USM SSP 25_0015 Notice of Proposed Sole Source Purchase of Equip.

http://www.ms.gov/dfa/contract_bid_search/Bid

RFx: 3150006171

Comments/objections will be received as required per Section 31-7-13 (C) of the Mississippi Code until 8:00 a.m. (Central Time) on March 8, 2025.

Any person or entity that objects and proposes that the commodity listed is not sole source and can be provided by another person or entity shall submit a written notice to:

Jacob Cochran
Interim Director of Procurement & Contracts 118 College Dr. Box 5003 Hattiesburg, MS 39406
bids@usm.edu
Phone: 601-266-4131

Subject Line must read "Sole Source Objection USM SSP 25_015"

The notice shall contain a detailed explanation of why the commodity is not a sole source procurement. Appropriate documentation shall also be submitted if applicable.

If after a review of the submitted notice and documents, USM determines that the commodity in the proposed sole source request can be provided by another person or entity, then USM will withdraw the sole source request publication from the procurement portal website and submit the procurement of the commodity to an advertised competitive bid or selection process.

If USM determines after review that there is only one (1) source for the required commodity, then USM will appeal to the Public Procurement Review Board. USM will have the burden of proving that the commodity is only provided by one (1) source.

Run Dates: 2/21, 2/28

The University of Southern Mississippi

Notice of Proposed Sole Source Purchase

SSP 25_015

The University of Southern Mississippi anticipates purchasing the item(s) listed below as a sole source purchase. Anyone objecting to this purchase shall follow the procedures outlined below.

1. Description of the commodity that USM is seeking to procure:

   Equip is a software platform designed to support inclusive postsecondary education (IPSE) programs like USM's RISE To The Top! program, which provides college opportunities for students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. RISE To The Top! is USM's inclusive 4-year, 8 semester non-degree certificate program for students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities that focuses on the following: academics, community engagement, employment preparation, and student life. Equip streamlines administrative tasks, enhances student engagement, and facilitates communication between students, educators, and support staff. Key Features of Equip include student-centered planning, course and program management, communication tools, accessibility & inclusivity, data tracking and reporting, and employment & career readiness. Equip helps IPSE programs operate efficiently, ensuring that students with intellectual disabilities receive the support, structure, and opportunities they need to succeed in college and beyond.

2. Explanation of why the commodity is the only one that meets the needs of the agency:

   Like other inclusive postsecondary education programs across the country designed to offer academic, community engagement, employment preparation, and student life opportunities for students with intellectual or other developmental disabilities, the RISE program requires a level of efficiency and organization designed to meet the specific needs of its student population. To maintain this level of efficiency, and competitively grow the RISE program without sacrificing quality, a tailored programmatic system is needed that would aid in maintaining and improving organizational capacity. Currently, the Equip software platform is the only mechanism for enhancing administrative and logistical capabilities in inclusive postsecondary education programs like the RISE program. Equip was developed specifically for inclusive postsecondary programs to empower independence by centralizing students' management of routines, schedules, assessments, announcements, documentation, goals, progress, activities, and essential information from all aspects of support, including but not limited to program staff, peer mentors , and employers. By integrating Equip's software platform into the RISE program, organizational capacity and efficiency would be significantly enhanced Equip streamlines and centralizes essential functions, reducing the time spent on administrative tasks and enabling staff to dedicate more resources and attention to personalized student support and development.

3. Explanation of why the source is the only source is the only person or entity that can

   provide the required commodity:

Equip's design and functionality is tailored specifically to meet the needs of managing and supporting individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities who are students in inclusive postsecondary education programs. Features include student profiles, customizable routines, assessments, targeted announcements and communication, group management, mood tracking and reporting, and accessible mobile application. Due to the population the RISE program serves, a high level of efficiency and organization is needed in order for it to succeed. Equip also provides a centralized location for students, staff, and supports to be able to access any needed information. At this time, Equip is the only available software platform designed for the programs and students.

4. Explanation of why the amount to be expended for the commodity is reasonable:

Equip is a reasonable cost because it is designed to provide a centralized functionality at an affordable price by reducing inefficiencies, consolidating essential tools, and supporting long-term program success. It combines multiple tools into a single platform, reducing the need for separate software subscriptions. It increases efficiency and saves staff time by reducing the workload, which saves on labor costs. It offers pricing options that align with the size and needs of the program and helps enhance student success rates, which can lead to higher program funding and sustainability.

5. Efforts that the agency went through to obtain the best possible price for the commodity:

RISE To The Top! Program staff have gone through the proper process of receiving the approval from I-Tech and also the Vice President of Research, Dr. Kelly Lucas to purchase the Equip software platform. In addition, RISE staff negotiated with Equip to obtain the best possible pricing for the program's size and needs.

Advertisement Schedule	Date
1st scheduled	2/21
2nd scheduled	2/28

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SSP 25_015

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Jacob Cochran

Director of Procurement & Contracts

Jacob.Cochran@usm.edu

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