

Using the Discussion Forum

This document is a quick-reference guide for procurement users who want to use the Discussion Forum in the Arizona Procurement Portal (APP) to communicate with suppliers. If you have any questions, please contact the APP Help Desk at 602-542-7600 or to submit an issue use this form <https://spo.az.gov/app-service-request>. Questions can be emailed to app@azdoa.gov. Additional resources are also available on the SPO Website: <https://spo.az.gov/>

Once a solicitation has been released to suppliers for offers, suppliers are able to submit clarifying questions via the Discussion Forum. The Discussion Forum provides procurement users with the following functionality:

1. **Categorizations:** When a message is being drafted, users must indicate the type of question they are asking (i.e., Clarification, Q&A, Negotiations, Other).
2. **Streamlined Communications:** The Discussion Forum provides a traceable and streamlined two-way communication channel between suppliers and procurement users.
3. **Downloadable Content:** Procurement users are able to download all content from the Discussion Forum and attach it as an RFX exhibit and/or to a contract. This can be particularly helpful for posting content to the public portal.

Using the Discussion Forum

1. From any page in APP, select **Sourcing Projects** from the **Sourcing** drop-down menu.
2. Search for the solicitation you wish to edit and then click the  (**Pencil**) icon to open it.
3. Navigate to the **Discussion Forum** tab.
4. Any supplier discussions are displayed. Use the **Display** drop-down menu to refine your search results as necessary.
5. Click on the message you wish to respond to.
6. Review the message and then click the **Reply** or **Forward** button.
 - **Reply** will send only your answer to the question to the addressees. The supplier who submitted the question will see the answer linked to their original post. If you use this option we highly recommend you copy and paste the original question into your answer for the benefit of other suppliers viewing the answer.
 - **Forward** will send both the question **AND** your answer to the addressees. The supplier who asked the question will not see the answer linked to their original question – they will see it as a new post.
7. Enter your response and attach any associated files.
8. If you want the response to be visible to all suppliers, change the **To** dropdown to **All Not blocked bidders** (this will allow all suppliers, including those who elect to participate in the sourcing event after the answer is posted, to see the response).
9. Click the **Send** button.



Note: You are also able to use the **Compose** button in the **Discussion Forum** tab to write messages to project team members or suppliers. After clicking the **Compose** button, select the type of message you are drafting (Q&A, Negotiations, Other, or Clarification) and who the message should be sent to and then enter the details of the message.

It is recommended that all supplier communication throughout the solicitation process be conducted via the Discussion Forum so there is complete transparency and traceability.