

Federal AI Hardware RFP Checklist

2026

A working checklist for building AI and HPC hardware requirements into your next RFP

Workload Requirements

☐	Workload category defined (inference, fine-tuning, training, or scientific simulation)
☐	Minimum GPU memory (VRAM) requirement specified based on model size
☐	GPU interconnect requirement identified (standard PCIe vs. HGX/SXM) based on GPU-to-GPU synchronization needs
☐	Storage throughput and capacity requirements defined for the specific workload
☐	Scalability horizon specified (3-5 year growth expectations)

Compliance and Supply Chain

☐	TAA compliance documentation required from all bidders (Manufacturer's Certificate of Compliance)
☐	Country of origin documentation required for major components, not just final assembly location
☐	Contract vehicle confirmed (GSA Schedule, NASA SEWP V, ITES-4H, ADMC 3, 2GIT) and eligibility verified

Security Requirements

☐	Hardware-level security capabilities specified (TPM support, secure boot, firmware integrity verification)
☐	Zero Trust Architecture alignment confirmed with OMB M-22-09 requirements
☐	NIST SP 800-223 / SP 800-234 alignment addressed for HPC environments, where applicable
☐	RMF control implementation documentation requested from bidders

Sustainability

☐	EPEAT registration required, with tier specified (Bronze, Silver, Gold, or Climate+)
☐	ENERGY STAR certification required for applicable hardware categories

Cost and Lifecycle

☐	Total cost of ownership requested from bidders, not purchase price alone
☐	Power and cooling requirements assessed against facility capacity before finalizing configuration
☐	Maintenance and support terms specified and compared across bidders
☐	Factory acceptance testing or configuration validation required before delivery

Vendor Evaluation

☐	Workload assessment methodology requested from bidders, not just a hardware spec sheet
☐	Manufacturing facility and quality certification documentation requested (e.g., ISO 9001)
☐	References or past performance on comparable federal contracts requested

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