Federal
Acquisition
Institute

Mission Driven.
Customer Focused.

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Vision

The premier institution
of acquisition
workforce excellence

Mission

Foster the development
of a high-performing,
qualified civilian
acquisition workforce

Strategic Goals

Goal 1: Enable a qualified
acquisition workforce

Goal 2: Integrate acquisition policy,
practice, and people

Goal 3: Optimize resources to
successfully execute our mission

www.FAI.gov

Letter from the Director

The acquisition landscape is changing. Federal agencies are required to deliver more efficient solutions to achieve their unique missions while aligning with industry practices. The workforce of the future must be agile and adept with technology while garnering new skills to serve as trusted partners who execute acquisitions successfully. Ready access to information and the ever-evolving pace of technology have changed expectations of learning and development organizations. The acquisition workforce—the Federal Acquisition Institute's (FAI's) key customer—expects well-packaged, customized learning resources in modalities available anytime, anywhere.

In FY19, FAI focused on significant initiatives to meet these requirements. We recognized and responded to the workforce's desire to move from classroom to virtual instruction for adult learners. Moving to virtual instruction has enabled FAI to increase course offerings at reduced expense. We created continuous learning resources that strengthen acquisition program management and teams and build specialized IT expertise. We empowered contracting professionals to hone their craft with customer-friendly tools and redoubled our commitment to efficiently steward resources for the acquisition workforce.

FAI is trending in a positive direction. We doubled the number of FAI course graduates over FY18 and increased the number of virtual instructor led (vILT) course offerings. In one particular instance, we were able to cancel a classroom course due to low enrollment and purchase three vILT Emergency Contracting course offerings. During FY20, FAI will increase collaboration with our agency partners, industry and academia. As a result of our standing agreements, we have made research results available, eliminated duplicative development efforts and expanded training opportunities for our AWF professionals. We share common challenges, working together and joining forces we stand stronger than if we stand individually. The FAI team stands ready and willing.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey B. Birch
Director
Federal Acquisition
Institute

Advancing Acquisition Excellence

A Mission-Critical Workforce

Successful acquisitions depend on a high-performing and qualified acquisition workforce. FAI fosters development of over 193,000 civilian acquisition workforce members through professional certification training and career development, human capital planning, and acquisition research. Working across the 23 Chief Financial Officers Act agencies and members of the Small Agency Council, these acquisition professionals steward over $205 billion in products and services to keep the American public healthy and safe.

The performance of this diverse workforce rests on the skills and knowledge of each member applied in varied, increasingly complex environments. From the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the International Trade Commission to the Departments of Homeland Security and Veterans Affairs, certified contracting officers (COs), contracting officer's representatives (CORs), and program and project managers (P/PMs) work collaboratively with systems engineers, logisticians, and cost estimators to efficiently acquire the services, technologies, and systems that facilitate medical care, predict the weather, protect the environment, secure our nuclear energy supply, defend our homeland, and transport Americans across air, land, sea, and space safely.

FAI's certification training and learning and development tools ensure acquisition professionals have the necessary experience and critical thinking skills to deliver in support of their unique agency missions in today's fast paced, complex operating environment.

Office of Federal Procurement Policy

Strategic Direction

GSA

Office of Government-wide Policy

Operational Direction

Federal Acquisition Institute

The 2011 Federal Acquisition Improvement Act outlines 12 statutory responsibilities for FAI.

The FAI Team: Benedict Eng, Teresa Reefe, Jeffrey Birch, Anne Reinhold, Jim Peterson, Lori Taylor, Lynne Schneider, and Jane Sang. Not pictured: John Andre and Robert Faulk.
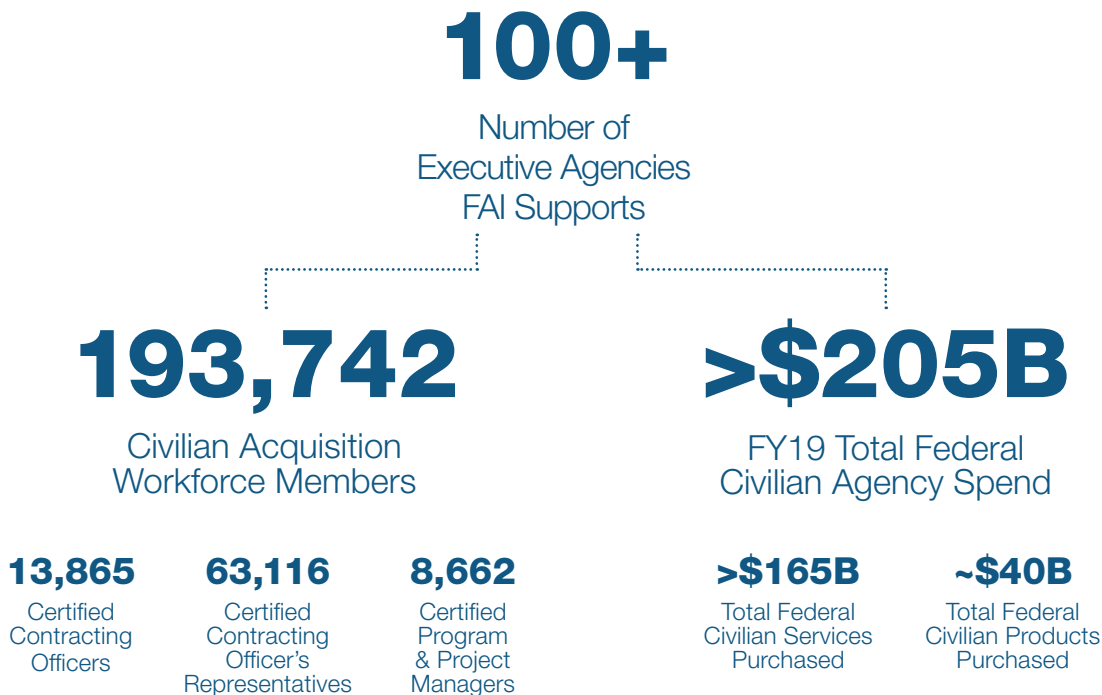
A Collaborative Leadership Approach

Sustaining a high-performing workforce requires the collective effort of many stakeholders. FAI is the only federal organization integrating mission-critical acquisition workforce development efforts and acquisition stakeholders government-wide. In FY19, FAI partnered with agency stakeholders and industry to create learning resources and career development tools, understand trends, and share best practices across the acquisition community.

FAI led a collaborative effort to strengthen civilian acquisition program management, presented to peers and industry leaders in multiple forums and conferences, and gathered lessons learned and innovative practices that can be tailored and applied in the federal context. FAI convened interagency discussions with functional leaders and acquisition career managers regularly and established an online community of practice to share information and best practices.

To prepare the workforce for the future, FAI sought input from acquisition stakeholders about the changing acquisition environment, anticipated workforce requirements, and how to best position itself to support the workforce and its key stakeholders. Government-wide collaboration is critical today and will be even more important for tackling our common challenges going forward.

100+
Number of
Executive Agencies
FAI Supports

193,742
Civilian Acquisition
Workforce Members

>$205B
FY19 Total Federal
Civilian Agency Spend

13,865
Certified
Contracting
Officers

63,116
Certified
Contracting
Officer's
Representatives

8,662
Certified
Program
& Project
Managers

>$165B
Total Federal
Civilian Services
Purchased

~$40B
Total Federal
Civilian Products
Purchased

Empowering an Agile Workforce

A high-performing workforce requires effective teamwork across multiple functions, specialized knowledge and expertise, and access to just-in-time learning resources. FAI's continuous learning resources and customer-friendly tools prepare the workforce to achieve their agency missions.

Continuous Learning Resources

FAI's cross-functional and specialized learning opportunities equip acquisition teams to solve complex acquisition and business challenges at the highest level.

Building Contracting Skills

FAI developed four new training courses for acquisition and contracting professionals that support better buying:

- Establishing Line Items for Contracts and Orders,
- Verifying Offeror or Quoter Registration in the System for Award Management,
- Contract Types, and
- Price Analysis.

FAI also updated 15 courses to address policy and regulatory changes, and to incorporate 508-compliant materials.

Cross-Functional Courses

Teamwork and effective program and project management are essential to successful acquisition outcomes in the rapidly changing acquisition environment. FAI led an interagency team that created four courses to strengthen acquisition program and project management. This series of courses is key to implementing the Program Management Improvement Accountability Act (PMIAA) talent management and training strategy for the workforce. Offered virtually, these courses focus on cross-functional interactions between COs, CORs, and P/PMs that span the acquisition lifecycle.

The first course, completed by 525 students in FY19, centers on team roles, responsibilities,

The interagency, cross-functional course development team: LaTanya Anderson, Department of Interior; John Lackey, Department of Veterans Affairs; Becky Zusman, General Services Administration (GSA); Jim Peterson, FAI; Tim Whalen, Department of Homeland Security; Jill Segarra, GSA; Joy Garnett, Department of Treasury; Jeff Koses, GSA; and Jennifer Brondyk, GSA.

and decision-making. The three other courses apply critical thinking in developing requirements, identifying the best contracting solution, and achieving acquisition program goals. To develop the series, FAI partnered with GSA's Center for Acquisition Professional Excellence. In FY20, the team will develop a capstone course where learners apply the knowledge, skills, and abilities from the previous courses to navigate an acquisition project challenge.

Specialized IT Training

IT acquisition continues to increase in complexity with new requirements around cybersecurity and secure supply chain. IT spending is projected to rise. In FY19, FAI moved proactively to sponsor an interagency cohort of 30 COs and P/PMs through the Digital IT Acquisition Professional training program. This program equipped the cohort to be more effective when preparing requirements for and procuring digital services. Acquisition professionals who successfully complete the program earn the specialized certification required to buy digital services. By sponsoring a cohort, FAI made this highly competitive program available to more workforce members and relieved the cost burden for agencies. FAI plans to sponsor additional cohorts in the future.

Fueling Change

FAI created the Procurement Innovation Lab Primer, a video series that outlines eight proven, innovative practices to improve procurement outcomes and fuel cultural change in federal agencies. The primer was a Bronze winner at the Omni Awards, which recognize outstanding achievements in film, video, web, and mobile media.

"This is so timely. The new entrants and even mid-level folks... want and need this map. FAI is putting out great information and tools for the acquisition community."

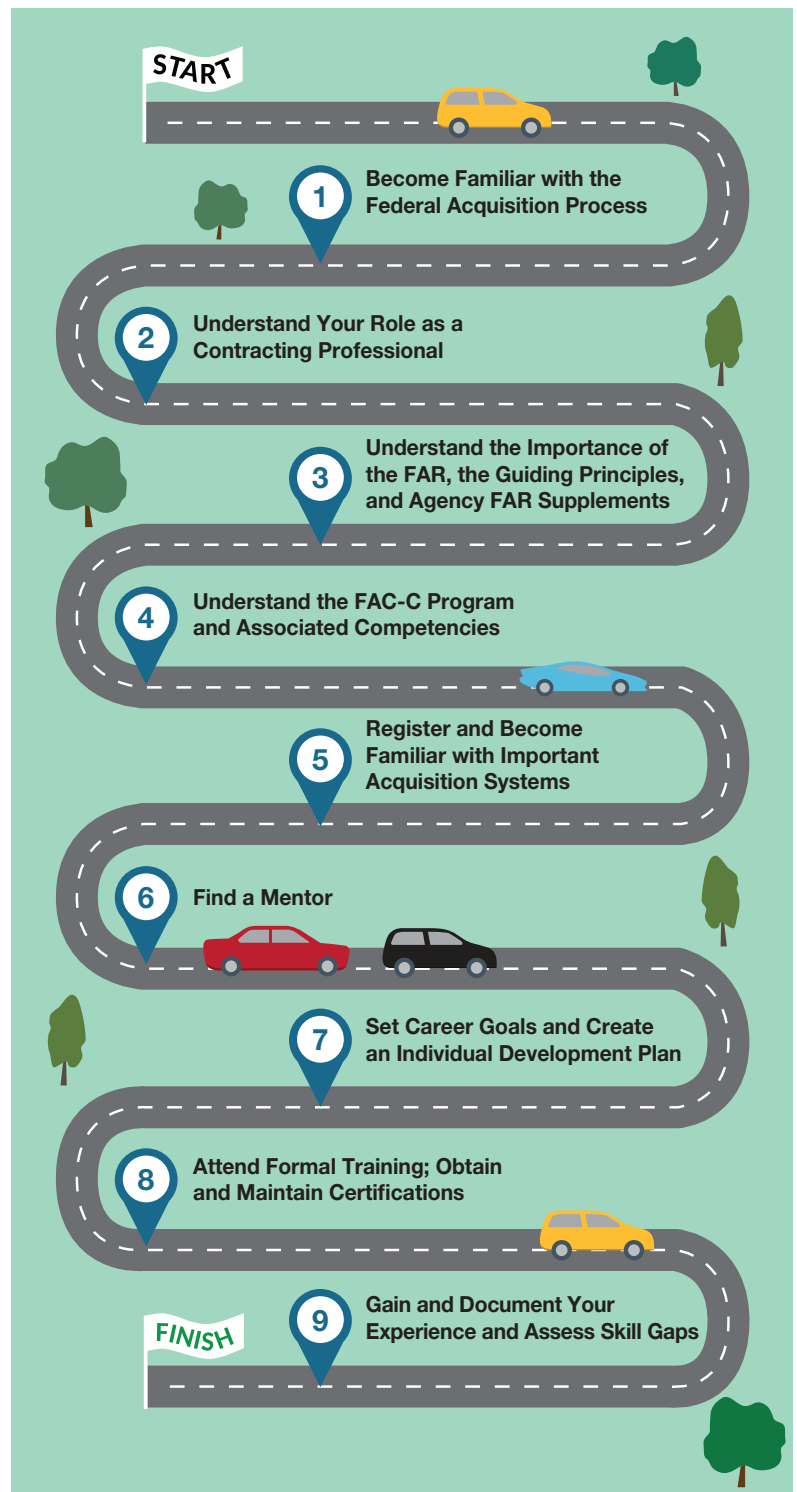– A NASA executive

Tools at Your Fingertips

FAI's 24/7 accessible tools, featured in _Contract Management_ magazine, enable acquisition professionals to augment their qualifications and improve their craft through curated resources and a personalized customer experience.

Contracting Professional's Career Roadmap

COs are the backbone of the acquisition workforce, and FAI's career roadmap empowers them to own their personal career paths and develop the knowledge and experience to perform well. A step-by-step guide for beginners in the 1102 career field, the Contracting Professional's Career Roadmap outlines the basics of the acquisition process, required competencies and training, guidelines for selecting and working with a mentor, how to set goals, and best practices for documenting experiences on the job. This tool is a great way for new acquisition professionals to plan their careers.

START

1. Become Familiar with the Federal Acquisition Process
2. Understand Your Role as a Contracting Professional
3. Understand the Importance of the FAR, the Guiding Principles, and Agency FAR Supplements
4. Understand the FAC-C Program and Associated Competencies
5. Register and Become Familiar with Important Acquisition Systems
6. Find a Mentor
7. Set Career Goals and Create an Individual Development Plan
8. Attend Formal Training; Obtain and Maintain Certifications
9. Gain and Document Your Experience and Assess Skill Gaps

FINISH

Sharing Knowledge

FAI's Program and Project Management Toolkit is a user-friendly, one-stop knowledge hub with resources and best practices for P/PMs government-wide.

P/PM Toolkit

The Program and Project Management Toolkit is a knowledge base, developed and maintained via a partnership between FAI and the Federal Program and Project Management Community of Practice (FedPM CoP). Some of the links provided require an additional user ID and password to access the material.

Program and Project Management Toolkit

As P/PMs navigate increasingly complex acquisitions, they need the right resources at the right time to deliver programs and projects on time and on budget. In response to the PMIAA, FAI partnered with the Federal Program and Project Management Community of Practice (FedPM CoP) to develop a user-friendly toolkit with just-in-time, on-demand knowledge resources. This online knowledge base serves as a one-stop shop with curated policies, federal and academic training, and industry best practices, and links to federal acquisition communities of practice.

1102 Experience Development Tool

COs are expected to be proficient in a diverse range of skills. For 1102s seeking to gain this breadth and increase their qualifications, FAI created the 1102 Experience Development tool that tracks competencies to acquire and activities and experiences to develop their skills. The tool enables COs to visualize areas for growth at any point in their career and empowers them to work with their supervisor to fill those needs. FAI, in partnership with OFPP and the Office of Personnel Management, launched Acquisition Open Opportunities, an interactive resource to assist acquisition professionals in identifying and/or offering career development opportunities.

Government-Wide Acquisition Workforce Management System

A government-wide acquisition workforce management system affords acquisition professionals continuous access to learning and development resources and equips them with the knowledge to deliver optimal, cost-effective solutions for their customers. Further, it serves as a central repository for critical workforce certification data that informs evidence-based planning and decision-making by agency acquisition and human capital leaders across government. Building on its FY18 analysis of alternatives to the Federal Acquisition Institute Training Application System (FAITAS), in FY19, FAI conducted research and planning to enable a 2021 migration to a modern learning management system. This change will offer our workforce a modern, cloud-based, commercial-off-the-shelf system that meets the modernization and shared services goals of the President's Management Agenda (PMA).

A Commitment to Stewardship

At a time when federal agencies are expected to perform more with less, FAI's enhanced Acquisition Workforce Training Fund (AWTF) program review yielded additional funds for workforce learning and development opportunities. The PMA directs agencies to reduce unaligned spending and maximize use of best-in-class– and spend under management– approved vehicles. When agencies use schedule vehicles, such as NASA Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement, they are investing in their own professional development. A percent of the fees collected by civilian executive agencies managing government-wide acquisition or multiple-award schedule contracts are directed to the fund. Contributions to the AWTF increased by 16 percent with full participation by the requisite executive agencies following FAI's FY19 program review. FAI used all available funds.

In FY19, FAI moved proactively to sponsor an interagency cohort of 30 COs and P/PMs through the Digital IT Acquisition Professional training program.

Award-Winning Micro-Learning

In FY19, FAI received the prestigious Horizon Interactive Silver Award for its six-part series of Back to Basics micro-learning courses developed in FY18.

Funding Mission Priorities

FAI's FY19 operating budget was $10.5 million. Five percent of fees collected by civilian executive agencies managing government-wide acquisition or multiple-award schedule contracts are directed to the AWTF, which provides the basis for FAI's annual spend plan. The AWTF is administered by GSA. OFPP and FAI's board of directors advise on and approve the spend plan.

193,742
Civilian acquisition workforce members

+3,900
Additional workforce members in FY19

$5,475,337
For training development and delivery

12
New learning resources

Human Capital Initiatives Support
Funds government-wide human capital resource planning management, data collection, analysis, and reporting, such as the Acquisition Workforce Competency Survey.

Operations and Logistics Support
Funds business planning and FAI's operations infrastructure to execute its mission. Examples include personnel costs and the FAI.gov help desk.
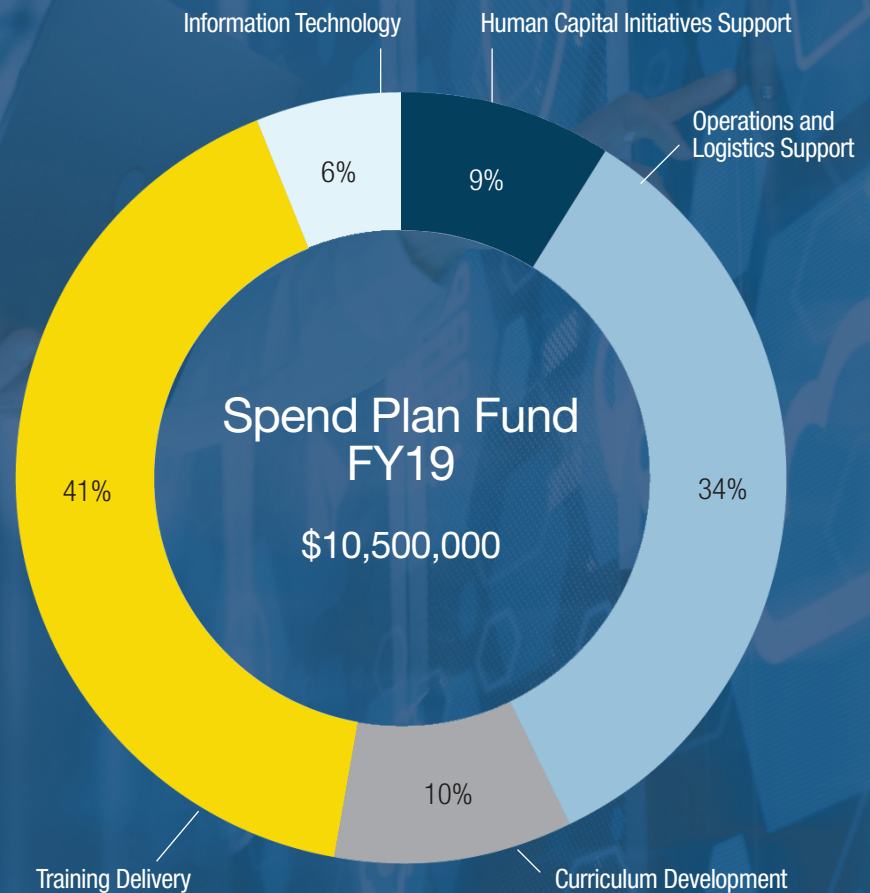
Curriculum Development
Funds creation of training content and materials for federal acquisition certification and continuous learning programs.

Training Delivery
Funds online and classroom learning, delivery, and development activities, including FAI's training application system and acquisition seminars.

Information Technology
Funds IT operations, maintenance, and communications, such as FAI.gov.

Spend Plan Fund FY19
$10,500,000

Information Technology — 6%
Human Capital Initiatives Support — 9%
Operations and Logistics Support — 34%
Curriculum Development — 10%
Training Delivery — 41%

Conquering Tomorrow's Challenges

Reimagining FAI

Machine learning technologies, such as artificial intelligence and robotics process automation, and ongoing government reform are changing acquisition and the role of the workforce significantly. At the same time, customer expectations for tailored, just-in-time learning resources are shifting the role of learning and development organizations away from traditional training courses toward curated knowledge aligned with customer needs. FAI will continue to use its learning and development expertise and government-wide platform to respond to these challenges.

In FY19, FAI conducted a visioning exercise with stakeholders on how to transform the acquisition workforce and position itself to most effectively support the workforce of the future. FAI incorporated input from stakeholders across the acquisition community and researched leading acquisition, learning, and development practices in industry and government. FAI identified opportunities for growth in six discrete areas: strategy, governance, organizational interface, people, processes, and technology. FAI will build on its current work and relationships with government stakeholders, industry, and academia to plan for and help the workforce adapt to future needs and drive sustained change.

Preview of Future Initiatives

In the future, FAI will pursue the following key initiatives in the first phase of its transformation strategy.

FAI Transformation

To transform, FAI is working with OFPP, GSA, and the board of directors to refine its governance structure and align resources to FAI's budget better. FAI will baseline its internal operations and assess workload to improve processes and make evidence-based, data-driven decisions. With GSA, OFPP, and our agency partners, FAI will implement a modern, reliable acquisition workforce management solution with capabilities that can grow and be sustained in the future. FAI will support OFPP's Acquisition Workforce 2025 initiative.

Acquisition Workforce Recognition

To highlight the value of the workforce, acquisition innovation, and workforce excellence, FAI will build on current efforts in partnership with OFPP and agency stakeholders to create a more robust workforce recognition program. FAI will explore the feasibility of building a talent pipeline for the acquisition workforce.

Competency Management

To ensure competency standards for the acquisition workforce keep pace with the evolving acquisition landscape, FAI will refresh its FAC-COR competency model as part of a broader competency management program. FAI will integrate the streamlined competencies into its Acquisition Workforce Competency Survey. This will help agencies understand the proficiency strengths and gaps of their CORs better and guide training efforts accordingly.

"Technology is rapidly changing acquisition. Automating manual processes enables acquisition professionals to spend more of their valuable time applying critical thinking skills and sound judgment. As the federal leader strengthening the civilian agency acquisition workforce, FAI is preparing them for this exciting future."

— Joanie Newhart,
Associate Administrator of Acquisition Workforce Programs,
Office of Federal Procurement Policy

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