(s), using the inputs from the IT Procurement Intake Form and any applicable discussion items from the Planning Meeting.
Inputs	• Updated IT Procurement Intake Form • Latest approved version of the applicable RFx Template from the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Sourcing Library
Outputs	• Draft Solicitation Document(s) • Sourcing Project Workspace and Sourcing Event in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool • Updated Privacy Threshold Analysis (if applicable)
Stakeholders and Roles A = Accountable R = Responsible C = Consulted I = Informed	- **Agency CIO (A)** - Agency Business (Product Owner) (C) - Agency IT (C) - Agency PMO (C) (if IT Project) - **Agency Procurement (R)** - Agency IT Security (C) - Agency Privacy Office (C) - Agency Legal (C)

Applicable Statutes and Administrative Codes	- None

Key Activities	- **Agency Procurement** works with Agency Business to begin to draft the solicitation document(s) using:
	
	  - the latest NCDIT-approved solicitation template from the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Library
	  - information contained in the IT Procurement Intake Form, and
	  - any discussion points from the Planning Meeting.
	
	- **Agency Procurement** creates Sourcing Event in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.
	
	- **Agency Procurement** uses their established internal process and tools (e.g., SharePoint, Shared Drive, Email) to collaborate with Agency stakeholders to complete the development, review and approval of the draft solicitation document(s).
	
	- **Agency Procurement** submits the draft solicitation document(s) in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool to get the Agency CIO's approval.
	
	- **Agency Business** should review the previously submitted Privacy Threshold Analysis to confirm that all information is still accurate and make any adjustments as appropriate.
	
	- If the agency CIO denies approving the draft IT solicitation document(s), **Agency Procurement** works with applicable agency stakeholders to address agency CIO's feedback and resubmits updated draft IT solicitation document(s) for agency CIO's approval. Once the draft solicitation document(s) have been approved by the agency CIO, Agency Procurement can move to the next step.

NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Tasks	▼ ⇨ **03 - DEVELOP SOURCING EVENT** ∨
	
	  🕒 Upload Draft Solicitation Document and Complete Sourcing Event Rules, Suppliers, and Content Sections * ∨
	
	  🕒 Submit Draft Solicitation Document for Agency Approval * ∨

Helpful Tips	- **Using the latest solicitation document template(s) and other forms. Agency Procurement** should always pull the latest solicitation document template(s) and other forms from the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Library when drafting new solicitation document(s) instead of using a previous solicitation or form as a starting point. This ensures that the state agency is using the latest NCDIT-approved solicitation document template and forms to avoid having to spend time moving content into the latest approved template. - **Obtaining Agency CIO's confirmation and approval.** When the agency CIO reviews and approves the draft IT solicitation document during this task, they are expected to confirm the following: 1. The IT solicitation is included in the agency's IT Strategy, and / or is required to meet business needs

	2. Funding for the resulting IT contract is available and has been encumbered properly 3. The content of the draft IT solicitation accurately captures the IT business need and targeted outcomes the agency is seeking 4. The draft IT solicitation has completed all applicable agency internal reviews (e.g., Agency Business, Agency IT, Agency IT Security, Agency Privacy, Agency PMO, Agency Legal and Agency Budget) 5. Agency CIO supports the Procurement Exception Request (if applicable) being submitted in conjunction with the draft IT solicitation document.

C.4 04 – Review and Approve Sourcing Event

Step Name	04– Review and Approve Sourcing Event
Purpose	The fourth step of the IT Procurement Process involves NCDIT conducting the required reviews and approvals of the State Agency's drafted Sourcing Event, solicitation document(s), and Procurement Exception Requests (if applicable).
Inputs	• Sourcing Project Workspace and Sourcing Event in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool • Draft Solicitation Document(s) • Updated Privacy Threshold Analysis
Outputs	• Approved Sourcing Event in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool • Approved Solicitation Document(s) • Approved Procurement Exception Request (if applicable) • Approval to Post Memo
Stakeholders and Roles **A = Accountable** **R = Responsible** **C = Consulted** **I = Informed**	- Agency Business (Product Owner) (C) - Agency IT (C) - Agency PMO (C) (if IT Project) - Agency Procurement (C) - Agency IT Security (C) - Agency Privacy Office (C) - Agency Legal (C) - Procurement Guidance Team (I) - **NCDIT SCIO (A)** - **NCDIT ESRMO (R)** - NCDIT Privacy Office (C) - **NCDIT Enterprise Architecture (R)** - **NCDIT EPMO (R) (if IT Project)** - **Statewide IT Procurement Office (R) (if over Agency's Delegation or Procurement Exception Request is submitted)** - Statewide DOJ Legal (C) (if over Agency's Delegation and requested by Statewide IT Procurement Office)
Applicable Statutes and	- Conditions for Limited or Waived Competition. 09 NCAC 06B.0901 - Contract Beyond 3 Years. 09 NCAC 06B.0301

Administrative Codes	
Key Activities	- If any Procurement Exceptions are identified, **Agency Procurement** works with Agency Business to complete the required Procurement Exception Request Form that is available in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Library. Once completed, Agency Procurement submits the Procurement Exception Request Form through the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool for NCDIT review. - **Agency Procurement** uses the workflow in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool to send the draft solicitation document(s) and Sourcing Event to appropriate NCDIT reviewers. - **Agency Procurement** can add additional Reviewers that are in the NC eProcurement system as needed to the standard workflow. - **Procurement Guidance Team** receive notification from the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool that a State Agency has submitted a Sourcing Event and draft solicitation document(s) for approval. - **Procurement Guidance Team** saves a copy of submitted draft solicitation document(s) to a Statewide IT Procurement Office SharePoint folder, and indicates the Statewide IT Procurement Office File Number in the Comments field of the approval task in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool. - **Procurement Guidance Team** also adds the assigned Statewide IT Procurement Office staff member as the last approver in the approval workflow in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool. The Procurement Guidance Team then marks the approval task as approved. - **When the Estimated Base Contract Value is less than $25,000,** the Procurement Guidance Team will not need to manually add a Statewide IT Procurement Office staff member to the end of the approval workflow. - The applicable **NCDIT Reviewers** then receive notification that they have an approval request in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool. The comments field in the approval task contains the Statewide IT Procurement Office File Number so that the NCDIT Reviewers know where to find the master documents to be reviewed. - **NCDIT Reviewers** access the draft solicitation document(s) using the Statewide IT Procurement Office File Number from the comments field of the approval task, and provide their feedback, changes and comments in the master version of the draft solicitation document(s). - At the completion of their review, **NCDIT Reviewers** will indicate in the Comments field of the approval task if they need to see the draft solicitation document(s) again after the agency has addressed their feedback. NCDIT Reviewers then select the approve option to indicate they have completed their review. - A notification is then sent to the assigned Statewide IT Procurement Office staff member that they have a Sourcing Event and solicitation document(s) for review in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.

- The **assigned Statewide IT Procurement Office** staff member uses the Statewide IT Procurement Office File Number in the comments field to access the applicable folder on the Statewide IT Procurement Office SharePoint site that contains the master version of the draft solicitation document(s) for review. The assigned Statewide IT Procurement Office staff member completes their initial review and provides updates and comments in the master version of the draft solicitation document(s) on SharePoint.

- If Statewide IT Procurement Office determines that Statewide DOJ Legal review is required, **Statewide IT Procurement Office** adds Statewide DOJ Legal to the approval workflow in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool. **Statewide DOJ Legal** receives notification of a request for review, reviews the comments field of the review task to find the Statewide IT Procurement Office File Number, and then goes to the applicable folder on the Statewide IT Procurement Office SharePoint site to find the master draft solicitation document(s). Statewide DOJ Legal completes their review of the master draft solicitation document(s) on SharePoint, and provides their feedback to the assigned Statewide IT Procurement Office staff member. Statewide DOJ Legal then marks the approval task as approved to indicate they have completed their review. Statewide DOJ Legal can indicate in their comments in the approval task if they need to see the document(s) again after Agency Procurement has addressed the feedback.

- The **assigned Statewide IT Procurement Office** staff member reviews and processes the feedback provided by Statewide DOJ Legal.

- **Statewide IT Procurement Office** also reviews any submitted Procurement Exception Requests in parallel to reviewing submitted draft solicitation document(s).

- The **assigned Statewide IT Procurement Office** staff member then copies the master version of the draft solicitation document(s) that contain all of the NCDIT Reviewers comments and changes from SharePoint to the approval task in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.

- The **assigned Statewide IT Procurement Office** staff member reviews all comments by NCDIT Reviewers to see if any NCDIT Reviewers have indicated that they need to see the draft solicitation document(s) again after the agency has addressed their feedback.

  If one or more NCDIT Reviewers asked to see the draft solicitation document(s) again, the assigned **Statewide IT Procurement Office** staff member marks the approval task in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool as 'Denied' and indicates in the comments field that Agency Procurement must address issues and submit the draft IT solicitation document(s) in a new round for approval by NCDIT. If Agency Procurement does not need to conduct another round of review once all identified issues and comments have been addressed, the assigned **Statewide IT Procurement Office** staff member marks the approval task as 'Approved', and attaches an Approval to Post Memo to the approval task in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.

	- This notifies **Agency Procurement**, and other stakeholders who are part of the Sourcing Team, that NCDIT has completed the review process and documented their approval or any additional feedback, changes and comments. - **Agency Procurement** reviews the master version of the draft solicitation document(s) that contains all of the NCDIT Reviewers comments and changes, and works with Agency Business and other Agency Stakeholders as needed to process and resolve all comments and changes to the Sourcing Event and draft solicitation document(s). - **Agency Procurement** is now cleared to launch Sourcing Event that contains the approved solicitation document(s). - If the approval task was denied, **Agency Procurement** uses the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool to send the updated draft solicitation document(s) that have addressed all feedback received from NCDIT Reviewer(s) for a second round of review and approval. - **Procurement Guidance Team** receives notification from the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool that the agency is submitting a second round of review for the draft solicitation document(s) and follows the same steps from the first round (e.g., saves master draft solicitation document(s) to SharePoint and provides Statewide IT Procurement Office File Number in comments field of approval task). - **NCDIT Reviewers** follow the same steps from the first round, and this process continues until all NCDIT Reviewers have indicated their approval of the draft solicitation document(s) and that they do not need to see them again.
NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Tasks	▼ ⇨ **04 - REVIEW AND APPROVE SOURCING EVENT** ∨ 🕐 Upload Procurement Exception Request to Procurement Exception Folder (if applicable) ∨ 🕐 Gain NCDIT Approval of Solicitation Document and Sourcing Event * ∨
Helpful Tips	- **Seeing all comments.** When reviewing comments made by NCDIT Reviewers in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool, **Sourcing Users** may need to scroll down to see all comments made by NCDIT Reviewers. - **Minimizing approval rounds needed. Agency Procurement** can contact NCDIT Reviewers directly if there are any questions on feedback or changes the NCDIT Reviewer provided during this step to help minimize the number of times the draft solicitation document(s) need to be submitted to NCDIT for approval. - **Indicating how feedback was addressed when resubmitting updated documents to streamline the re-review process**. **Agency Procurement** should reply to NCDIT Reviewers' comments in draft solicitation document(s) to indicate how they addressed the feedback versus make

	updates and delete the Reviewers' comments. This will allow the Reviewers to more efficiently see how their feedback was addressed to streamline the re-review process. - **Ensuring submitted vendor responses are only viewable by appropriate agency resources.** Once the Sourcing Event and solicitation document(s) are approved, **Agency Procurement** should remove from the Sourcing Project in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool any Project Team members that are not on the Evaluation Committee or may serve as Subject Matter Advisors to the Evaluation Committee to ensure that submitted vendor responses are only viewable by appropriate agency resources.

C.5 05 – Conduct Sourcing Event

Step Name	05 – Conduct Sourcing Event
Purpose	The fifth step of the IT Procurement Process involves Agency Procurement conducting the Sourcing Event with vendors.
Inputs	• Approved Sourcing Event in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool • Approved Solicitation Document • Approval to Post
Outputs	• Posted Sourcing Event and Solicitation Document(s) • Posted Addendums (e.g., with responses to vendor-submitted questions) • Vendors' submitted responses
Stakeholders and Roles A = Accountable R = Responsible C = Consulted I = Informed	- Agency CIO (I) - **Agency Procurement (A)** To help answer questions submitted by from vendors: - Agency Business (Product Owner) (C) - Agency IT (C) - Agency PMO / Project Manager (C) (if IT Project) - Agency IT Security (C) - Agency SMEs (C) - Agency Legal (C) - NCDIT ESRMO (C) - NCDIT Privacy Office (C) - NCDIT Enterprise Architecture (C) - Statewide IT Procurement Office (C) - Statewide DOJ Legal (C)
Applicable Statutes and Administrative Codes	- In some cases, pursuant to NCGS § 143B-1378, agencies will need to provide an industry certification report and in particular, for cloud-based hosting or application solutions.
Key Activities	- **Agency Procurement** launches Sourcing Event with approved solicitation document(s) in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool, and NC eProcurement

	Sourcing Tool automatically posts notice on the electronic Vendor Portal (eVP) for vendors to review.
	- **Vendors** should follow instructions in solicitation to submit any questions to Purchasing Agent listed as contact for the solicitation. This may be by emailing the questions directly to the Purchasing Agent, and / or submitting the questions via the Sourcing Event's message board.
	- **Agency Procurement** collects submitted questions from vendors up until the stated deadline in the Sourcing Event, aggregates all questions into a single document and works with appropriate agency team members to develop responses to vendor questions.
	- **Agency Procurement** develops addendum to Sourcing Event using the template in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Library to include approved responses to vendors' questions and adds approved addendum to Sourcing Event.
	- **Agency Procurement** issues any additional addendums that may needed following same process.
	- **Vendors** develop and submit their responses to the Sourcing Event in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool as directed in the solicitation document(s) by the response due date and time.
	- **Agency Procurement** opens the vendor responses, completes a Preliminary Bid Tabulation and posts the Preliminary Bid Tabulation to the electronic Vendor Portal (eVP).
NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Tasks	▼ ⇨ 05 - CONDUCT SOURCING EVENT ⌄ 🕒 Publish Sourcing Event ⌄ 🕒 Develop Addendum after Question Submission Deadline ⌄ 🕒 Gain Approval of Addendum ⌄ 🕒 Issue Addendum to Sourcing Event ⌄ 🕒 Open Vendor Responses to Sourcing Event after Response Submission Deadline * ⌄ 🕒 Post Preliminary Bid Tabulation to eVP ⌄
Helpful Tips	- **Grouping questions that require vendor response to enable improved side-by-side evaluation.** To help vendors understand what they need to provide in their response to be deemed responsive and Evaluation Committee Members to evaluate vendor responses more efficiently to the Sourcing Event, it is recommended to group together all questions that require the vendors to provide a response (versus having questions throughout the solicitation document). This approach allows the vendors to provide responses in same order to better facilitate side-by-side evaluation by Evaluation Committee Members.

C.6 06 – Evaluate Vendor Responses

Step Name	06 – Evaluate Vendor Responses
Purpose	The sixth step of the IT Procurement Process involves the Agency's evaluation of vendors' responses to the Sourcing Event.
Inputs	• Vendor responses submitted via the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool
Outputs	• Screened Vendor Responses that are ready for Evaluation Committee review • Requests for Clarification • Vendor Responses to Requests for Clarification • Leading Vendor Proposal(s)
Stakeholders and Roles **A = Accountable** **R = Responsible** **C = Consulted** **I = Informed**	- Agency CIO (C) - Agency Business (Product Owner) (C) - Agency IT (C) - **Agency Procurement (R)** - Agency PMO / Project Manager (R/I) (if IT Project) - Agency IT Security (C) - **Agency Evaluation Committee Lead (A)** - **Agency Evaluation Committee Members (A)** - Agency Subject Matter Advisors (C) - Statewide IT Procurement Office (C) - Statewide DOJ Legal (C)
Applicable Statutes and Administrative Codes	- NCGS § 143B-1365 requires State agencies to use the State infrastructure to host their projects, services, data, and applications pursuant to current guiding authorities/laws. - The SCIO requires all inter-agency and external facing solutions/applications that create content use the State's Identity and Access Management solution ("NCID").
Key Activities	- After the response due date and time, **Agency Procurement** opens the submitted vendor responses in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool and conducts an initial screening to confirm vendor responses are deemed responsive. - If **Agency Procurement** determines that a vendor's response is non-responsive and the Sourcing Event is configured as a two-step opening (e.g., Technical Response in separate envelope from Pricing Response), Agency Procurement will need to request confirmation through the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool from the Statewide IT Procurement Office that vendor's response is indeed non-responsive. This is necessary since once a vendor has been deemed non-responsive in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool after the opening of the first envelope, the contents of the first envelope are no longer available.

	- **Agency Procurement** sends notification to the Evaluation Committee Members through the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool that responsive vendors' responses to the Sourcing Event are ready for their review. - **Evaluation Committee** Members receive notification from the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool that they have vendor responses to review and access the Sourcing Event to view responsive vendors' responses. - **Evaluation Committee** Members follow the process outlined by Agency Procurement to conduct their review, assessment, and determination of leading response(s). - Additional **Agency Reviewers** may be enlisted to support the Evaluation Committee Members in their evaluation of vendor responses. - If needed, **Agency Procurement** collects any clarifying questions from Evaluation Committee Members, develops a Request for Clarification document for applicable vendors using the template in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Library, and sends the Request for Clarification document to applicable vendors through the Event Message feature in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool. - **Vendors** that are sent a Request for Clarification via an Event Message in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool will receive a message with the Request for Clarification document attached. Vendor will complete and return the document by replying to the Event Message in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool by the date and time specified in the original Event Message. - **Agency Procurement** will receive the vendor responses to any Request for Clarification via Event Messages in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool and will disseminate the responses to the appropriate stakeholders (e.g., Evaluation Committee Members). - **Evaluation Committee** Members complete their initial evaluation and ranking of vendors' responses following the Evaluation Process defined in the Sourcing Event and solicitation document(s).

NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Tasks	▼ ⇨ **06 - EVALUATE VENDOR RESPONSES** ⌄
	
	    🕐 Determine Vendor Responsiveness * ⌄
	
	    🕐 Evaluate Vendor Responses ⌄
	
	    🕐 Gain Statewide IT Procurement Office Approval to Proceed with Opening Cost Proposal for Two-Step Solicitation ⌄
	
	    🕐 Seek Clarifications with Vendors as Needed ⌄
	
	    🕐 Receive Vendor Responses to Request for Clarification ⌄
	
	    🕐 Receive Initial ranking from Evaluation Committee ⌄

Helpful Tips	- **Using the latest version of applicable Forms.** The latest approved versions of all Forms can be found in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Library.
	- **Submitting Exception Request Forms**. Submitting any Exception Request Form at the same time as the request to review and approve the leading vendor's solution helps NCDIT Reviewers complete both requests more efficiently.
	- **Using Standards Exception Request Form for hosting exceptions.** State Agencies should use Standards Exception Request Form B to submit hosting exception requests, not Security Exception Request Form C.
	- **Marking Draft Award Recommendation as a draft.** Agency Procurement should mark the draft Award Recommendation clearly as a draft to allow the Agency to make any adjustments based on feedback from NCDIT.
	- **Providing sufficient description of evaluation process**. Agency Procurement should provide sufficient description of the Evaluation Committee's evaluation process to date in the initial draft award recommendation to help NCDIT Reviewers understand how the Agency identified the leading vendor proposal(s).

C.7 07 – Conduct NCDIT Review

Step Name	07 – Conduct NCDIT Review
Purpose	The seventh step of the IT Procurement Process involves NCDIT Reviewers reviewing the leading vendor's solution to identify any issues or concerns that need to be addressed by Agency.
Inputs	• Leading Vendor Proposal(s) • Draft Award Recommendation (to document evaluation process to date) • Standards/Security Exception Requests (if applicable)
Outputs	• NCDIT Reviewer Feedback • NCDIT Approval Decision on Standards / Security Exception Requests (if applicable)
Stakeholders and Roles A = Accountable R = Responsible C = Consulted I = Informed	- Agency CIO (C) - Agency IT (C) - Agency Procurement (C) - Agency PMO (I) (if IT Project) - **Agency IT Security (R) (for Security Exception Requests and Standards Exception Requests)** - Agency Privacy Office (C) - Agency Legal (I) - Agency Evaluation Committee Lead (I) - Agency Evaluation Committee Members (I) - Agency Subject Matter Advisors (C) - **NCDIT SCIO (A)**

	- **NCDIT EPMO (R) (if IT Project)** - **NCDIT ESRMO (R)** - **NCDIT Enterprise Architecture (R)** - **NCDIT IAM Operations (R) (if Standards Exception Request (NCID))** - **NCDIT Enterprise Operations (R) (if Standards Exception Request (Hosting))** - NCDIT Privacy Office (C) - Statewide DOJ Legal (if requested by Statewide IT Procurement Office (C) - **Statewide IT Procurement Office (R)**
Applicable Statutes and Administrative Codes	- None
Key Activities	- If it is determined that a Standards or Security Exception Request is needed, **Agency Procurement works with Agency Business** and other agency stakeholders as needed to complete the Standards or Security Exception Request Forms that are available in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Library. Once completed, Agency Procurement submits the Standards or Security Exception Request Forms through the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool for initial approval by the Agency IT Security Liaison. There are two Standards Exception Requests tasks in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool: one for hosting exception requests and one for NCID exception requests. **Agency Procurement** should be sure to attach the completed Standards Exception Request Form to the applicable approval task to ensure applicable NCDIT approvers are included in the approval workflow (e.g., NCID exceptions only need to be reviewed by NCDIT IAM Operations). - **Agency Procurement** may need to manually add the applicable **Agency IT Security Liaison** as an approver in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool approval flow if they are not pre-loaded within the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool for this task. - Once **Agency IT Security Liaison** has approved the Standards or Security Exception Request Forms, they will be automatically sent to NCDIT in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool for their review and approval. - **Agency Procurement** develops the draft Award Recommendation using the template that is available in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Library. The draft Award Recommendation should describe the Agency's actions to date around receiving and evaluating vendor responses. This includes the rationale for how the Evaluation Committee identified the leading vendor proposal(s) that will be sent to NCDIT for review. There would not be an award recommendation at this stage of the evaluation process, but this initial documentation is needed by NCDIT Reviewers as they conduct their review of the submitted leading vendor proposal(s). - When the agency is ready for NCDIT to review the leading vendor proposal(s), **Agency Procurement** should save copies of the leading vendor proposal(s) in

the Leading Vendor Proposal(s) Folder in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool to help streamline the NCDIT review process.

- **Agency Procurement** submits the draft Award Recommendation to NCDIT through the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool, indicating in the Comments field of the review task the name of the leading vendor proposal(s) that NCDIT should review.

- The NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool's workflow for this task will automatically include the recommended **NCDIT Reviewers** based on attributes of the specific Sourcing Project (e.g., NCDIT EPMO is added as a Reviewer if Sourcing Project is flagged as an IT Project).

  Agency Procurement can add additional Reviewers that are in the NC eProcurement system as needed to the standard workflow.

- **NCDIT Reviewers** receive notification from the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool that they have a Draft Award Recommendation and a leading vendor proposal(s) for review with a link to the specific Sourcing Project.

- If an Exception Request Form was also submitted by the state agency, **NCDIT Reviewers** will receive notification from the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool that they have an Exception Request for review with a link to the specific Sourcing Project.

- **NCDIT Reviewers** review the Draft Award Recommendation and leading vendor proposal(s) in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool and document any requested clarifications, issues or risks in the Comments field of the review task in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.

- **NCDIT Reviewers** mark the review task in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool as complete once they have finished their review.

- Once all NCDIT Reviewers have completed their review, the **Procurement Guidance Team** then is notified of the review task and adds the assigned Statewide IT Procurement Office staff member to the end of the review workflow, and then marks their review as completed in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.

- A notification is then sent to the assigned Statewide IT Procurement Office staff member that they have a document(s) for review in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.

- The **assigned Statewide IT Procurement Office** staff member reviews the draft award recommendation, the leading vendor proposal(s), the feedback from the NCDIT Reviewers in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool, and then conducts their review of the document(s) to identify any additional issues or concerns.

- If Statewide IT Procurement Office determines that Statewide DOJ Legal review is required, **Statewide IT Procurement Office** adds Statewide DOJ Legal to the review task workflow in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool. **Statewide DOJ Legal** receives notification of a request for review, reviews the draft award recommendation, the leading vendor proposal(s), and the feedback from the NCDIT Reviewers in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool. Statewide DOJ Legal

	completes their review and provides their feedback to the assigned Statewide IT Procurement Office staff member. Statewide DOJ Legal then marks the review task as completed in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.
	- The **assigned Statewide IT Procurement Office** staff member reviews and processes the feedback provided by Statewide DOJ Legal, makes any additional comments in the comments field for Agency Procurement, and then marks the review task as completed in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.
	- This notifies Agency Procurement, and other stakeholders who are part of the Sourcing Team, that the NCDIT Reviewers have completed the review process and documented their requests for clarification, issues, or risks.
	- **NCDIT Reviewers** review any submitted Standards or Security Exception Requests and document their approval, or any requested clarifications, issues or risks in the Comments field of the review task in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.
	- **NCDIT Reviewers** mark the Exception Request approval task in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool as either approved or denied once they have finished their review. This notifies Agency Procurement, and other stakeholders who are part of the Sourcing Team, that the NCDIT Reviewers have completed the Exception Request review process and documented their approval, or requests for clarification, issues or risks.
	- **Agency Procurement** may need to incorporate requested clarifications, issues or risks identified by NCDIT Reviewers during the Exception Request process in the Negotiation Plan that is developed in Step 08 – Conduct Vendor Negotiations. This will be needed before the Agency can resubmit any denied Exception Request for NCDIT re-review and approval.
	- Once all NCDIT Reviewers have completed their review, **Agency Procurement** works with the applicable agency stakeholders to process the feedback from the review of the draft award recommendation, leading vendor proposal(s), and Exception Requests.
	- Where needed, **Agency Procurement** can either conduct the Request for Clarification process in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool with the vendor to get written responses to inform the evaluation process, or incorporate the clarification points in the overall Negotiation Plan that will help structure the discussion(s) between the state agency and the leading vendor(s).
NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Tasks	▼ ⇨ **07 - CONDUCT NCDIT REVIEW** ∨ 🕐 Submit Standards Exception Request (Hosting) to NCDIT (if applicable) ∨ 🕐 Submit Standards Exception Request (NCID) to NCDIT (if applicable) ∨ 🕐 Submit Security Exception Request to NCDIT (if applicable) ∨ 🕐 Submit Draft Award Recommendation and Leading Vendor Proposal(s) to NCDIT for Review * ∨
Helpful Tips	- **Ensuring required documentation is available.** To streamline the NCDIT review process, Agency Procurement should make sure that required documentation (e.g., completed Vendor Readiness Assessment Report) is available in the Documents tab in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.

	- **Understanding if additional approvals are needed.** Agency Procurement should note that there may be additional approvals needed by Federal Partners for award recommendations or security exceptions.
	- **Submitting Exception Requests that are not associated with an active IT procurement or IT contract amendment / renewal.** If an Agency needs to submit a Standards or Security Exception Request that is <u>not</u> associated with an active IT procurement or IT contract amendment / renewal, the Agency has two options:
	
	Option 1: Use the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool and follow the steps below:
	 - Agency user:
	   o Download the latest Standards or Security Exception Request Form from the NCDIT Exceptions [website](#)
	   o Complete the Standards or Security Exception Request Form and provide the completed form and any required supporting documentation to Agency Procurement
	 - Agency Procurement:
	   o Create a Sourcing Project (not a Sourcing Request) in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool, <u>and select Solicitation Vehicle to be IT: Exception Request Only</u>
	   o Attach the completed Standards or Security Exception Request Form and supporting documentation to the applicable approval task in the Sourcing Project and submit it to NCDIT for approval (the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool will send it first to Agency IT Security for their approval)
	 - NCDIT Reviewers:
	   o Review and provide approval decision to submitted Standards or Security Exception Request in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool
	
	Option 2: Email Completed Standards or Security Exception Request to NCDIT
	 - Agency user:
	   o Email a completed Standards or Security Exception Request and supporting documentation to NCDIT at dit.exceptions@nc.gov.
	 - NCDIT:
	   o Enter the submitted Standards or Security Exception Request form into the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool on agency's behalf for processing (the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool will send it first to Agency IT Security for their approval)
	 - NCDIT Reviewers:
	   o Review and provide approval decision to submitted Standards or Security Exception Request in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool

C.8 08 – Conduct Vendor Negotiations

Step Name	08 – Conduct Vendor Negotiations
Purpose	The eighth step of the IT Procurement Process involves the State conducting negotiations with the leading vendor(s) to collaboratively address any issues and optimize the value being delivered by the vendor's solution.

Inputs	• NCDIT Reviewer Feedback
Outputs	• Negotiation Plan • Exception Request Approvals • Request for BAFO(s) • Updated Draft Award Recommendation • Vendor BAFO(s)
Stakeholders and Roles A = Accountable R = Responsible C = Consulted I = Informed	- Agency CIO (I) - Agency Business (C) - Agency IT (C) - **Agency Procurement (R)** - Agency PMO (C) (if IT Project) - Agency IT Security (C) - Agency Legal (R) - **Agency Evaluation Committee Lead (A)** - **Agency Evaluation Committee Member (A)** - NCDIT ESRMO (C) - NCDIT Enterprise Architecture (C) - NCDIT Enterprise Operations (I) - Statewide IT Procurement Office (C) - Statewide DOJ Legal (C) - NCDIT Privacy Office (I) - IT Vendors (C)
Applicable Statutes and Administrative Codes	- None
Key Activities	- If it is determined that discussions with the leading vendor(s) would be beneficial, **Agency Procurement** will facilitate the development of a Negotiation Plan(s) and schedule an initial meeting with the leading vendor(s) and applicable state resources. - **Agency Procurement** will facilitate conducting the sessions with the leading vendor(s) and executing the Negotiation Plan(s). - If additional negotiation sessions are needed, **Agency Procurement** will schedule and facilitate the additional meetings with the applicable state and vendor representatives. - Once identified issues from the previous Exception Request process have been addressed with the leading vendor(s), **Agency Procurement** can resubmit any previously denied Exception Requests through the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool for a new round of approval. Agency Procurement should include in the Comments field of the approval task how the previously identified issues were addressed through the negotiation process.

- **NCDIT Reviewers** will be notified of the Exception Request approval task in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool, complete their review of the updated information provided by the agency, and provide their approval decision.

- This process of providing feedback, addressing issues and re-submitting Exception Requests can continue until **NCDIT Reviewers** have provided their approval in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.

- Once the initial negotiation points are addressed, **Agency Procurement** will develop a draft Request for BAFO using the Request for BAFO template that is in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Library. This draft Request for BAFO document will capture the proposed changes to the leading vendor proposal needed to address the state's interests.

- **Agency Procurement** will also update the draft Award Recommendation to reflect the steps taken to negotiate with the leading vendor(s) and how identified issues were addressed.

- **Agency Procurement** then submits the updated draft Award Recommendation to the Statewide IT Procurement Office through the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool for their review.

- **Agency Procurement** also sends the draft Request for BAFO to the Statewide IT Procurement Office through the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool for their review.

- **Statewide IT Procurement Office** reviews the updated Draft Award Recommendation and the draft Request for BAFO document in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.

- If **Statewide IT Procurement Office** determines that Statewide DOJ Legal review is required, Statewide IT Procurement Office adds Statewide DOJ Legal to the approval workflow in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool. **Statewide DOJ Legal** receives notification of a request for review, completes their review of the draft Award Recommendation, and draft Request for BAFO. Statewide DOJ Legal provides feedback to the Statewide IT Procurement Office.

- **Statewide IT Procurement Office** completes its review of the draft Award Recommendation and draft Request for BAFO, including any feedback provided by Statewide DOJ Legal. Statewide IT Procurement Office then provide additional feedback, any requested changes, or issues with the reviewed documents through the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.

- **Statewide IT Procurement Office** indicates their approval or denial in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool once they have finished their review, and adds in the Comments field if Statewide IT Procurement Office their feedback and identified issues. This notifies Agency Procurement, and other stakeholders who are part of the Sourcing Team, that the Statewide IT Procurement Office has completed its initial review.

- **Agency Procurement** reviews Statewide IT Procurement Office's feedback and works with the Evaluation Committee and leading vendor(s) to address any issues.

	- **Agency Procurement** can resubmit the draft Award Recommendation and draft Request for BAFO to Statewide IT Procurement Office for their re-review if requested by Statewide IT Procurement Office. - Once the Statewide IT Procurement Office completes its review and provides their approval, **Agency Procurement** finalizes the Request for BAFO and sends the completed Request for BAFO to the leading vendor using the Event Message functionality in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool. - The **leading vendor** reviews and completes the Request for BAFO and returns it to Agency Procurement using the Event Message functionality in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool. - **Agency Procurement** will review the leading vendor's Request for BAFO response in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool and share it with the Evaluation Committee Members and Subject Matter Advisors. - **Evaluation Committee Members** and Subject Matter Advisors review the leading vendor's submitted Request for BAFO response and confirm it is acceptable.
NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Tasks	▼ ⇨ **08 - CONDUCT VENDOR NEGOTIATIONS** ⌄ 🕐 Conduct Initial Vendor Negotiation Session(s)(if applicable) ⌄ 🕐 Submit updated Draft Award Recommendation to NCDIT for Review (if applicable) ⌄ 🕐 Submit draft BAFO to NCDIT for Review (if applicable) ⌄ 🕐 Send Final BAFO(s) to Vendor(s)(if applicable) ⌄ 🕐 Receive Vendor Final BAFO Response (if applicable) ⌄
Helpful Tips	- **Developing a Negotiation Plan**. A Negotiation Plan typically includes who from the State will be involved in the discussion with the vendor and their role. It should also list the key discussion points to be addressed when meeting with the vendor. This could include requested clarifications from NCDIT Reviewers, issues identified by NCDIT Reviewers that need to be resolved, and any risks identified by NCDIT Reviewers that Agency Business may want the vendor's input on how to mitigate. - **Getting assistance**. If needed, Agency Procurement can request NCDIT Reviewers to help support development of the Negotiation Plan and participation in vendor negotiation session(s). - **Marking Draft Award Recommendation as a draft.** Agency Procurement should mark the updated draft Award Recommendation clearly as a draft to allow the Agency to make any adjustments based on feedback from NCDIT. - **Providing sufficient description of evaluation process and award recommendation**. Agency Procurement should provide sufficient description of the Evaluation Committee's evaluation process to date in the

	updated draft award recommendation to help NCDIT Reviewers understand how the Agency is justifying the award recommendation.

C.9 09 – Review and Approve Award Recommendation

Step Name	09 – Review and Approve Award Recommendation
Purpose	The ninth step of the IT Procurement Process involves NCDIT reviewing the draft Award Recommendation for Sourcing Events above Agency's Delegation Authority to ensure compliance with all applicable IT statutes, administrative codes, and NCDIT technical and security standards.
Inputs	• Vendor BAFO(s) • Draft Award Recommendation
Outputs	• Approval Decision of Award Recommendation • Certification of Award
Stakeholders and Roles **A = Accountable** **R = Responsible** **C = Consulted** **I = Informed**	- Agency CIO (I) - Agency Business (C) - Agency IT (C) - Agency Procurement (C) - Agency PMO (C) (if IT Project) - Agency IT Security (C) - Agency Legal (C) - Agency Evaluation Committee Lead (C) - Agency Evaluation Committee Member (C) - NCDIT EPMO (if an IT Project) (I) - **NCDIT SCIO (A)** - **OSBM (if an IT Project that is an Enterprise type) (R)** - **Statewide IT Procurement Office (R)** - Statewide DOJ Legal (C) (if over Agency's Delegation and requested by Statewide IT Procurement Office)
Applicable Statutes and Administrative Codes	- None
Key Activities	- For Sourcing Events that have an Estimated Base Contract Value <u>below $25,000</u>, **Agency Procurement** can follow Agency Procurement Policies and move to Step 10 – Execute Contract. - For Sourcing Events that have an Estimated Base Contract Value <u>above $25,000</u>, **Agency Procurement** submits the updated draft Award Recommendation to Statewide IT Procurement Office for review and approval decision using the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool. - **Statewide IT Procurement Office** receives notification from the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool that they have a draft Award Recommendation

	document for review and adds the assigned Statewide IT Procurement Office staff member to the end of the approval workflow.
	- If the Sourcing Project is for an IT Project that is an Enterprise type, **OSBM** will be added to the approval workflow. OSBM will review the award recommendation and confirm that vendor's total cost is within approved budget. If OSBM approves the award recommendation, then the next approver will be the added Statewide IT Procurement Office staff member.
	- If the assigned **Statewide IT Procurement Office** staff member determines that Statewide DOJ Legal review is required, the Statewide IT Procurement Office staff member adds Statewide DOJ Legal to the approval workflow in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.
	- **Statewide DOJ Legal** receives notification of a request for review, completes their review of draft Award Recommendation, and provides feedback to the Statewide IP Procurement Office.
	- **Statewide IT Procurement Office** completes its review of the draft Award Recommendation, reviews any feedback provided by Statewide DOJ Legal, and either provides their approval or denial. If Statewide IT Procurement Office denies approval, they will provide additional feedback, requested changes, or issues in the Comments field in the review task in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.
	- If **Statewide IT Procurement Office** did not approve the draft Award Recommendation, Agency Procurement works with Agency Business and other Agency Stakeholders as needed to process and resolve any comments and requested changes to the draft Award Recommendation.
	- **Agency Procurement** can conduct additional rounds of review until Statewide IT Procurement Office has provided their approval of the draft Award Recommendation.
	- Once **Statewide IT Procurement Office** is ready to approve the Award Recommendation, Statewide IT Procurement Office creates and attaches a Certification for Award Memo in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool and approves the task.
	- **Agency Procurement** receives Statewide IT Procurement Office's approval in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool and is now cleared to execute a contract with the approved vendor(s).
NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Tasks	▼ ⇨ 09 - REVIEW AND APPROVE AWARD RECOMMENDATIONS ∨ 🕒 Gain Statewide IT Procurement Office and OSBM (if applicable) Approval of Final Award Recommendation * ∨
Helpful Tips	- **Completing Exception Requests in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.** Making sure all Exception Requests are conducted in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool will streamline Statewide IT Procurement Office's review and approval of the draft Award Recommendation.

C.10 10 – Execute Contract

Step Name	10 – Execute Contract
Purpose	The tenth step of the IT Procurement Process involves the State Agency executing a contract with the approved vendor.
Inputs	• Certification of Award
Outputs	• Award Notification • Executed Contract • Contract entry in NC eProcurement Contracts Tool
Stakeholders and Roles **A = Accountable** **R = Responsible** **C = Consulted** **I = Informed**	- **Agency CIO (A)** - **Agency Procurement (R)** - IT Vendor (I) - Statewide IT Procurement Office (I) (if over agency delegation)
Applicable Statutes and Administrative Codes	- None
Key Activities	- **Agency Procurement** gets the applicable Agency signatures on the contact, and then posts an Award Notification on the electronic Vendor Portal (eVP). - **Agency Procurement** emails a copy of the executed contract to Statewide IT Procurement Office contact that assisted with the IT procurement process. - **Agency Procurement** creates a follow-on project to the Sourcing Project in the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool. This reduces the information that needs to be entered into the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool, since many fields are automatically copied from the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool. - **Agency Procurement** uploads an electronic copy of the fully executed contract into the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool. - **Agency Procurement** changes project status from 'Active' to 'Completed' in the State field on the Overview tab of the Sourcing Project in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool.

NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool Tasks	▼ ⇨ **10 - EXECUTE CONTRACT** ∨ 🕐 Execute Contract * ∨ 🕐 Post Award Notification to eVP ∨ 🕐 Send Executed Copy of Contract to Statewide IT Procurement Office * ∨ 🕐 Create Contract Workspace for Each Awarded Vendor ∨
Helpful Tips	- **Creating Contract Workspace in NC eProcurement Contracts Tool**. **Agency Procurement** should enter resulting contract into the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool to support ongoing contract management activities and to provide notifications as contract approaches end dates. This helps Agency Procurement and Agency Business to determine appropriate procurement strategy for the contract (e.g., extend contract if an option, re-bid the contract, or let contract expire) with sufficient time to execute the selected strategy to avoid any disruption of goods or services to the Agency Business. - **Entering the correct Contract Start Date**. When creating a follow-on Contract Workspace in the NC eProcurement Contracts module from the Sourcing Project, the date entered into the 'Target Contract Award Date' field in the Overview tab of the Sourcing Project will auto populate the Contract Start Date field in the created Contract Workspace. **Agency Procurement** should review and update as necessary the Contract Start Date field in the Contract Workspace to match the actual start date of the awarded contract.

C.11 Manage Contract

Step Name	Manage Contract
Purpose	The last step of the IT Procurement Process involves the State Agency managing a contract with the approved vendor for the duration of the contract's lifecycle.
Inputs	• Fully Executed Contract
Outputs	• Contract Amendments (if applicable) • Contract Renewals (if applicable) • Approved Standards Exception Requests (if applicable) • Approved Security Exception Requests (if applicable) • Cure Notices (if applicable) • Termination Letter (if applicable)
Stakeholders and Roles **A = Accountable**	- Agency Business (C) - **Agency CIO (R)** - Agency IT (C) - **Agency Procurement (R)** - Agency PMO (C) (if IT Project)

R = Responsible **C = Consulted** **I = Informed**	- **Agency IT Security (R) (for Security Exception Requests and Standards Exception Requests)** - Agency Privacy Office (C) - Agency Legal (C) - Agency Subject Matter Advisors (C) - **NCDIT SCIO (A)** - **NCDIT EPMO (R) (if IT Project)** - **OSBM (R) (if an IT Project that is an Enterprise type)** - **NCDIT ESRMO (R)** - NCDIT Privacy Office (I) - **NCDIT Enterprise Architecture (R)** - **NCDIT IAM Operations (R) (if Standards Exception Request (NCID))** - **NCDIT Enterprise Operations (R)** - **Statewide IT Procurement Office (R) (if over agency delegation)** - Statewide DOJ Legal (C) (if over Agency's Delegation and requested by Statewide IT Procurement Office) - IT Vendor (C)
Applicable Statutes and Administrative Codes	- None
Key Activities	- **Agency Procurement** confirms fully executed copy of IT contract and any executed contract amendments / renewals are uploaded into NC eProcurement Contracts Tool. - **Agency Procurement** works with Agency Business and other applicable agency stakeholders to develop draft IT contract amendments, renewals, or termination letters as needed throughout the contract's lifecycle. - **Agency Procurement** submits draft IT contract amendments or renewals to **Agency CIO** first, and then to NCDIT when applicable through the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool for review and approval. **Agency Procurement** works with Agency Business and other applicable agency stakeholders to prepare and submit any applicable Standards Exception Requests, Security Exception Requests, or Procurement Exception Requests associated with the IT contract amendment or renewal in the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool. - There are two Standards Exception Requests tasks in the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool: one for hosting exception requests and one for NCID exception requests. **Agency Procurement** should be sure to attach the completed Standards Exception Request Form to the applicable approval task to ensure applicable NCDIT approvers are included in the approval workflow (e.g., NCID exceptions only need to be reviewed by NCDIT IAM Operations). - **Agency CIO** receive notification from the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool that a draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter is ready for their approval. Agency CIO reviews the attached document(s) and provides approval decision in NC eProcurement Contracts Tool. Denied approval

tasks go back to Agency Procurement to address the feedback identified in the document and / or comments field.

- Once approved by the Agency CIO, **Procurement Guidance Team** receive notification from the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool that a State Agency has submitted a draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter for review and approval

- **Procurement Guidance Team** saves a copy of submitted draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter to a Statewide IT Procurement Office SharePoint folder, and provides the Statewide IT Procurement Office File Number in the Comments field of the approval task in the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool. **Procurement Guidance Team** also adds the assigned Statewide IT Procurement Office staff member as the last approver in the approval workflow in the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool.

- **When the Contract Value is less than $25,000,** the **Procurement Guidance Team** does not need to add a Statewide IT Procurement Office staff member to the approval workflow in the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool.

- The applicable **NCDIT Reviewers** and **OSBM** (if an IT Project that is an Enterprise type) receive an approval request in the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool that contains the Statewide IT Procurement Office File Number to help them access the master version of the draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter in the Statewide IT Procurement Office SharePoint site.

- **NCDIT Reviewers** and **OSBM** access the draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter using the provided Statewide IT Procurement Office File Number, and provide their feedback, changes and comments in the master version of the draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter.

- **NCDIT Reviewers** mark their completion of the approval task in the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool and indicate in the Comments field if they need to see the draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter again after the agency has addressed their feedback.

- The assigned **Statewide IT Procurement Office** staff member completes their initial review and provides updates and comments in the master version of the draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter on SharePoint.

- If the assigned Statewide IT Procurement Office staff member determines that Statewide DOJ Legal review is required, the assigned **Statewide IT Procurement Office** staff member adds Statewide DOJ Legal to the approval workflow in the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool.

- **Statewide DOJ Legal** receives notification of a request for review, uses the Statewide IT Procurement Office File Number provided in Comments field to locate the master draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter on SharePoint, and completes their review of the draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter on SharePoint.

- The assigned **Statewide IT Procurement Office** staff member reviews and processes the feedback provided by Statewide DOJ Legal, and then completes their final review of the draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter.

- The assigned **Statewide IT Procurement Office** staff member copies the master version of the draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter that contain all of the NCDIT Reviewers comments and changes from SharePoint to the approval task in the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool.

- The assigned **Statewide IT Procurement Office** staff member reviews all comments by NCDIT Reviewers to see if all have approved and if any have indicated that they need to see the draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter again after the agency has addressed their feedback.

  If one or more NCDIT Reviewers or OSBM asked to see the draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter again, the assigned **Statewide IT Procurement Office** staff member marks the approval task in the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool as denied. If all looks good, the assigned **Statewide IT Procurement Office** staff member marks the approval task as approved.

- This notifies **Agency Procurement** that NCDIT Reviewers have completed the review process and documented their approval or any additional feedback, changes and comments.

- **Agency Procurement** reviews the master version of the draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter that contains all of the NCDIT Reviewers comments and changes, and works with Agency Business and other Agency Stakeholders as needed to process and resolve all comments and changes to the draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter.

- If the approval task was denied, **Agency Procurement** uses the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool to send the updated draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter that have addressed all feedback received from NCDIT Reviewer(s) for a second round of review and approval.

- **Procurement Guidance Team** receives notification from the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool that the agency is submitting a second round of review for the draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter and follows the same steps from the first round (e.g., saves master draft solicitation document(s) to SharePoint).

- **NCDIT Reviewers** follow the same steps from the first round. This process continues until all NCDIT Reviewers have indicated their approval of the draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter and that they do not need to see the draft IT contract amendment, renewal, or termination letter again.

	- **Statewide IT Procurement Office** also reviews any submitted Procurement Exception Requests in parallel to reviewing submitted draft IT contract amendment. - **Agency Procurement** sends NCDIT-approved IT contract amendments and renewals to vendor to sign, and then obtains agency signatures using agency-established process and tools. - **Agency Procurement** uploads executed IT contract amendment or renewal into NC eProcurement Contracts Tool. - **Agency Procurement** adjusts contract attributes (e.g., contract end date) as needed. - **Agency Procurement** monitors expiration date of IT contract and works with Agency Business within appropriate amount of lead time to determine if IT contract needs to be renewed (if available), rebid, or allowed to expire. - If applicable, **Agency Procurement** works with Agency Business and other appropriate agency stakeholders to send vendor cure notice(s) using agency-established process and tools to address vendor's non-compliant performance. - If necessary, **Agency Procurement** works with Agency Business and other appropriate agency stakeholders to develop draft termination letter and sends to NCDIT for approval through the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool. - **Agency Procurement** sends approved termination letter to vendor using agency-established process and tools and adjusts contract attributes (e.g., contract end date, contract status) as needed in the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool.

NC eProcurement Contracts Tool Tasks	For Contract Execution
	
	▼ ➠ **01 - Contract Execution** ⌄
	
	    🕐 Upload Fully Executed Contract Document ⌄
	
	    🕐 Confirm applicable Stakeholders for Notifications are listed under Contract Terms Attributes section of Overview Tab ⌄
	
	    🕐 Publish Contract Workspace ⌄
	
	For Contract Amendments
	
	▼ ⇨ **02 - Contract Modification** ⌄
	
	    ▼ ⇨ **Amendment Modification** ⌄
	
	       🕐 Prepare and upload Draft Amendment Document (REQUIRED) ⌄
	
	       🕐 Submit Standards Exception Request (Hosting) to NCDIT (if applicable) ⌄
	
	       🕐 Submit Standards Exception Request (NCID) to NCDIT (if applicable) ⌄
	
	       🕐 Submit Security Exception Request to NCDIT (if applicable) ⌄
	
	       🕐 Upload Procurement Exception Request to Procurement Exception Folder (if applicable) ⌄
	
	       🕐 Gain NCDIT Approval of Draft Amendment Document ⌄
	
	       🕐 Obtain Signatures on Amendment from Vendor and Agency Authorized Signer ⌄
	
	       🕐 Upload Fully Executed Amendment to Contract Document - IT Folder ⌄
	
	       🕐 Publish Contract Workspace ⌄
	
	For Contract Renewals
	
	▼ ⇨ **02 - Contract Modification** ⌄
	
	    ▼ ⇨ **Renewal Modification** ⌄
	
	       🕐 Prepare and upload Draft Renewal Document (REQUIRED) ⌄
	
	       🕐 Submit Standards Exception Request (Hosting) to NCDIT (if applicable) ⌄
	
	       🕐 Submit Standards Exception Request (NCID) to NCDIT (if applicable) ⌄
	
	       🕐 Submit Security Exception Request to NCDIT (if applicable) ⌄
	
	       🕐 Gain NCDIT Approval of Draft Renewal Document ⌄
	
	       🕐 Obtain Signatures on Renewal from Vendor and Agency Authorized Signer ⌄
	
	       🕐 Upload Fully Executed Renewal to Contract Document - IT Folder ⌄
	
	       🕐 Update Contract Expiration Date ⌄
	
	       🕐 Publish Contract Workspace ⌄

	For Contract Terminations
	
	▼ ⇨ **02 - Contract Modification** ∨
	
	    ▼ ⇨ **Termination Modification** ∨
	
	       🕒 Prepare and Send Request to Cure Notice ∨
	
	       🕒 Prepare and upload Draft Termination Letter (REQUIRED) ∨
	
	       🕒 Gain NCDIT Approval of Draft Termination Letter ∨
	
	       🕒 Send Termination Letter to Vendor ∨
	
	       🕒 Update Contract Expiration Date ∨
	
	       🕒 Publish Contract Workspace ∨
	
	       🕒 Update Contract Status to 'Closed' ∨

Helpful Tips	- **Creating Contract Workspaces for existing IT contracts**. **Agency Procurement** is able to create Contract Workspaces in the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool for IT contracts that were not procured in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool. Instead of creating a follow-on project from the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool, **Agency Procurement** can access the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool and select 'Contract Workspace (Procurement) under the Create section in the Common Actions portlet. After entering the requested fields about the specific IT contract into the Contract Workspace, **Agency Procurement** can upload the fully executed copies of the IT contract and any amendments or renewals that have been completed to date into the Contract Workspace. - **Publishing the Contract Workspace**. After first creating a Contract Workspace or completing the amendment or renewal process, **Agency Procurement** should be sure to publish the Contract Workspace. This allows notifications to be sent when applicable and allows the IT contract to be visible to other users. To publish a Contract Workspace, **Agency Procurement** can go to the Overview tab, select the blue 'Actions' button to the right of 'Contract Attributes' section, and select the 'Publish' button. - **Limiting Access to Contract Workspace**. By default, all Contract Workspaces in the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool are visible to all Contracts Tool users. To limit the access to a Contract Workspace to just users included on the Team tab, **Agency Procurement** can to the Overview tab, select the blue 'Actions' button to the right of 'Overview' section, select 'Edit Overview', and then select 'Private To Team Members' option in the Access Control field

D. Summary

With the streamlined IT Procurement Process described in Section C, Agency and NCDIT resources will change how they perform the IT procurement process and the tools they use.

We understand that adopting the changes to the IT procurement process will take time and there are resources available to support this change. In addition to this Playbook / Training Guide, there are instructor-led training sessions and job aids for the NC eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools that are available here: Training | NC eProcurement

We want your feedback on how to further streamline the IT procurement process. Please email your ideas to ImproveProcurement@nc.gov. A Procurement Improvement Committee (PIC) has been formed at NCDIT with the purpose of continually reviewing and improving the people, process, and technology dimensions of the IT Procurement Process. Your ideas will be added to the list of existing Improvement Opportunities for consideration.

E. Helpful Links

Listed below are a few links to helpful sites related to the IT Procurement Process.

- IT Procurement Training | NCDIT
- NC eProcurement (Ariba Buyer, Ariba Sourcing, Ariba Contracts)
- NC electronic Vendor Portal
- Planning Meeting Scheduling Site
- NC Statewide IT Procurement Office
- Privacy Threshold Analysis (PTA) SharePoint Site
- Touchdown System Access
- Touchdown System Training
- NCDIT EPMO
- NCDIT Project Management Services
- What is an IT Project?
- List of NCDIT EPMO Project Management Advisors by State Agency
- DIT NCID Service Help Desk
- Additional Frequently Asked Questions
- NC eProcurement Help Desk or call 888-211-7440 and select option 3

F. Appendix: IT Project Identification Tips

State Agencies can work with NCDIT EPMO early in the process for assistance in determining if an IT business need qualifies as an IT Project.

NCDIT EPMO has provided the following guidance to help State Agencies determine what qualifies as an IT Project. An IT Project is defined as:

- Temporary endeavor
- Has a start and end date
- Results in an IT product, system, application, or service being implemented or delivered
- There is no dollar threshold for cost per Statute

NCDIT EPMO indicates that efforts involving providing an IT service to citizens, businesses, employees, or providing a method for an agency to improve services or be more efficient at providing services, are typically deemed IT Projects that require NCDIT EPMO oversight. Listed below are a few examples of IT Projects:

- New technology purchases and implementation regardless of cost (e.g., new business application)
- Development and establishment of new IT service offering (e.g., ITSM/ITAM, CRM, Cisco telephony)
- Development and establishment of new capabilities
- Generally, feasibility studies and proof-of-concepts projects
- Generally, procurement using the RFP process for IT Technology or Services
- Outsourcing of business functions to a vendor that includes IT systems may be a project
- IT Reserve Fund Spending

If the answer to either of the following clarifying questions is "Yes," the effort would typically be considered an IT Project and require NCDIT EPMO oversight:

- Does the State Agency need to obtain an IT product, system, application, or service?
- Will the IT product, system, application, or service provide new or enhanced capability/functionality not currently possessed by the procuring organization?

The following are examples of IT procurements that would not be deemed an IT Project:

- Purchases related to IT hardware replacement or upgrades
- Purchased related to IT software upgrades
- Purchases related to IT Operations and Maintenance (O & M)

State Agencies can also refer to [Determining an IT Project](#) guide or [What-is-an-IT-Project.pdf (nc.gov)](#) for more information on this topic

G. Appendix: IT Procurement Process Flows

This section contains process flows for each step of the streamlined IT Procurement Process to show the key stakeholders that are typically involved and the activities that they perform. The figure below explains the information provided in the process flow slides that are provided in the following pages of this section.
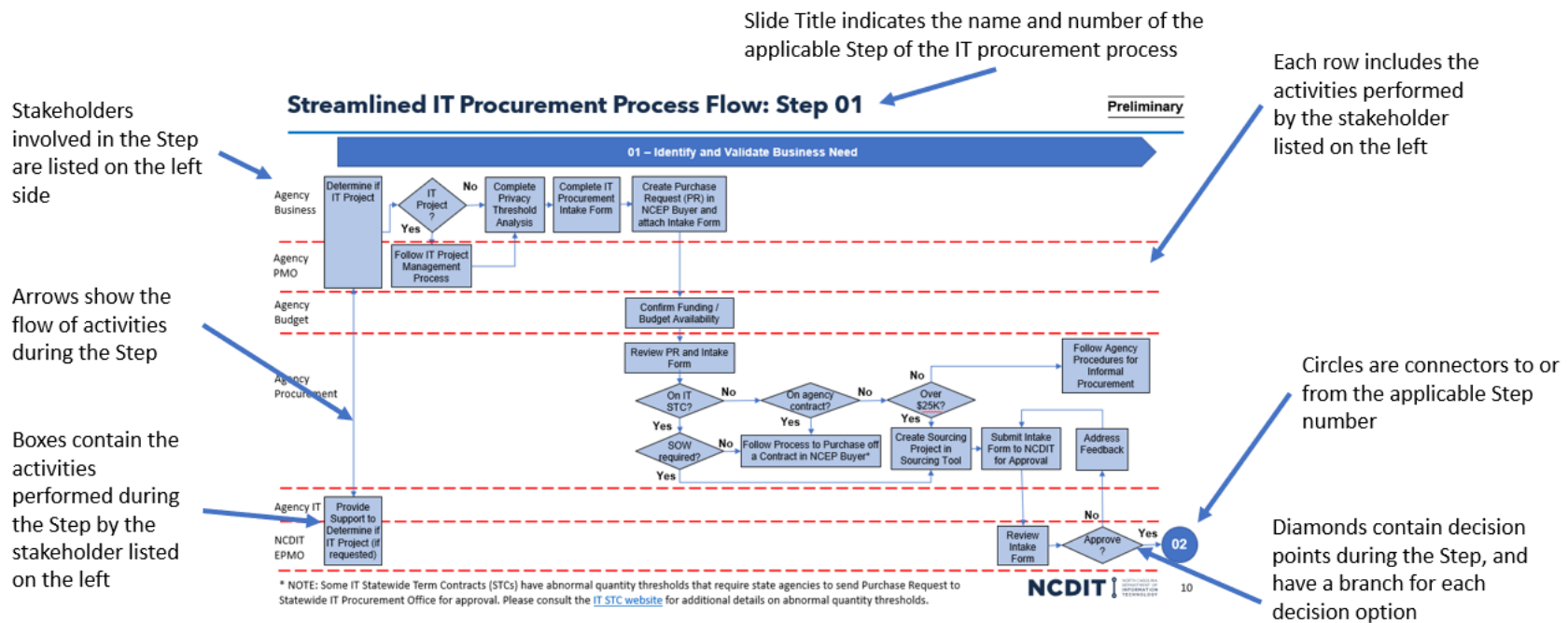
Figure: Provides legend for components within each Step's process flow

Streamlined IT Procurement Process (Step 01)

01 – Identify and Validate Business Need

Agency Business:
- Determine if IT Project
- IT Project? → No → Complete Privacy Threshold Analysis
- IT Project? → Yes
- Complete IT Procurement Intake Form
- Create Purchase Request (PR) in NCEP Buyer and attach Intake Form

Agency PMO:
- Follow IT Project Management Process

Agency Budget:
- Confirm Funding / Budget Availability

Agency Procurement:
- Review PR and Intake Form
- On IT STC? → No → On agency contract? → No → Over $25K? → No → Follow Agency Procedures for Informal Procurement
- On IT STC? → Yes → SOW required?
- SOW required? → No → Follow Process to Purchase off a Contract in NCEP Buyer*
- SOW required? → Yes
- On agency contract? → Yes
- Over $25K? → Yes → Create Sourcing Project in Sourcing Tool → Submit Intake Form to NCDIT for Approval → Address Feedback

Agency IT / NCDIT EPMO:
- Provide Support to Determine if IT Project (if requested)
- Review Intake Form → Approve? → No → Address Feedback
- Approve? → Yes → 02

* NOTE: Some IT Statewide Term Contracts (STCs) have abnormal quantity thresholds that require state agencies to send Purchase Request to Statewide IT Procurement Office for approval. Please consult the IT STC website for additional details on abnormal quantity thresholds.

Streamlined IT Procurement Process (Step 02)

Preliminary

02 – Conduct Planning Meeting

Streamlined IT Procurement Process (Step 03)

Preliminary

03 – Develop Sourcing Event

Streamlined IT Procurement Process (Step 04)

04 – Review and Approve Sourcing Event

Agency Business

Agency Procurement

03 → Send Draft Solicitation Document(s) for Approval → Procurement Exception? — **Yes** → Complete Procurement Exception Request Form and Submit for NCDIT Approval

No ↓

Review and Address Feedback from NCDIT on Procurement Exception or Draft Solicitation Document(s), and Resubmit for Approval

Agency IT

Agency Security

Agency Privacy Office

Agency PMO (if IT Project)

Agency Legal

Statewide Admin — Copy Draft Solicitation Document(s) to SharePoint

Copy Updated Document(s) from SharePoint to Sourcing Tool → Approved? — **No** / **Yes**

NCDIT EA — Review Draft Solicitation Document(s), on SharePoint, and Provide Feedback / Approval Decision — **No**

NCDIT ESRMO

NCDIT Privacy Office — Greater than $25K? — **Yes**

NCDIT EPMO (if IT Project)

Statewide IT Procurement Office — Review any Procurement Exception Request, and Provide Feedback / Approval Decision — Review Sourcing Event / Draft Solicitation Document(s) on SharePoint and Provide Approval Decision — Legal Review? — **Yes** / **No** — Add Statewide DOJ Legal to Workflow — Process Feedback and Provide Approval Decision — Send Approval to Post Memo → **05**

Statewide DOJ Legal — Review Draft Solicitation Document(s) on SharePoint

Streamlined IT Procurement Process (Step 05)

05 – Conduct Sourcing Event

Agency Procurement

(04) → **Launch Sourcing Event** → **Post Notice on eVP**

Aggregate Submitted Vendor Questions and Work with Agency Stakeholders to Develop Responses → **Develop and Post Addendum to Sourcing Event in Sourcing Tool and Post Addendum on eVP** → **Receive Vendor Responses in Sourcing Tool by Response Due Date and Time** → (06)

Agency Business

Agency IT

Agency Security

Agency Privacy Office

Agency Legal

Agency PMO

Agency Subject Matter Advisors

NCDIT ESRMO

NCDIT Enterprise Architecture

NCDIT Privacy Office

Statewide IT Procurement Office

Statewide DOJ Legal

Support Developing Responses to Vendor Submitted Questions (as needed)

IT Vendors

Review Sourcing Event on eVP and Follow Link to Sourcing Tool → **Questions from Vendors?** — Yes / No

Streamlined IT Procurement Process (Step 06)

06 – Evaluate Vendor Responses

Agency Business

Agency Procurement

(05) → Open Vendor Responses in Sourcing Tool After Response Due Date and Time → Post Preliminary Bid Tabulation on eVP and Conduct Initial Screening of Vendor Responses → Non-Responsive Vendor(s)? — No / Yes → Two-Step Process? — No / Yes → Request Approval to Deem Vendor Non-Responsive → Add Identified Evaluation Committee Members and Subject Matter Advisors to Sourcing Project → Notify Evaluation Committee Members and Subject Matter Advisors To Begin Evaluation of Responsive Vendor Responses → Aggregate Clarifying Questions and Develop Request for Clarification for Each Vendor → Send Request for Clarification to Vendors through Event Message in Sourcing Tool → Provide Vendors' Clarifications to Evaluation Committee Members and Subject Matter Advisors → Complete Exception Request Form(s) and Submit to NCDIT through Sourcing Tool (For Standards and Security Exc. Only) → (07)

Create Draft Award Recommendation and Submit Leading Vendor Proposal(s) to NCDIT for Review through Sourcing Tool

Agency Security

Evaluation Committee Members (and Subject Matter Advisors)

Conduct Evaluation of Vendor Responses per Guidance from Agency Procurement → Identify Clarifying Questions and Provide to Agency Procurement

Complete Evaluation of Vendor Responses and Identify Leading Vendor

Exceptions? — No / Yes

Agency IT

Agency PMO (if IT Project)

Statewide IT Procurement Office

Review and Provide Approval Decision

Statewide DOJ Legal

IT Vendors

Receive and Respond to Request for Clarification through Event Message

Streamlined IT Procurement Process (Step 08)

08 – Conduct Vendor Negotiations

Streamlined IT Procurement Process (Step 09)

09 – Review and Approve Award Recommendation

Agency Procurement

Evaluation Committee Members (and Subject Matter Advisors)

Agency IT

Agency Security

Agency Privacy Office

Agency PMO (if IT Project)

Agency Legal

OSBM (if IT Project)

Statewide IT Procurement Office

Statewide DOJ Legal

08 → Receive Notification of Approval Task in Sourcing Tool → Review Final Award Recommendation → Approved? — **No** → Provide Feedback in Sourcing Tool → Review and Address Feedback from NCDIT

Review Final Award Recommendation and Completed Leading Vendor BAFO

Yes

Legal Review? — **No** → Make Approval Decision → Approved? — **No** → Provide Feedback in Sourcing Tool

Yes → Add Statewide DOJ Legal to Workflow

Review Draft Award Recommendation and Provide Feedback

Approved? — **Yes** → Create and Provide Certification for Award → **10**

Streamlined IT Procurement Process (Step 10)

10 – Execute Contract

Agency Procurement

Less than $25,000 — **08**

More than $25,000 — **09**

08/09 → Get Agency Signatures on Contract → Post Award Notification on eVP → Email Executed Contract to Statewide IT Procurement Office (If over $25,000) → Create Follow-On Project in Contracts Tool and Upload Executed Contract in Contract Workspace → Send Executed Contract to Vendor

IT Vendor

Receive Executed Contract

H. Appendix: IT Procurement Process Responsibility Matrix

The table below contains the Responsibility Matrix for the IT procurement process to help show the responsibilities of each applicable stakeholder during each step of the streamlined IT procurement process.
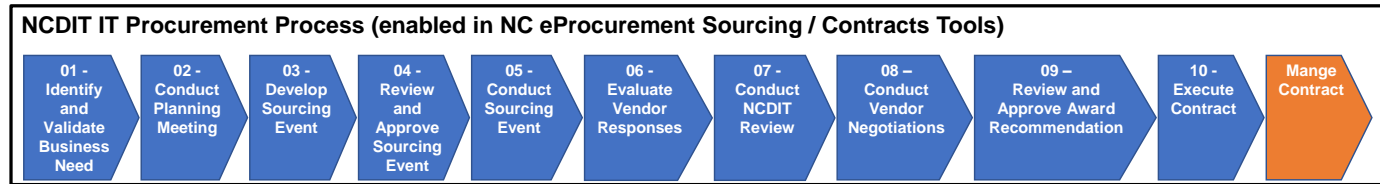
NCDIT IT Procurement Process (enabled in NC eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools)

01 - Identify and Validate Business Need → 02 - Conduct Planning Meeting → 03 - Develop Sourcing Event → 04 - Review and Approve Sourcing Event → 05 - Conduct Sourcing Event → 06 - Evaluate Vendor Responses → 07 - Conduct NCDIT Review → 08 – Conduct Vendor Negotiations → 09 – Review and Approve Award Recommendation → 10 - Execute Contract → Mange Contract

Stakeholder	Step 01	Step 02	Step 03	Step 04	Step 05	Step 06	Step 07	Step 08	Step 09	Step 10	Manage Contract
Agency CIO	A	A	A		I	C	C	I	I	A	R
Agency Business	R	R	C	C	C	C			C	C		C
Agency Procurement		C	R	C	A	R	C	R	C	R	R
Agency Budget	C										
Agency IT	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C		C
Agency IT Security		C	C	C	C	C	R	C	C		R
Agency Privacy Office		C	C	C			C				C
Agency PMO	C		C (if IT Project)	C (if IT Project)	C (if IT Project)	C (if IT Project)	C (if IT Project)	C (if IT Project)	C (if IT Project)		C (if IT Project)
Agency Legal		C	C	C	C		C	C	C		C
Agency Evaluation Committee						A	I	A	C		
NCDIT SCIO				A			A		A		A
NCDIT ESRMO		C		R	C		R	C			R
NCDIT Privacy Office				C	C		C				I
NCDIT Enterprise Architecture	C	C		R	C		R	C			R
NCDIT EPMO	R	C		R (if IT Project)			R (if IT Project)	C (if IT Project)	I (if IT Project)		R (if IT Project)
NCDIT IAM Operations							R (NCID only)				R (NCID only)
NCDIT Enterprise Operations							R	I			R
Statewide IT Procurement Office	C	C		R	C	C	R	C	R	I	R

Stakeholder	Step 01	Step 02	Step 03	Step 04	Step 05	Step 06	Step 07	Step 08	Step 09	Step 10	Manage Contract
Statewide DOJ Legal		C		C	C	C	C	C	C		C
OSBM									R (if IT Project that is Enterprise type)		R (if IT Project that is Enterprise type)

**A = Accountable, R = Responsible, C = Consulted, I = Informed**

I. Appendix: FAQs

Listed below are some common questions and their answers. Please see Additional Frequently Asked Questions for more.

1. **How can I adjust the email notifications I am receiving from the NC eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools?**

    The recommended steps below will help you adjust the default notification settings in the NC eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools so that you only receive the most important email notifications related to Sourcing Project or Contract Workspace tasks for which you have been specifically assigned as a watcher, or added by someone else as a reviewer or approver.

    a. Log into the NC eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools with your NCID/Password via the following LINK.

    b. Click on your initials in the top right of the screen and select 'Change notification **preferences'** from the dropdown.
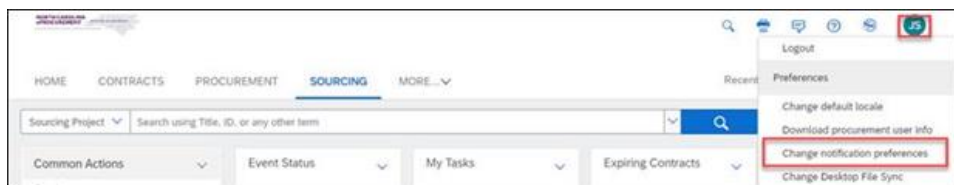
    c. By default, all notification options will be checked (meaning, you will receive an email for every action described below). You will not need most of these notifications, so we suggest you remove all checks and only add back a few. To quickly remove all checks, uncheck the top box next to **'Send me email notifications when:'**

    d. Once all checks have been removed, scroll down to find the following four options and put a check back in the box to their left, then click **'OK'.**
    *   Approval tasks are assigned to me.
    *   Review tasks are assigned to me.
    *   An approval task is assigned to me as a watcher.
    *   A review task is assigned to me as a watcher.

e. You should now only receive NC eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools-related email notifications for Sourcing Project or Contract Workspace tasks where your input is requested.

2. **How do I get added as a user to the NC eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools?**

    If a staff member needs access to the NC eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools, they should contact their agency's Security Administrator and provide their name, email address, and NCID username. If access is warranted, the Security Administrator will create and submit a User Maintenance eForm. A job aid on how to complete and submit a User Maintenance eForm is located at this link.

    If a Sourcing Project Owner, Contract Workspace Owner, or Approver / Reviewer is trying to add a specific person to a workflow and that person is NOT a current NC eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools user, the Sourcing Project Owner, Contract Workspace Owner, or Approver / Reviewer should contact their agency's Security Administrator to request the specific person be added to the NC eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools. Once the Security Administrator completes and submits a User Maintenance eForm and it is processed, the Sourcing Project Owner, Contract Workspace Owner, or Approver / Reviewer will be able to manually add the specific person to a workflow.

    To determine who the current Security Administrator is for your state agency, please contact the NC eProcurement Help Desk at 888-211-7440, option 1 or send email to ephelpdesk@its.nc.gov.

3. **How can I identify my agency's assigned NCDIT EPMO Project Management Advisor to help me determine if an IT procurement is an IT Project?**

    Please go to this link for a list of assigned NCDIT EPMO Project Management Advisors by agency.

4. **How do I update the status of a Sourcing Project in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool (e.g., when it is completed or cancelled)?**

    Souring Project Owners can update the status of their Sourcing Project in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool by going to the Overview tab of the Sourcing Project, clicking on Actions menu to the right of the Overview section label, clicking in the 'Edit Overview' option, and then changing the status in the 'Project State' field to the appropriate option (e.g., change from Active to Completed or Cancelled). The Sourcing Project Owner should then click 'OK'.
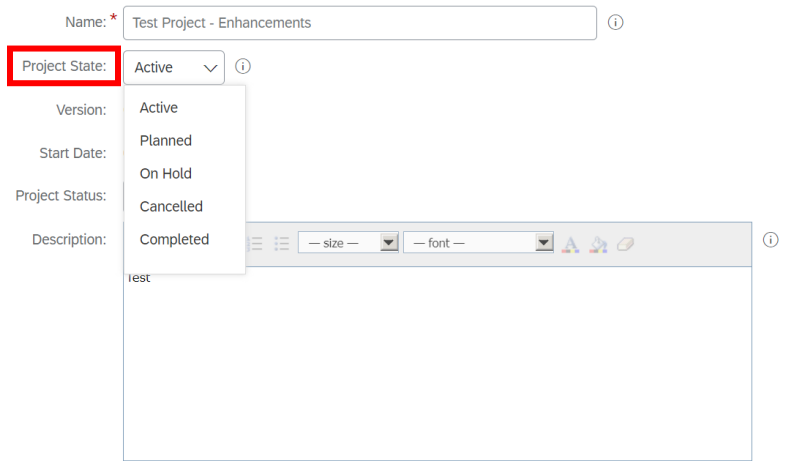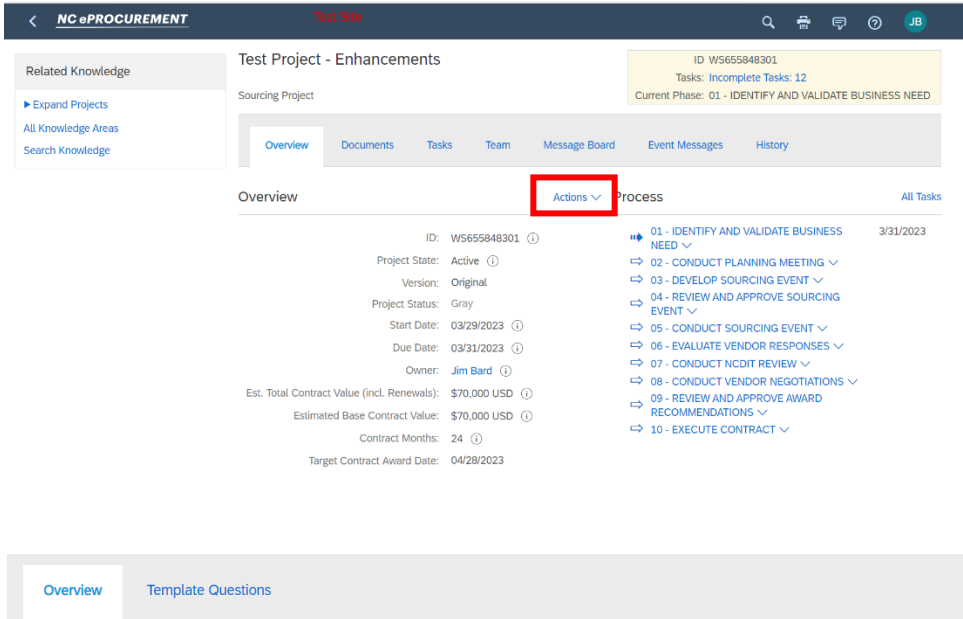
5. **How should I follow-up with an Approver / Reviewer that has not responded to an Approval / Review Task that I submitted in the NC eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools?**

    We recommend sending an email or a Teams message to one or more of the individuals in the specific user group with a reference to the specific IT Sourcing Project or IT Contract Workspace, and Approval / Review Task name. This helps make sure that the communication is received by the Approver / Reviewer in case they are having access issues with the NC eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools, or are not regularly monitoring their To Do tasks and have disabled email notifications sent by the NC eProcurement Sourcing / Contracts Tools.

6. **As an Approver or Reviewer, what should I do with an Approval or Review Task that I receive that has a Due Date in the past?**

As background, the Due Dates entered in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool for Approval and Review Tasks are picked by the task submitter. We suggest task submitters provide a minimum of five business days for approvals or reviews, but they may not always do so. An Approver or Reviewer is able to respond to an Approval or Review Task even if the Due Date is in the past.

NOTE: The Due Date entered by the task submitter applies to all Approvers or Reviewers in the workflow. Delays in completing Approval or Review task by Approvers or Reviewers early in the workflow where there are multiple Approver or Reviewer groups in series will leave less time for Approver or Reviewer groups later in the workflow.

7. **How do I submit a Standards Exception Request or a Security Exception Request if it not associated with a procurement, or if the procurement is under the formal procurement threshold?**

State agencies are encouraged to submit completed Standards and Security Exception Requests forms and supporting documentation through the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool if they are associated with an active IT procurement. State agencies can submit completed Standards and Security Exception Requests forms and supporting documentation through the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool if they are associated with an IT contract amendment or renewal that is being processed in the NC eProcurement Contracts Tool.

For state agencies that need to submit a Standards or Security Exception Request that is not associated with an active IT procurement or IT contract, there is still the option to email a completed Standards or Security Exception Request and supporting documentation to NCDIT at dit.exceptions@nc.gov. NCDIT will enter the submitted Standards or Security Exception Request form into the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool on your agency's behalf for processing.

State agencies that wish to use the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool to submit a Standards and Security Exception Request that is not associated with an active IT procurement or IT contract amendment or renewal can follow the steps below:

a. Agency user that wants to submit a Standards or Security Exception Request downloads the latest Standards or Security Exception Request Form from the NCDIT Exceptions website
b. Agency user completes the Standards or Security Exception Request Form and provides the completed form and any required supporting documentation to Agency Procurement
c. Agency Procurement creates a Sourcing Project (not a Sourcing Request) in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool, and selects Solicitation Vehicle to be IT: Exception Request Only
d. Agency Procurement attaches the completed Standards or Security Exception Request Form and supporting documentation to the applicable approval task in the Sourcing Project and submits it to NCDIT for approval (it will be sent first to Agency IT Security for their approval)
e. NCDIT Reviewers review and provide approval decision to submitted Standards or Security Exception Request in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool

8. **Can I invite only specific vendors to respond to a RFQ or SOW sourcing event in the NC eProcurement Sourcing Tool?**

Yes. Instead of posting notification of the Sourcing Event to the public via the electronic Vendor Portal (eVP), it may be necessary to directly invite a limited number of vendors for solicitations such as an RFQ or SOW. This can be done by clicking the **'Proceed To Invite Participants'** link at the top of **Section 2 (Suppliers)** and adding specific vendors.

a. Click the **'Proceed to Invite Participants'** link at the **top of Section 2 (Suppliers)**.
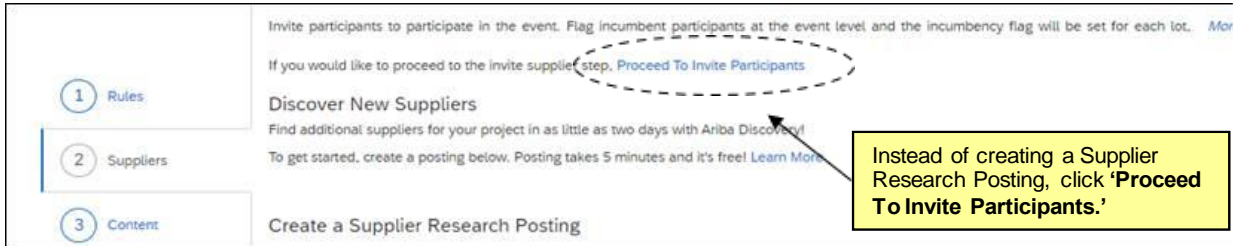
b. On the subsequent **'Invited Participants'** page, click the **'Invite Participants'** button.

c. Using the **'Search Filter,'** find the name of a vendor to invite, put a check to the left of their name, and click **'OK'** to invite them to respond. Clicking the **'+'** button will add additional search fields.

   Note: Only vendors actively registered in the NC electronic Vendor Portal will be available for selection.
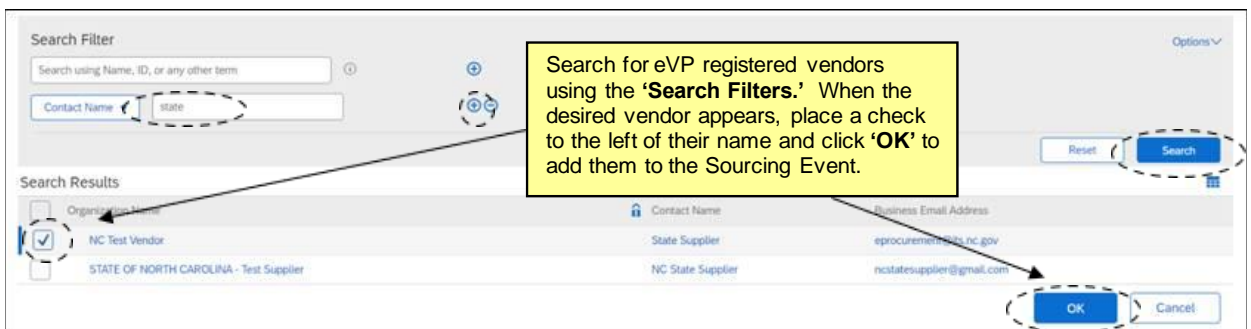
d. Invited vendors will display on the **'Invited Participants'** page. Repeat this process for as many vendors that need to be invited to the Sourcing Event by clicking the **'Invite Another Participant'** button.
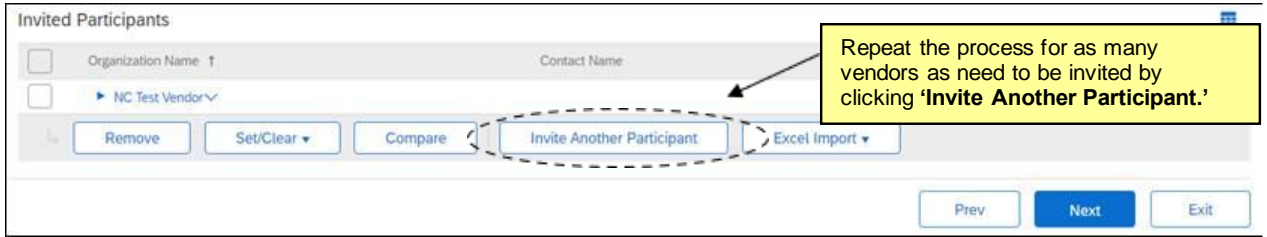
e. Go back to the Suppliers tab and click 'Publish'.