

(e) (1) If a contract is awarded based on competitive sealed proposals, the WSSC shall seek proposals by issuing a request for proposals.

(2) A request for proposals shall include:

(i) A statement describing the scope of the contract, **INCLUDING THE EXPECTED DEGREE OF MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PARTICIPATION, AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (F)(3)(VI) OF THIS SECTION;**

(ii) The factors, including price, that will be used in evaluating proposals; and

(iii) The relative importance of each factor.

(3) After receipt of proposals, but before the contract is awarded, the WSSC may conduct discussions with an offeror to:

(i) Obtain the best price for the WSSC; and

(ii) Ensure full understanding of the requirements of the WSSC, as set forth in the request for proposals and in the proposal.

(4) The WSSC:

(i) Shall treat all responsible offerors fairly and equally; and

(ii) May allow each responsible offeror to revise the offeror's initial proposal and submit a best and final offer.

(5) The WSSC shall award a contract based on competitive sealed proposals to the responsible offeror who submits the proposal or best and final offer that the WSSC determines is the most advantageous to the WSSC, considering the evaluation factors set out in the request for proposals.

**(F) (1) IN THIS SUBSECTION, "MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 14-301 OF THE STATE FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT ARTICLE.**

**(2) (I) BY RESOLUTION AND BY ADOPTING REGULATIONS, THE WSSC SHALL ESTABLISH A MANDATORY MINORITY BUSINESS UTILIZATION PROGRAM TO FACILITATE THE PARTICIPATION OF RESPONSIBLE CERTIFIED MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISES IN CONTRACTS AWARDED BY THE WSSC IN ACCORDANCE WITH COMPETITIVE BIDDING OR PROPOSAL PROCEDURES.**