

# Purchasing Manual

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The University of Cincinnati Board of Trustees has designated Central Purchasing as the sole authority to administer purchases of construction, equipment, goods and services. Items acquired through other channels are not eligible for payment with university funds. The purpose of the unit is to provide optimum quality, research, medical, classroom, and operational supplies, equipment and services to the university community at the lowest cost, in the fastest time frame, and in the most convenient way.

**Primary Board rules that pertain to purchasing are:**

- 3361:20-23-02 Contracts: purchasing, competitive bidding
- 3361:10-17-03 Conduct and Ethics: Code of Conduct

**Primary functions of Central Purchasing are to:**

1. Purchase approximately \$250 million dollars in goods and services for the Uptown Campus (East and West), Clermont College, Raymond Walters College, Hoxworth Blood Center, and Genome Research Institute using purchase orders and term contracts
2. Insure compliance with university, State and Federal rules and regulations regarding procurement
  - a. Board of Trustees Rules
    - i. 3361:10-17-03 Conduct and Ethics: Code of Conduct
    - ii. 3361:20-23-02 Contracts: purchasing, competitive bidding
3. Combine the entire university's buying power
4. Insure that all interested firms have a fair opportunity to compete for the university business, while conforming to all applicable laws
5. Actively recruit diverse suppliers including minority, women-owned, and economically disadvantaged firms
6. Identify vendor sources for departmental units
7. Process vendor registration forms, including changes to the vendor file
8. Resolve issues with vendors
9. Provide a central location for sales representatives and bid analysis for vendor review
10. Explain procurement policies and procedures to UC units and vendors
11. Formulate long-term fixed price contracts
12. Bid and award term contracts and purchase orders
13. Review bid package for format compliance with Federal and State laws and university rules
14. Maintain Term Contract and Bidding System (TABS)
15. Process forms A910 (contract approval cover sheets) for signature/approvals of vendor forms by Office of General Counsel, President, or Board of Trustees
16. Administer the Purchasing Card program
17. Monitor purchases to encourage standardization

18. Process check request forms
19. Process change orders
20. Serve as a liaison between external and internal business community
21. Interact with government and other group purchasing organizations
22. Reduce transaction costs
23. Maintain purchasing functions of the UC Flex system
24. Formulate monthly, quarterly, and annual reports for internal and external agencies
25. Serve as a deterrent against fraudulent transactions
26. Assist Office of General Counsel in representing units in product law suits

## 2 COMPETITIVE BIDDING

Competitive bidding is a pricing procedure wherein the Central Purchasing Department solicits bids from potential suppliers and then selects the vendor submitting the lowest and best proposal. It is a common method used by governmental and/or public agencies concerned with the task of obtaining the right price for goods and services. The University of Cincinnati's Central Purchasing Department has standardized procedures that ensure fairness in the bidding process and compliance with governing rules and policies. For example, the use of a standard bid form is an essential part of the competitive bid process. Its use enables the buyer to obtain all quotations on a comparable basis, an essential element when making accurate comparisons. For purchases fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) and above, legal ads are placed in the Cincinnati Enquirer and Cincinnati Herald. The requesting unit is responsible for entering the additional requisition for the legal ads. Customarily, bids that are advertised in the newspaper are opened at a specific time and place in a public bid opening. If additional information is needed, the appropriate buyer should be contacted for instructions. When bids have already been obtained under a UC contract or other purchasing group and the university's requirements were included as part of that inquiry, the buyer may choose to utilize those contracts for applicable purchases.

Central Purchasing will not under any circumstances accept a late bid, even one minute late, due to the precedent it would set and its potential for unethical behavior. Likewise, proposals that are not clear may be disqualified on that basis.

Under no circumstances should a unit discuss the purchase and bidding results with a vendor during the bid process. The vendor should be referred to Central Purchasing if they have questions about the process or submitted bids.

The development of specifications should include the following considerations:

- Specifications should clearly and accurately describe the requirements of the goods or services to be procured; however, should not be unduly restrictive so as to inhibit competition.
- When practicable, specifications should include technical requirements in terms of functions to be performed or performance required, including the range of acceptable characteristics or minimum acceptable standards.
- Some specifications may require the insertion of brand names. When such is the case, keep in mind that use of brand names is to help guide the bidder in interpreting the standard of quality, design, and performance desired and not to exclude acceptable alternates. The Central Purchasing Buyer should use the generic price page in the TABS system with the “Brand Quoted by Vendor” line to facilitate such entry by the bidders.
- When practicable, products and services should be dimensioned in the metric system of measurement.
- When practicable, special consideration should be given for products and services that conserve natural resources and are energy efficient.

## 2.1 Bid Evaluation and Award Recommendation

For non-construction bids, the award goes to the lowest and best bidder. At a publicly funded institution, low bid within specification is considered the winner.

Reasons for vendor disqualification must be based on criteria already established in the specifications and must explain how the bid(s) did not meet product or service specifications.

## 2.2 Bid Waiver

State statutes and university Board of Trustees Rules require open competitive bidding of purchases. However, timing and unique product requirements on occasion may justify the waiving of the bidding procedures. If the unit head believes competitive bidding should be waived, a memo referencing the requisition number, citing the professional justification, and the name of the organizational unit contact responsible for attesting to its accuracy should be forwarded to Central Purchasing. It is recommended that the requisitioner discuss the request with the buyer prior to submittal of a written justification; the buyer can provide formatting instructions to follow. ***Central Purchasing will retain such records for auditing purposes if it agrees that bidding is to be waived.***

**Examples of professional justification include:**

1. There is only one manufacturer, and no distributors from whom competition can be obtained. The unit has an elaborate function critical to the research and no alternate is professionally acceptable.

2. This is the only equipment approved for use on the project by the sponsor. The equipment is available from only one source. (A copy of the grant page on which the equipment was mentioned should be attached).
3. The unit connects to existing equipment, and no other would be compatible. (Specify the equipment).

Before requesting a sole source waiver, units should consider that experience has shown manufacturers will often reduce their selling price (even for patented equipment) when competitive bidding is conducted.

It is an illegal conflict of interest for an employee of the university to authorize or employ the authority or influence of the employee's office to secure authorization of any contract for the purchase or sale of goods or services by the university in which the employee, a member of the employee's family, or any of the employee's business associates has an interest. In the event such a conflict is identified after an employee has become involved in the contract authorization process, or in the process of administering the contract subsequent to its authorization, the employee is instructed immediately to withdraw from the process and to disclose the facts and circumstances to Central Purchasing. Questions or concerns about conflict of interest may be addressed to the Office of General Counsel.

## 2.3 Non-Competitive List

For the following list of non-competitive items, a bid waiver request is not required due to the inherent sole-source nature.

- Academic testing services and their test materials
- Accreditation fees
- Advertising (not advertising agencies)
- Blood
- Booth rentals
- Championship game travel (bus, airplane) where directed by NCAA
- Entertainment, Theater Production Rights
- Game guarantees
- Game officials
- Grant sub-awards, exclusive of goods and services, to collaborating colleges, universities, hospitals, or state agencies under a federal assistance agreement.
  - Requisition description or text must state *"This sub-award is authorized under a federal assistance agreement from [name of sponsor] to [name of sub-awardee]"* to designate non-competitive grant sub-awards
  - Central Purchasing must receive evidence of the signed sub-award, typically in the form of an amendment or a new subaward signed by both parties (applies to new purchase orders and change order increases)

- Institutional memberships, dues and applications
- Permit fees and certificates - City, State, Federal
- Postage
- Published mailing lists
- Purchases where source is designated by a grant
- Research animals
- Royalties
- Software maintenance and licensing renewal
- Speaker Fees/honorariums
- Subscriptions, publications, and reprints of published materials
- Training purchases, where third-party clients designate specific personnel, companies and materials.

## 3 CHOOSING THE RIGHT SOURCE TO MAKE YOUR PURCHASE

The university provides many products and services through internal sources. Use external sources (preferably in the order shown below), if the product or service is not available through the listed internal sources.

### 3.1 Internal Purchasing Sources

- **CENTRAL STORES** - Central Stores offers a complete inventory of all office supplies at discounted prices.
- **UNIVERSITY BOOKSTORE** - The Bookstore offers office supplies, art supplies, computers, (Macintosh and PC based machines), software, computer accessories, textbooks, general books, teaching aids, student supplies, and UC insignia in five convenient locations.
- **CREATIVE SERVICES UNIT OF UNIVERSITY RELATIONS** – Creative Services provides editorial consultation, graphic design, and photography.
- **ACADEMIC HEALTH CENTER PUBLIC RELATIONS & COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES**
  - Duplicating Services
  - Art and Design Services
  - Photography Services
  - Video Services
  - Printing Services

## 3.2 Purchasing from External Sources

- **ANNUAL TERM CONTRACTS** At the beginning of each fiscal year, the university competitively bids and contracts for hundreds of term contracts for services and supplies used by all units. No time is lost during the year waiting for orders to be placed or researching the cost. Needed items or services are ordered by individual organizational units sending the vendor a Term Contract Release Order.
  - Fifty percent of all purchases are on term contracts (for high-dollar, repetitive needs). Browse an on-line list of term contracts, or call the appropriate Central Purchasing buyer to identify if the needed goods or services are on a term contract. For additional information, refer to the term contract section.
- **PURCHASING CARD** The Purchasing Card provides a convenient means with which to make small dollar purchases, and at the same time, reduces the costs associated with initiating and paying for those purchases. The Central Purchasing Department is responsible for managing the program and each academic or administrative unit is responsible for managing its cardholder accounts.
- **SMALL DOLLAR INVOICE (SDI)** The SDI feature in UC Flex should be used for small dollar purchases when a Purchasing Card cannot be used. Refer to the section regarding small dollar invoices.
- **PERSONAL SERVICES CONTRACT** The **Personal Services Contract Form** is used to contract for the professional services of an individual (not a company) other than a university employee. The services must be short term and of a unique nature. See section regarding Personal Services Contracts for further information. This form is not appropriate to secure services which are available through a University Term Contract, or where the dollar amount requires competitive bidding as outlined in University Board rules.
- **LIMITED SERVICES ENGAGEMENT** To make payment for services rendered at a one-time event, the Limited Services Engagement is most appropriate. Complete the **Limited Services Engagement Form** and attach it to a Recommendation for Payment form (A-114). Send these forms to the Accounts Payable Office. See the university's financial policies for more information.
- **PAYROLLING AGENCIES** Payrolling Agencies are used to procure services of professional individuals (not incorporated) with specific talents, to perform projects at the university for a specific period of time. Refer to the section regarding Payrolling Agencies for further information.



- **UNIVERSITY PURCHASE ORDER** If none of the above procedures are appropriate, a regular Purchase Requisition is entered into the UC Flex system. A requisition is intended for high-dollar, non-repetitive needs for which the university does not have an existing agreement. UC Flex help contains instructions on entry of a purchase request and other purchasing processes.

## 4 PROCEDURES

### 4.1 Purchase Requisition

If none of the other methods described in Section 3 are appropriate then enter a requisition. If an item is available through a term contract, releases are processed through the ME21N transaction instead using doc type ZTC. To aid in data gathering and approval prior to entering a requisition, the [Purchase Requisition Worksheet](#) is available online on the Central Purchasing website.

#### Guidelines

1. The requisition transaction is intended for high-dollar, non-repetitive needs when goods or services are not addressed by an established agreement.
2. Within the [guidelines](#) established by the Board of Trustees, the Central Purchasing buyers will obtain competitive pricing, and will then place the order with the lowest and best bidder. If the low bidder is quoting on an alternate quality or service, the buyer will contact the ordering unit before making an award. If an annual contract for the service or item already exists, the request will be awarded based on that agreement. Refer to Section 2 for further information.
3. Never make a commitment to a vendor without an authorized purchase order. The individual could be held personally liable by the State Attorney General. There can be no financial obligation in advance of a purchase order.
4. Individuals should refer to their UC Flex training materials for instructions on data entry of a requisition. **UC Flex training and password are essential and required for data entry into UC Flex.**

#### Procedure

1. Prior to entering a requisition, unit guidelines should be followed for obtaining approval of a purchase and approval to encumber departmental funds.
2. A Contract Approval Cover Sheet (Form A-910) must be completed to obtain approval for any purchase when using a non-standard or vendor form. (Further instruction for its use is contained on the A-910).
3. To accommodate monthly or quarterly payments for service agreements, a requisition can be entered for the appropriate period (usually our fiscal year) and



the RSML indicator should be checked. When the requisition is processed by Purchasing into a purchase, the order is highlighted with the heading "Rental, Service, Maintenance, or Lease Agreement",

4. When entering a requisition (using transaction ME5IN Create Purchase Requisition) requisitioner should indicate preferred or known source of supply for item(s) required. If the vendor is registered, the correct vendor number to enter can be found in the system by using the vendor search. If the vendor is not registered, use vendor code 100005 "Vendor not Registered" and enter the vendor name, address and contact information in the "Item Note Field". When no source is known, or for listing additional vendors, vendor code 100006 should be used to indicate "Bidders" in the vendor name field. If vendors are listed in the additional text section of the requisition, they will be considered for bid solicitation by Central Purchasing.
5. The correct material group should be entered for the item(s) being purchased. A commodity search utility is located on the Central Purchasing website to aid in choosing the correct one, and identifying the correct Buyer associated with it. Do not enter multiple items on the same requisition if they are handled by different Buyers.
6. If the request is for a service, it should bypass Receiving, otherwise it should come through the appropriate Receiving Center. The appropriate Delivery Point and Ship-To code must be selected. Any special delivery instructions should be entered in the Delivery text.
7. Complete specifications should be provided for Central Purchasing to accurately furnish the exact products or services required. Brand names that diminish competition should be avoided. Specifications should be sufficiently detailed so any vendor in the marketplace who receives a bid from the Central Purchasing will have a complete understanding of all technical and service-related requirements. This information can be entered using the item text. Refer to section 2 for further specification guidelines.
8. Additional product information or extensive specifications may be referenced as attachments in the requisition, with a copy faxed to Central Purchasing indicating the requisition number at the top of the front page. **The attachments check box should be checked so the buyer in Central Purchasing is informed of the forthcoming transmittal.**
9. When a permanent change needs to be made to a delivery point in UC Flex, units should print the [Mail Location Delivery Point Request Form](#) available from the [Central Receiving website](#) and follow the submittal instructions at the top of the form. This should be completed prior to entering a new requisition.

## 4.2 Change Order or Cancellation

A change order form is used to notify a vendor to change or cancel an existing purchase order. Instructions regarding how to complete the form are on the back. The change order/cancellation form A600 is available from **Central Stores**. Note that changes to term contract release orders are completed directly in the UC Flex system by the originating unit, and the change form prints automatically.

### Guidelines

Five accepted reasons for using the Cancellation or Change Order form are:

1. An extended lapse of time has occurred without delivery
2. Mutual agreement between the university and the vendor
3. A change to description, quantity, and/or unit price
4. Change in account assignment
5. To close an order or to reduce any extraneous encumbrance.

### Procedure

1. Complete all appropriate fields on the Cancellation or Change Order form.
2. Change Order must be signed by the authorized unit representative
3. Change Order should be forwarded to Central Purchasing for review. If approved, Central Purchasing will modify the order, notify the vendor as necessary, and return an approved copy to the unit

## 4.3 Receiving and Invoices

1. University organizational units are encouraged to receive physical items through Central Receiving when appropriate in order to alleviate delivery traffic on campus. At the time of the requisition or term contract release order entry in UC Flex, units choose whether to have items centrally received or whether to bypass Central Receiving by selecting the appropriate Ship-To code (Ship-To code of "1" for Central Receiving is the default). Some specialized units (Radiation Safety, Laboratory Animal Medicine, Hoxworth Blood Center, and University Printing Services) maintain their own docks and have their own corresponding Ship-To code.
2. When goods are received at Central Receiving, and some for the other specialized docks, a Goods Receipt is entered directly by the dock staff into UC Flex. Each time an invoice is received in A/P, it is entered into UC Flex by the A/P staff. If there is a match with a goods receipt, then the invoice will cause a check to be generated based on the payment terms of the order. However if no goods receipt is entered yet, the invoice is blocked. Each night an exception receiving process is run which automatically enters a goods receipt on orders with invoices containing items that are under \$10,000.00, except for those orders

that indicate a Ship-To code for some of the specialized docks. Some specialized docks always require a goods receipt prior to payment.

3. An e-mail notice is generated by A/P to unit user to indicate an invoice has been processed. If the unit wishes to stop payment due to non-delivery, it should immediately contact A/P.
4. A/P also manages receipt entry for invoiced items not centrally received which are \$10,000.00 and above. Examples of these cases are service related items or orders coded to bypass Central Receiving. In these instances where no goods receipt has yet been entered, and once the unit receives the e-mailed invoice notice from A/P, the unit must verify receipt of these large dollar items and authorize A/P or the appropriate dock to enter a receipt, so that the invoice can be processed, as outlined in the e-mail notification
5. For shipments verified by Central Receiving and entered into UC Flex, a goods receipt hardcopy will be delivered with the goods for the unit's reconciliation and recordkeeping. For shipments that by-pass Central Receiving, vendor packing slips must be obtained and managed by the unit requesting the purchase. Vendor packing slips are to include the vendor's detailed and itemized delivery record. The packing slip should show the date of the transaction, items purchased, and quantities shipped. Regardless of which area receives the shipment, the unit requesting and paying for a purchase is responsible for obtaining and retaining all documentation (purchase order, packing slips, mail order form copies, invoice, etc.) related to the purchase and verifying that the documentation sufficiently demonstrates the university authorized the purchase, funded it with an appropriate account and paid the proper amount for its delivery.

#### **4.4 Small Dollar Invoice (SDI)**

The Director of Central Purchasing delegates to units the authority to make purchases of up to \$300.00. The Small Dollar Invoice is used to expedite small dollar non-repetitive purchases that cannot be made with the Purchasing Card, not covered by term contracts or do not fall within other university purchasing requirements such as competitive bidding, etc.

Small Dollar Invoices are not to be used to purchase any materials or services that are in violation of the university rules. If in doubt of any item's validity, contact the Accounting Resource Center at 556-6773. The SDI is subject to review by the Auditor's office.

##### **Procedure**

1. Transaction FB60 in UC Flex must be used. Select "Small Dollar Invoice". Enter the vendor information, invoice information, amount and accounting information.

A check will be cut and sent to the vendor or to the unit to forward to the vendor, based on the payment method chosen.

2. The vendor should be provided with the UC Flex invoice number when phoning the order to them.
3. See financial policy 2.1.8 **Small Dollar Invoice Payment** for additional information.

## 4.5 Payrolling Agencies

Payrolling Agencies are used to procure services of professional individuals (not incorporated) with specific talents, to perform projects at the university for a specified period of time. There is a university contract for payrolling agencies (T947), and units must use one of the contract vendors. For further information on rules and guidelines, refer to the university financial policy 2.3.1 "Payments to Individuals for Services".

### Procedure

1. The Temporary Payroll Service Form should be completed (you may print this form from our website) and forwarded to the appropriate Vice President, or the individual delegated the authority to sign for the Vice President.
2. After the form has been approved, the Vice President's office will return the form to the requesting unit. The unit should enter a requisition in UC Flex and forward the approved form to Central Purchasing for the processing of a purchase order.

[Print the Payroll Agency Form](#)

## 4.6 Personal Services Contracts

The Personal Services Contract is a legal binding document used to hire an independent contractor. An independent contractor performs temporary professional services according to his/her own methods, without the direct control of the university except with respect to the desired results, and the contractor often does similar work for other clients. For rules, guidelines and procedures, refer to the university financial policy 2.3.1 "Payments to individuals for Services". The **Personal Services Contract Form** is available online.

# 5 PURCHASING CARD

The University of Cincinnati Purchasing Card (P-card) Program has been established to provide a convenient means with which to make purchases and, at the same time, reduce the costs associated with initiating and paying for those purchases. The P-Card

allows the cardholder to charge work-related expenses directly to the appropriate university account. The Central Purchasing Department is responsible for managing the program and each academic or administrative organizational unit is responsible for managing its cardholder accounts. University employees must be at least 80% FTE before a P-Card can be issued. For additional information, refer to the [Purchasing Card Policies and Procedures Manual](#) and the [Purchasing Card Violation Policy](#).

## 6 TERM CONTRACTS

Term contracts are long-term commitments (oftentimes with an option to renew for one or two additional years) made for high-dollar, repetitive supplies, equipment, and services, used by one or more university units. Most are competitively bid in the spring and become effective on July 1, (the beginning of the fiscal year). In return for a substantial buying commitment, UC seeks volume discounts, fixed pricing, vendor stocking, quick delivery, and reduced paper handling. About half of all purchases are made utilizing term contracts. Some are based on joint agreements with the State of Ohio, Inter-University Council, City of Cincinnati, and others. Releases against term contracts and purchase requisitions are entered into the UC Flex System. A majority of contracts are unrestricted and may be used by any unit. Some contracts are restricted due to safety issues and other needs for central controls.

### Guidelines

1. To take advantage of Term Contract benefits, organizational units that will be primary users of a contract respond to a mailing from Central Purchasing by indicating which contracts\* will be used during the next fiscal year, and the estimated amount of usage. This mailing is usually sent to units in February. If a unit wishes to participate as a primary user in a term contract later in the year, they should send an e-mail to the applicable buyer.
2. Central Purchasing compiles the data from the primary units and competitively bids for the goods and services.
3. The awarded vendors receive a term contract award document.
4. For contracts that are not restricted, any unit may process a release against it. If restricted only the authorized users may issue releases.

\*Copies of the awarded contracts will be sent to the applicable units.

### Procedures

1. The unit completes a Term Contract Release Order (ZTC) in UC Flex using transaction ME21N each time a shipment is to be made. The unit sends copies of term contract release forms directly to the vendor.

2. Units should refer to their UC Flex training manuals for instructions on data entry of a term contract release. These are available online on the UC Flex website.
3. When a unit fails to issue a release form, the shipment may be held in the Receiving Center, and the vendor's invoice will not be paid, until a release is entered. (This provides proof that the shipment was authorized by the unit.)
4. If the unit picks up a shipment, the unit must first complete a term contract release. A Ship-To code must be entered for "Pick Up" so Accounts Payable may contact the unit instead of Central Receiving for receipt verification as necessary.
5. When the unit phones a release to the vendor, the unit must enter a term contract release and give the system assigned release number to the vendor. Without it, the Receiving Center and Accounts Payable will have no means to identify the shipment or an invoice. If an invoice is not paid, the vendor may not honor future emergency requests. The unit must mark the confirming check box on the release order and enter "Confirmation of phone release of (date)".
6. Units typically are encouraged to receive shipments through the Receiving Center. Any exceptions to this are handled by selecting the correct Ship-To code on the release.

## 7 CONTRACT COMPLIANCE

The office of Contract Compliance offers guidance to minority and disadvantaged suppliers, and plays a major role in recruiting minority vendors, suppliers, and contractors to compete for business opportunities at the University of Cincinnati. Contract Compliance also provides Prevailing Wage Coordination and offers assistance in identifying targeted vendor groups to those participating in grants and contracts.

The University of Cincinnati, through the Office of Contract Compliance, provides resources and actively participates with external organizations such as the African American Chamber of Commerce, South Central Ohio Minority Supplier Development Council and the Greater Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce. Staff and the above agencies assist minority organizations with buyer relationships as well as procedural steps in order to engage in business opportunities at the university. This is done by assisting businesses in assessing opportunities and evaluating the capabilities of businesses to make certain they can accommodate the needs of the university.

Annually, over \$30 million dollars are bid on a set-aside and edge basis. Minority firms who are not yet state certified are encouraged to do so. Minority, disadvantaged and women-owned businesses not certified by the state of Ohio are also strongly encouraged to register with the university for inclusion of opportunities.



A focal point of the university minority business enterprise development program is its participation in the state Set-Aside and EDGE programs. Selected price inquiries are placed for Set-Aside bidding when one or more state-certified, minority firms are available. Organizations certified in the State EDGE program are eligible to compete in university opportunities for goods, services, and construction.

## Guidelines

The university's commitment mandates that vendors holding university contracts, or purchase orders adhere to the same equal employment opportunity practices as the university in respect to their own employees and subcontractors.

As a recipient of Federal, State and local funds, the University of Cincinnati is required to comply with many federal, state, and local requirements, including:

- Federal Executive Orders for equal opportunity, including 11246 and 11375
- Ohio revised code section 125 on Set Aside and section 123 on Edge Programs
- Ohio Revised Code Section 3345.29 on contract compliance
- UC's Affirmative Action plan banning employment discrimination

The University of Cincinnati as a contracting public authority is also subject to Chapter 4115 of the Ohio Revised Code relative to Prevailing Wage Rates. Contract Compliance includes the prevailing wage coordinator for all construction, remodeling, and repairs completed at the university by outside contractors.

Federal and/or State grants held by university organizational units, in whatever dollar amount, are subject to review as part of the university's overall receipt of Federal and/or State grant moneys.

## 8 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) GUIDELINES

### What is an RFP?

- A Request For Proposal is a type of vendor solicitation that typically has the following characteristics:
  - Deals with services (e.g. consulting) more so than products, but not always.
  - Describes the results the customer wants (in a Purpose or Statement of Work section) versus how to do it.
  - Suppliers describe in their proposal the approach they intend to take.
  - Price is usually not the overriding consideration. Accordingly, specifications provided by the unit must include a list of all criteria by



which bids will be evaluated (as explained below).

Proposals must be scored based on this criteria.

- Negotiation, within defined parameters pre-established by Central Purchasing, is an option.

## RFP Preparation

It is strongly recommended that you contact Central Purchasing for consultation on the intended purchases at the beginning of the process. Sufficient time is needed to allow for the bidding process and scoring process. Refer to Section 2 for additional information on development of specifications.

## RFP Format

An RFP should consist of the following components, some provided electronically to Central Purchasing by the end user, and others provided by Central Purchasing itself as noted below. Refer to the **sample** as a guide.

- **Front section** (sample pages 1-7 and provided by Central Purchasing) consisting of:
  - a boilerplate cover page
  - accompanying general conditions and special terms
- **Main RFP section** (following the front section) that includes:
  - "Purpose" or "Statement of Work" (sample page 8 and provided by end user)
    - Describes the end results the customer wants
  - Proposal Content (sample pages 9, 10, 11, and 12 and provided by end user)
    - Details all the information the end user wants the bidders to include in their proposals which will form the basis for bid evaluations and the award recommendation.
    - Headings must directly tie to the list of criteria in the Method of Evaluation section.
    - Includes price pages
  - "Method of Evaluation" (sample page 13 and provided by end user)
    - Establishes and lists the criteria by which proposals will be evaluated
    - Must directly tie to information requested in the Proposal Content section
  - "Proposal Submission" (sample pages 13 and 14 and provided by Central Purchasing) consists of a standard narrative instructing bidders how to prepare their proposals.

## RFP Supplements

The following additional components are also needed for the RFP process:

- **Bid list** (provided by end user and Central Purchasing)
- **Score sheets** (provided by end user)
  - Based on criteria listed in the Method of Evaluation section
  - Identifies proposal evaluation / scoring committee members

### Example of Price Inquiry generated as an RFP

The example shows the format outline described above. Note how the categories in the section titled "Proposal Content" correspond directly to the criteria listed in the section titled "Method of Evaluation".

### Score sheet format example showing weighted scores

Note how the score sheet criteria matches the "Method of Evaluation" criteria which matches the categories in the "Proposal Content" section.

## 9 UNIVERSITY LOGOS AND LICENSED VENDORS

1. The University of Cincinnati Licensing Program was established by the Board of Trustees in 1986 to protect and control the use of the name, mascot, logos and other identifying marks of the university. This is accomplished by requiring that only licensed vendors may produce items using University of Cincinnati trademarks. This requirement applies to both commercial and non-commercial uses of the trademarks.
  - The Licensing Program is represented by the Collegiate Licensing Company ("CLC"), and only vendors who are licensed through CLC are authorized to produce logos with University of Cincinnati trademarks. ***Please be advised that Central Purchasing may no longer process purchase orders or accept bids for goods with UC trademarks unless the vendor has been licensed through CLC, or is in the process of licensure with CLC.*** Current lists of licensed vendors are available from the [Office of Trademarks & Licensing website](#) or by [contacting their office](#).
2. Purchases of goods for internal university use are not assessed a royalty. If goods are purchased for resale a royalty fee will be added to the price.
3. Questions about the Licensing Program or the use of the licensed vendors, should be directed via email to the Director of Trademarks & Licensing. Further information can be found on their website.