Sole Source Purchases

Definition

Sole Source Purchasing is a procurement method that allows, under certain conditions, for procuring goods or services from a single source without soliciting bids from multiple sources.

Some examples of situations that might require purchasing through a sole source are:

- Where compatibility of equipment, accessories, or replacement parts is a primary consideration.
- Where a sole-supplier item is needed for trial use or testing.
- Where procurement of a sole-supplier item is for resale.
- Where service being purchased is a public service.

Processing Sole Source Purchases

If the requisitioning department believes that they have a sole source purchase, they should complete the Sole Source Purchase Justification form and submit it, along with their requisition, to Procurement Services. Procurement Services will review the information to determine if the procurement meets the requirements of a sole source purchase.

In order to justify a sole source purchase, one or more of the following criteria must be substantiated in support of the justification:

1. **Compatibility with existing equipment.** This justification may be used if the goods or services are being purchased to directly interface with or attach to equipment of the same manufacturer, and no other manufacturer's goods will correctly interface with existing equipment.

2. **Compatibility for instructional purposes.** This justification may be used if the goods are being purchased to supplement existing equipment in a classroom. The goods must match the existing equipment and is being purchased to provide uniformity for instructional purposes.

3. **Compatibility for research.** This justification may be used if the main purpose for acquiring equipment or
supplies is to replicate specific experiments, using the exact goods that produced the original results. You may also use this justification if you are collaborating with another researcher and can show that identical goods are required to fulfill your part of the research grant or contract.

(4) **Only one supplier can be identified to supply compliant goods or services.** In limited cases, only one supplier may exist to provide particular goods or services. When providing a justification based on the availability of one supplier, the goods or services must be defined in generic terms. Specifying patented products or processes, when not necessary to meet functional requirements, is not acceptable as a sole source justification. Justifications can be accepted more readily by providing information regarding attempts to locate other suppliers, such as letters, information quotations, or telephone contacts.