DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

http://www.nih.gov

Sole Source Justification (SSJ)

FAR 8.401 & GSAM/R 538.7104-3(b)(1)

1. Acquisition Title: NIAMS Information Technology (IT) Security Support Service
Division: National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS)
Contracting Activity: National Institutes of Health (NIH)
NIH Office of Acquisitions and Logistics Management (OALM)
Author: *Kara Brannon Contract Specialist*

2. Nature and/or Description of the Action being Approved:
National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS) requests a Modification against GS35F135BA/ 75N98026F00023 with the contractor listed in the table below. This acquisition is conducted under the Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) Program using the ordering procedures established by the General Services Administration found in the General Services Acquisition Manual/Regulation (GSAM/R) at subpart 538.71. The Government projects award for *June 2026* using fiscal year *2026 Appropriations* funds.

Contractor: *Effectual Public Sector Inc.* **163 Waterfront ST STE 450** **Oxon Hill, Maryland 20745**				
Schedule Contract Number: *GS35F135BA 75N98026F00023*				
Performance Period	**Dates/Duration**	**Unit Price/CLIN**	**Multiplier**	**Total**
Base Period	*6 months*	*$135,369.00*	*1*	*$135,369.00*
Option to Extend Services per FAR Clause 52.217-8	*6 months*	*$135,369.00*	*1*	*$135,369.00*
Estimated Total Dollar Value:				$270,738.00
Original Contract Value:			*$135,369.00*	
New Contract Value:			*$270,738.00*	

[Last updated 4/7/2026.]

3. Description of Supplies and/or Services:

NIAMS IT services and applications must comply with the Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA) of 2014; Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) Publication (PUB) 200, Minimum Security Requirements for Federal Information and Information Systems; OMB policies and procedures; NIST, HHS, and NIH standards, guidelines and associated methods and techniques for providing adequate information security for all information systems that support the operations and assets of the agency. To ensure adherence to these Acts, policies, standards, and guidelines, NIAMS requires the following services:

IT Security Documentation Services Support

The contractor will provide extensive documentation support services to ensure that NIAMS security processes and systems are clearly documented and compliant with federal standards. This includes developing, updating, and maintaining critical documents such as System Security Plans (SSP), Risk Management Framework (RMF) artifacts, policies, procedures, and other required documentation.

Program Management Support

The contractor will assist in managing the information security program, ensuring that all compliance, risk management, and systems security activities are coordinated effectively. This includes developing timelines, managing project deliverables, and regularly updating NIAMS leadership to ensure the security program's success.

Comprehensive Security Assessment and Authorization (SA&A) Support

The contractor will conduct thorough Security Assessment and Authorization (SA&A) analyses, ensuring that all systems are assessed for vulnerabilities and authorized in compliance with federal standards. This includes preparing for assessments, managing the authorization process, and coordinating with federal auditors and internal stakeholders.

Continuous Diagnostics and Mitigation (CDM) Support

The contractor will provide continuous diagnostics and mitigation (CDM) support to ensure that security risks are continuously identified, assessed, and addressed. This included monitoring network traffic, performing vulnerability scans, and recommending solutions to mitigate potential risks and vulnerabilities across NIAMS IT infrastructure.

Related IT Security Services

In addition to the above, the contractor will offer comprehensive IT security services that include, but are not limited to:

Security Awareness training and support

Incident response and recovery planning

Risk assessments and ongoing risk management

Assistance with compliance reporting and audits

4. Authority Cited and Rationale: Authority of the FSS Program, Title III of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 (41 U.S.C. 251, et seq.); Title 40 U.S.C. 501, Services for Executive Agencies, as implemented at FAR 8.401 and GSAM/R 538.7104-3(b)(1).

b. GSAM/R 538.7104-3(b)(1)(ii)- Only one source is capable of providing the products, services, or solution required at the level of quality required because the products, services, or solutions are unique or highly specialized.

EPS is the incumbent contractor performing the cybersecurity services of providing ongoing assessments of the NIAMS IT Security Program objectives and the NIAMS IT systems and infrastructure of the NIH Information Security Program to assist with the documentation and implementation of the NIAMS compliance strategy for specific policies, standards, methods, processes, and tools for Federal Government IT security compliance, and for varying compensating controls to address centralized HHS, NIH, and NIAMS policies and standards. Without continued contractor support, the cybersecurity operations would be materially degraded, placing NAIMS' ability to carry out its mission at significant operational risk.

Although other firms may be capable of performing this work in the broader marketplace, a non-incumbent contractor could not reasonably assume full responsibility for these services in time to meet NIAMS' immediate need without a substantial transition period. NIAMS estimates that at least 60 days would be required for a successor contractor to complete onboarding, access provisioning, knowledge transfer, operational turnover, and assumption of technical responsibility without service degradation. Attempting to compete and award a new contract order would therefore compromise the required 60-day transition period. Continued performance by EPS is necessary to preserve commonality, interoperability, and continuity of operations for the 6-month extension period while the Government works toward the recompete award.

5. Market Research:

Consistent with RFO/FAR Companion Part 10 principles, the Government considered available market intelligence, prior market research, and the practical realities of the current requirement. That assessment supports the conclusion that, although qualified firms may generally exist in the marketplace for cybersecurity support, no alternate contractor could reasonably assume performance in time to meet NIH's immediate need for uninterrupted network services during the requested 6-month extension period. Conducting a new short-duration competition among schedule holders for this 6-month extension would introduce delay, transition risk, duplicative administrative burden, onboarding, access provisioning, knowledge transfer, and operational turnover costs.

6. Procurement history:

a. Contractor: Effectual Public Sector, Inc.
Contract or Order Number: GS35F135BA/75N98026F00023
Award Date and Period of Performance: 02/01/2026 to 07/31/2026
Value (including all options): $135,369.00
Competitive Status: Sole Source
Authority formerly relied upon if Not Competed: (FAR) 8.405-6(a)(1)(i)(B) (i.e., Only one source is capable of providing the supplies or services required at the level of quality required because the supplies or services are unique or highly specialized).

b. Contractor: JHC Technology, Inc. .
Contract or Order Number: GS35F135BA/ 75N92020F00188
Award Date and Period of Performance: 02/01/2026 to 07/31/2026
Value (including all options): $135,369.00
Competitive Status: Sole Source
Authority formerly relied upon if Not Competed: Not Applicable the requirement was competed with Full and Open Competition.

7. Actions to Foster Competition for Future, Similar Requirements:

NIAMS will complete the transition planning and proceed with the competed follow-on requirement once awarded so that this 6-month extension is not extended beyond the minimum needed continuity period.

8. Additional Information or Other Facts:

It is noted that during the current recompete process a Source of Sought notice was placed on GSA eBuy and there were noted responses from at least 11 vendors within GSA eBuy. Outside of GSA eBuy over 65 vendors submitted responses and capability statements via email directly to the Contract Specialist and Contracting Officer listed for responses. Although, it is also noted that the Source of Sought notice was released prior to the understanding of the critical 60-day transition period needed, and thus the base period of performance of the recomepte action would need to be later than anticipated to accommodate this critical need.

9. Technical or Requirements Program Management Certification: I certify that the supporting data under my cognizance which are included in the justification are accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. [Always required.]

Renee Strong
Contracting Officer Representative

RENEE E. STRONG -S

Digitally signed by RENEE E. STRONG -S
Date: 2026.07.10 11:35:40 -04'00'

Signature & Date:

10. Best Value Determination: As the contracting officer, I hereby determine that the anticipated price to the Government for this contract action represents the best value for the Government. This determination is due to the assessment of the need and qualifications of the current vendor that are vital to continue uninterrupted

while the five-year recompete of the requirement is executed. The current vendor that provided pricing for the extension of services for the 6 months was consistent with the pricing for the current services and thus this pricing is determined to be reasonable.

11. Contracting Officer (CO) *Certification and Approval*: I hereby certify that this justification is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. [Always required; CO approval authority is limited to $900 thousand.]

Sevag Kasparian	SEVAG B. KASPARIAN -S	Digitally signed by SEVAG B. KASPARIAN -S Date: 2026.07.10 13:10:47 -04'00'
Contracting Officer		**Signature & Date:**

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