

Resuming job order contracts expedites projects

Job order contracting (JOC), a procurement method for small-to medium-size construction projects, has returned to Purdue after an eight-year budget-induced absence.

The process generates speed by letting the steps of project design and cost proposal development occur simultaneously with one contractor.

“Our goal with JOC is to get projects in construction in less than 90 days,” says Owen Cooks, director of project management in the Office of the University Architect. “Equivalent projects that are sent to bid can take up to six months to reach the construction phase. Project development is 50 percent faster with JOC.”

Bid projects typically are designed in-house or by an architecture and engineering firm, after which contractors analyze costs and develop bids.

The Office of the University Architect took bids for JOC status, and two firms are in that arrangement and thus on call for projects deemed suited to the JOC approach.

The JOC contractors are Olsen Construction & Manage-

Choice of method

Job order contracting is one option for construction projects managed by the Office of the University Architect, along with in-house construction and capital bid projects.

ment and Centennial Contractors Enterprises Inc.

JOC is best suited for small to medium repair, new construction, and renovation valued at less than \$750,000, Cooks says. It works particularly well for Repair & Rehabilitation (R&R) projects, such as mechanical equipment upgrades and lab or classroom renovations, because of their well-defined scope.

The contractors are bound by a term contract of 12 months or \$4 million, whichever comes first. When the limit of the contract is reached, it can be renewed up to four times.

This term contract relationship is one of the benefits of JOC, Cooks says. Contractors are motivated to work faster and more efficiently in order to reach

the \$4 million limit before the 12 months are up.

Cooks says, “It is important to remember that JOC is a partnering relationship. When non-JOC projects are bid, the lowest bidder wins the project. They might only perform that one project and not be back. With JOC, not only is the contractor motivated by the financial terms of the contract, they have made a commitment to the University and want to continue to receive projects.”

JOC was chosen to complete the electrical upgrade and rehabilitation of a wind tunnel at the Aerospace Science Laboratory for John Sullivan, professor of aeronautics. Using JOC will enable the project to be completed this summer. The renovation of a lab in the Heine Pharmacy Building will be another JOC project.

About 30 JOC projects are in the planning phase right now with a total value of several million dollars.

Purdue was using JOC before the State of Indiana stopped funding R&R during 2000-01. Resumed funding this year has created a base of R&R projects on which to apply JOC.