

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Why did PEN launch a sprint on the theme of “Proactive Contract Management”?

Once a contract is signed, the focus shifts from procurement to performance: delivering outcomes for the public good.

Traditionally, with so much on their plates, many governments and agencies end up taking a “set it and forget it” approach to contract management, assuming that once a qualified vendor is identified, they’ll be able to meet contract objectives. In contrast, Proactive Contract Management empowers procurement and program staff to work collaboratively with vendors to achieve the outcomes outlined in the original solicitation. Through this sprint, PEN hopes to increase exposure, enthusiasm, and adoption of Proactive Contract Management strategies across various jurisdictions and agencies, shifting the perspective and reframing what effective contract management can look like in the public sector.

What is cohort-based learning?

Cohort-based learning brings together teams from various governments and agencies to develop skills, exchange insights, and apply best practices to produce a clear deliverable that addresses a core procurement challenge. Each team is represented by 2-4 staff members to support learning at scale.

Sprints are designed to be fast-paced experiences with multiple sessions built on three core components: **interactive group sessions, team assignments, and coaching calls** that collectively help teams refine their final deliverable.

What will I learn/achieve during this sprint?

All participating teams will work towards a common goal: developing a contract management plan for an upcoming high-priority solicitation or existing contract. During this experience, *your team will*:

- Review core components of a standardized contract management plan, discussing best practices to adjust for your jurisdiction’s requirements and contract needs;
- Discuss how to anticipate contract risks and how identifying likely challenges can be crucial to developing an active contract management strategy with the right intensity;
- Develop, analyze, and interpret relevant metrics and KPIs to support effective contract management;
- Explore strategies to build alignment and clarity of roles for key internal and external stakeholders to strengthen contract management policies and procedures.

Who is eligible to apply for this sprint?

All Procurement Excellence Network (PEN) members are welcome to apply. We welcome applications from a diverse spectrum of public organizations in our network, including but not limited to, the following:

- Any city, county, regional, metro, or state government
- Public colleges/universities
- Public school districts
- Transportation or utility authorities

Does my entire proposed team need to be PEN Members to participate?

Yes! This opportunity is exclusively available to PEN Members. Each participating government will designate a team of **2–4 participants**, and **every team member must be registered as a PEN Member**. When submitting your application, please share the membership [sign-up](#) link with your colleagues. Signing up takes less than one minute!

Will everyone who applies be able to participate in the sprint?

PEN is excited to support up to 10 governments to participate in this exclusive opportunity. All applicants will be notified of their selection status within 2 weeks of the deadline closing. PEN plans to offer more cohort-based learning opportunities consistently in the future. Keep an eye out for future updates on other cohort-based learning experiences ahead!

How much time is required for participation during the sprint?

To maximize the benefits of this learning opportunity, teams should be ready to invest at least ~4-5 hours per week to achieve their goals. Participants should expect to attend the following during this sprint:

- Orientation session [1 session x 60 minutes]
- Bi-weekly Cohort Sessions [5 sessions x 90 minutes each]
- Coaching calls [5 sessions x 60 minutes each]

Assignments given in the group training sessions will contribute to the final deliverable, which is due before the next session. Additionally, participants should expect to spend a couple of hours in independent teamwork to complete their assignments.

What are coaching calls, and how will they enhance the sprint experience?

Coaching calls are dedicated to workshop ideas, troubleshooting challenges, and reviewing key concepts from recent training to help support the development of your team's final deliverable. Between cohort group training sessions, each participating government or agency will meet weekly with its assigned Partners for Public Good (PPG) coach. These coaching sessions are mandatory and offer great value in providing a dedicated space to reflect, ideate, and work collaboratively to achieve desired outcomes.

My organization is very large, and we have many PEN members. Are we able to submit multiple applications?

We encourage teams of 2-4 people from each government or agency to participate and collaboratively submit a single application. However, more than one application can be submitted per government or agency if there are distinctly different teams and unique solicitations or existing contracts to workshop.

My government participated in a previous PEN cohort-based learning offering. Can we still apply?

Yes! This sprint is open to all PEN members, including individuals and governments that have participated in previous cohort-based learning offerings or other programming with Partners for Public Good.

What is the cost of the sprint?

FREE! All PEN members have exclusive access to apply for cohort-based learning opportunities. Please note, you **must** be a PEN member to participate in this sprint. If you are not yet a PEN member, sign-up [here](#).

Additional Questions? If you have any other inquiries that are not answered in this document, please reach out to pen@partnersforpublicgood.org.