

Vendor Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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

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

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

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

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

In summary, there must be a business case established to justify the cost of awarding and maintaining an enterprise agreement. Generally, these are not mandatory contract vehicles; however, customers must follow the process described in the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Part 208.74, the DoD policy on SmartBUY, and any Defense Component unique policies. In addition, if the DoD ESI has Co-branded an Enterprise Software Agreement under the SmartBUY program, a specific Federal-wide policy on use will be issued. In all cases, the success of the agreement depends on most favorable pricing and high demand for the products and services. Vendors interested in initiating this process with the DoD ESI may submit a request of the DoD ESI Working Group Co-Chairs or any of the other DoD ESI Working Group members by navigating to the 'Ask an Expert' tab on the [ESI Website](#) and selecting the fourth button titled "I am a publisher / vendor interested in doing business with DoD ESI."

Additional information may be obtained by performing a search for "ESI Vendor's Toolkit" on the [ESI home page](#) in the upper right corner. You may also navigate directly to it at <http://www.esi.mil/contentview.aspx?id=327>.

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

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

To find the SPM information using the ESI agreement:

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

1. Using the Search feature:

- a. On the Home Page, enter your Publisher name in the search area in the upper right and click the ‘search’ button.
- b. You will be presented with several tabs, including Agreements. Choose the Publisher you represent.
- c. If more than one is listed, click on the appropriate BPA
- d. Choose the appropriate Reseller /Direct Sales choice
- e. Click the POCs tab for the Software Product Manager contact information

2. Using the Agreements tab:

- a. On the Home Page, click the Agreements tab. A list will be displayed underneath. Perform one of the following....
 - Select ‘Software Agreements’ and choose the appropriate Publisher

OR

 - Select ‘Service Agreements’ and choose the appropriate Service Provider

OR

 - Select ‘Hardware Agreements’ and choose the appropriate Hardware Vendor.
- b. Whichever path you take above, you will be prompted to select your component or organization. Click ‘Go’ for a list of search results.
- c. If more than one is listed, click on the appropriate BPA
- d. Choose the appropriate Reseller /Direct Sales choice
- e. Click the POCs tab for the Software Product Manager contact information

3. Using the “Ask an Expert” feature:

- a. On the ESI Web site: www.esi.mil:
- b. Select the “Ask an Expert” tab

- c. Click the second button, titled "I'd like to request a consultation with a DoD ESI software licensing subject matter expert."
- d. Select the appropriate Vendor from the drop-down list.
- e. Select your Organization from the drop-down list
- f. Select your Classification from the drop-down list (DoD Active Duty, DoD Civilian, DoD Contractor, or Other.)
- g. Enter your name, email address, and enter the pertinent information you wish to convey to the SPM into the Your Question: text box. It will be routed automatically to the appropriate SPM
- h. Select the "Submit" button.

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

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

1. Select the 'Ask an Expert' tab
2. Select the appropriate button of the five for your situation.
3. When applicable, choose the appropriate Vendor, your Organization, your name and contact information, your classification, or any text requested
4. Click the "Submit" button – your inquiry will be automatically routed to the appropriate SPM or Subject Matter Expert.

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

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

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

Policy related to ESI can be found by performing a search for the word "policy" as detailed in UQ2 above. Choose the appropriate document under the 'Resources /Tools' tab.

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

Information related to SmartBUY can be found by searching the site for “SmartBUY Alliance”, and it is the first choice on the ‘Resources /Tools’ tab. More detailed information can be found at the SmartBUY Software Overview GSA Web Page at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/105119>

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

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

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

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