

PROCUREMENT SOLICITATION DOCUMENT



The Interlocal Purchasing System (TIPS)

A Cooperative Purchasing Program available for membership by Government and Other Entities in all fifty states.

Lead Agency



Region 8 Education Service Center

**4845 US Hwy. 271 North, Pittsburg, Texas 75686 - Toll-free (866) 839-8477
www.tips-usa.com E-mail: bids@tips-usa.com**

NOTICE TO PROPOSERS

**DEADLINE DATE FOR ALL PROPOSALS TO BE RECEIVED ELECTRONICALLY or
otherwise is:**

May 18, 2018 at 3:00 P.M. Local Time

The solicitation documents may be found at <https://tips.ionwave.net>

If a problem is encountered accessing the solicitation, please contact TIPS at the address or phone listed above for help. **This solicitation is a Request for Proposals as permitted in the Texas Education Code § 44.031 for the category:**

RFP 180403

**Office and School Supplies Products and Services (48 Contiguous State
Storefront Coverage)**

THIS SOLICITATION IS INTENDED FOR THE USE OF ESC REGION 8, TIPS AND TIPS MEMBER ENTITIES OR FUTURE MEMBERS TO PIGGYBACK UPON AND UTILIZE AS THEIR OWN SOLICITATION FOR LEGAL PROCUREMENT. BECAUSE ENTITIES PIGGYBACKING UPON CONTRACTS RESULTING FROM THIS SOLICITATION MY DO SO AT THEIR DISCRETION AND TIMING, ANY SCOPE REQUIREMENTS OF THE SOLICITATION MAY CHANGE DURING THE LIFE OF THE RESULTING AGREEMENTS AND NO VOLUME OF PURCHASES IS GUARANTEED BY TIPS.

NOTICE: The use of the terms Solicitation, Bid, Request for Proposals, RFP, Request for Competitive Sealed Proposals, RCSP, or other specific terms may not be accurate in legal terminology and should be construed to mean the method of

competitive procurement listed above with the legal citation of the source of the procurement method. Example: "This Solicitation is a Request for Proposals as permitted in the Texas Education Code Section 44.031".

General Information

FINANCING OF TIPS

TIPS Vendor Paid Fee

The total cost of the TIPS program, in most cases, is primarily funded through an administration fee paid to TIPS by the awarded contractors. The fee is based on actual vendor project sales. Vendor will pay the fee on the actual invoiced and paid sales to TIPS members. Fees are not assessed to vendors for shipping cost, required bond cost, or any taxes that may be applicable.

TIPS establishes a fee for each solicitation for proposals that is in the best interest of TIPS and its members.

The fee schedule for agreements awarded under solicitation is 1 %.

Term of Agreement and Renewals The initial term of the agreement is five (5) years. Awarded agreements may be extended for one (1) additional consecutive one-year term if both parties agree. TIPS may or may not exercise the one-year extension beyond the base five-year term and whether or not to offer the extension is at the sole discretion of TIPS. THIS CLAUSE CONTROLS OVER ANY OTHER TERM IN ANY OTHER PART OF THIS SOLICITATION. TIPS reserved the right to solicit proposals at any time it is in the best interest of TIPS and/or its members.

Termination TIPS or the awarded vendor may terminate an award under this solicitation at will for cause or no cause for convenience. TIPS must provide the vendor with 30 days written notice to the awarded vendor at the address provided in the response or as otherwise provided. The Awarded vendor shall provide TIPS with 90 days written notice in order to protect the interests of the TIPS member that may be in negotiation.

Vendor Questions

Questions about the specific SOLICITATION shall be submitted to bids@tips-usa.com with the following in the subject line: "SOLICITATION NAME #xxxxxx contractor question". Questions of a ministerial nature will be answered without an addendum, but questions of a substantive nature that are not addressed in the SOLICITATION or deemed relevant to the process by TIPS will be addressed by properly posted addendum.

QUESTIONS WILL BE RECEIVED UNTIL May 7, 2018 AT NOON Local Time.

Pre-Bid Meeting (Not Mandatory)

A Pre-Bid Meeting may be requested by any proposer, if you wish to request a Pre-Bid Meeting, please email bids@tips-usa.com

By Noon, April 19, 2018.

If requested, a Pre-Bid meeting will be scheduled if agreed by TIPS, an addendum posted and a notification will be sent by the electronic bidding system to all known interested parties.

***If Requested, TIPS reserves the right to determine if a Pre-Bid Meeting is held.**

ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE OF AWARD OR RELATED EVENT:

Posting Date	April 5, 2018	
Proposal Deadline	May 18, 2018	(Friday) at 3:00 PM Local Time
Proposal Opening	May 18, 2018	(Friday) at 3:00 PM Local Time
Proposals Award	June 28, 2018	(Thursday) 8:30 AM Local Time
Award Notifications	June 28, 2018	(Thursday) 12:00 PM Local Time
	June 28, 2018	TIPS will begin posting to TIPS Website
	June 28, 2018	Responders may call for results

*Non-Award letters will be mailed to contractors with No Awards.

TIPS agreements are available for use by all schools, colleges, universities, cities, counties and other government entities in all fifty states if permitted by the jurisdictions of the governmental entities.

Only full-service office supply companies that have company storefront in at least all 48 contiguous states (not Alaska or Hawaii) may submit proposals to this RFP. The proposing companies must, at a minimum provide full line office supplies, technology goods and supplies, copying and printing services. TIPS members must be able to purchase in the storefronts as walk-in customers to meet the immediate needs of the TIPS Member entities.

TIPS also currently has published a RFP 180401 Office and School Supplies Products and Services for office supply companies that serve local or regional areas in an effort to permit smaller companies or minority owned, women owned, veteran owned and other disadvantaged owned companies to compete within their capabilities.

Pricing Models

Pricing for Line Items or Catalog

It is the intention of TIPS to establish an agreement to furnish and/or deliver all goods and services provided by awarded vendors to its members. Proposers are requested to submit a proposal for

offering their complete and total line of available products and services to governmental entities, including school districts.

The list or category of goods or services sought by this solicitation is inclusive and not exclusive. There may be other similarly used items that are sold by the responding vendors that may be included as part of the proposing vendor's "catalog" (defined below) now or during the life of the agreement that are considered included in this solicitation and subject to the minimum discount proposed. Pricing may also be exclusively line item pricing or, and recommended, in combination with a minimum catalog discount.

Example: During the life of the agreement, models change and new products come to market that are in the same category and are added to the vendor's "catalog" and are available for purchase by users of the agreement. If you fail to propose a minimum discount off your catalog, it may limit the ability to change pricing of catalog items and services during the life of the award.

Definition of "catalog"

"Catalog" means the available list of tangible personal property or services, in the most current listing, regardless of date, during the life of the contract, that takes the form of a catalog, price list, schedule, shelf price or other form that:

- A. is regularly maintained by the manufacturer or vendor of an item; and
- B. is either published or otherwise available for inspection by a customer during the purchase process;
- C. to which the minimum discount proposed by the proposing vendor may be applied.

Adding New or Replacement Goods Items During the Life of the Agreement

Is easiest proposing a Minimum Discount off (PREFERRED MODEL) catalog prices for goods or a markup on vendor's cost of a good item. See Pricing sheets 1.

NEW ITEMS: TIPS will allow the addition of new goods items to be added to the agreement when they become available to the market through the vendor under the discount off published pricing model or markup on cost model. You must stipulate a discount or markup on catalog price in the appropriate section of the pricing Excel sheet to be eligible for this option. You may stipulate discount off specific brands or lines of goods if you desire. Be thorough and concise. Any items added must be available to all customers, within legal or contractual limitations, if any. (Example: Apple products are not permitted to be sold to the education market without special agreement from Apple but may be sold to other government customers.)

Shipping cost:

Pricing presented for goods offered does not have to include shipping costs from dealer to Member customer. If shipping is included in the price regardless of the situation, then you simply state no additional cost for shipping or delivery to any customer. Please propose and explain shipping policies and terms. Shipping method is determined by the vendor and the

Member/Customer at the time of the quote/purchase by the Member/Customer and satisfactory shipping methods and costs are agreed at that time unless determined by the Proposal terms. Shipping should be passed through at actual cost, if known, to the TIPS Member.

Experience: TIPS wants to know that our vendors are experienced in their field and that they have sufficient experience to supply our needs. One of the evaluation criteria score the proposer's experience in the business they are proposing.

SPECIFICATIONS and PRICING FORMAT (EXCEL SPREADSHEET)

PRICING

1. Instructions: TAB 1 complete the market basket pricing, not exceed pricing. Match exact items, national brand for national brand or private label for private label. TAB 2 provide catalog category discounts, not to exceed pricing, for all non-market basket items available to TIPS members. Provide the category, discount from Manufacturer's Suggested List Price (MSRP) list from catalog. Additionally, provide non-catalog, retail, web, or other pricing methodology for all other items or services available for sale. Supplier must state any limitations, such as pricing floor or ceiling. All pricing must be firmly calculable for TIPS Members based on the proposal and any discounts offered.
2. Price changes: Pricing for market basket items may change twice a year, with TIPS approval. Pricing for non-market basket product may be updated quarterly or biannually at vendor discretion. Awarded vendor may change market basket items for obsolete products with TIPS approval. Price changes must be approved by TIPS. All price increases must be supported by documentation.
It is the awarded vendor's responsibility to keep all pricing up to date and on file with TIPS. All price changes must be provided to TIPS, using the original contract format.
3. Pricing information: All deliveries are freight prepaid, F.O.B. destination and are included in all pricing offered unless otherwise clearly stated in writing. TAB 3 Provide any additional incentives, rebates, and pricing benefits. Provide any fees, restrictions, warranty limitations, minimum order, return/stocking fees, or other financial terms to TIPS members. Payment terms are net 30.
4. Prevailing Wage: It is responsibility of the Vendor to comply, when applicable, with the prevailing wage legislation in effect in the jurisdiction of the purchaser (TIPS or its Members).
5. Administrative Fees: All pricing submitted to TIPS shall include the administrative fee to

be remitted to TIPS by the awarded vendor. The awarded vendor agrees to pay administrative fees to TIPS as calculated as follows: Contract sales for fiscal year of January 1st through December 31st and reset each year. Administrative fee for this RFP is 1% of sales to all TIPS Members purchasing under the agreement.

1. Audit rights: Vendor shall, at Vendor's sole expense, maintain appropriate due diligence of each and all purchases made by TIPS and any entity that utilizes this Agreement. TIPS reserves the right to audit the accounting for a period of three (3) years from the time such purchases are made. This audit right shall survive termination of this Agreement for a period of one (1) year from the effective date of termination. In the State of New Jersey, this audit right shall survive termination of this Agreement for a period of five (5) years from the date of final payment. Such records shall be made available to the New Jersey Office of the State Comptroller upon request. TIPS shall have the authority to conduct random audits of Vendor's pricing that is offered to eligible entities at TIPS's sole cost and expense. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the event that TIPS is made aware of any pricing being offered to eligible agencies that is materially inconsistent with the pricing under this agreement, TIPS shall have the ability to conduct an extensive audit of Vendor's pricing at Vendor's sole cost and expense. TIPS may conduct the audit internally or may engage a third-party auditing firm. In the event of an audit, the requested materials shall be provided in the format and at the location designated by TIPS or TIPS.

Proposals on any reputable manufacturers regularly produced goods falling within the general categories solicited herein will be considered for award. If a name brand is mentioned, it is only to illustrate type and quality and is not intended to restrict competition. Any list included herein is inclusive and not exclusive. There may be other similarly used items that are sold by the responding vendors that may be included as part of the proposing vendor's "catalog" (Defined above) now or during the life of the contract that are considered included in this RFP. Example: During the life of the contract, models change and new products come to market that are in the same category and are added to the vendor's "catalog" and are available for purchase by users of the contract provided the catalog discount or cost markup proposed is honored by the awarded vendor.

TIPS leaves it to the proposer to determine what goods or services that perform or serve this function and the proposer may list or include anything applicable.

This solicitation is seeking providers for:

Office and School Supplies Products and Services

Specifications and Pricing

Appendix A is the pricing sheet for this solicitation and it has three tabs for various pricing

situations. Proposers may submit additional pricing or information for consideration besides the information on Appendix A.

Proposals should include all listings of Office and School Supplies Products and Services, description of services and any other related services, to include, but not limited to: office supplies, paper, toner, technology goods, furniture, cleaning supplies, copying, printing, etc. DO NOT INCLUDE ITEMS THAT ARE NOT CONSIDERED Office and School Supplies Products and Services related or sold by office supply dealers or stores. Hourly or other unit pricing for services providing installation, repair or maintenance to equipment may be submitted. Accessories to support the Office and School Supplies Products and Services be submitted.

Proposers may serve a local area only or a broader geographic area at their discretion and should indicate their limitations for a service area.

(Note: TIPS must be able to verify customer quotes when requested by the TIPS Member from the pricing submitted from this vendor proposal.)

Proposal should list offerings to be considered as part of Office and School Supplies Products and Services that can be provided by the vendor. Servicing of equipment, installation of equipment, rental of equipment, repair of equipment or any related service to support equipment may be included in this proposal.

A discount off list price pricing model is ideal as list prices change over the life of the awarded agreement. Possible pricing models are discussed in this document. Any other goods and services that are logically related to this general category. TIPS reserves the sole right to determine whether or not proposed goods or services are logically related to this general category.

Additional Services:

Bidder may list in the Pricing Sheet 2 excel spreadsheet all related services, installation, repair, maintenance, travel, lodging, per diem, and hourly fees or other defined unit cost according to category offered on this contract. Offering must be related to this category. No inappropriate offerings will be considered.

A zero discount off catalog proposal is permitted, but TIPS encourage vendors to propose the best discount they feel is necessary to compete with other retailers to provide the greatest benefit to TIPS members.

Please propose a minimum discount off catalog for all non-line items proposed so you will be covered when future items are available in you catalog. By doing this, the pricing is a ceiling and not a floor. You may always lower your price or increase your minimum discount percentage to be more competitive in a particular situation

Caution: Using the Markup method of pricing may exclude some members when using Federal funds as Federal regulations prohibit this type of pricing and some local regulations prohibit this type of pricing and when not using Federal Funds, it still requires the proposer to make

available to TIPS or its members proof of the cost of the item to the proposer to verify the markup is applied according to the terms of this solicitation and resulting award.

You may stipulate different blanket discounts off on specific brands or lines of goods if you desire.

PRICING FORMAT (EXCEL SPREADSHEETS 1 and 2)

DO NOT PROPOSE "PRICE TO BE DETERMINED" or "ON REQUEST". This method is not lawful to award by TIPS.

Vendor may provide additional pricing in another format.

ALL PRICING SHALL BE FIRM AND CALCULABLE AT THE TIME OF SALE DURING THE LIFE OF THE CONTRACT AND MUST CONFORM AND COMPLY WITH THE VENDOR'S PROPOSED PRICING MODEL IN RESPONSE TO THE ORIGINAL SOLICITATION. DO NOT PROPOSE "PRICE TO BE DETERMINED". If you have question on this process, call TIPS for clarification.

One Example: Proposed catalog, web or store price for an item is \$10.00 each and your proposed minimum discount is 5%, then the price is firm and calculable as \$9.50.

Please provide any explanatory information on your pricing proposal you believe is necessary to fully inform TIPS of your intent.

Service Incidental to the Sale of Goods

Many times, the sale of goods may be accompanied by the installation or set up of said goods. Proposers may submit pricing for the services in the Pricing Sheet 2 spreadsheet or in an attachment.

Any and All SERVICES may be proposed, but must be priced either as a line item or as a discount off the published Catalog price for said services. You may provide a catalog of services or a link to the available services or you may create a TIPS-specific Catalog list of services with applicable pricing. Please specify or illustrate your chosen method.

NOTE: FAILURE TO PROPOSE SERVICES SHALL EXCLUDE THEM FROM YOUR OFFERING THROUGH THIS AWARD SO, PLEASE INCLUDE THEM IN SOME CALCULABLE WAY. YOU MAY PROVIDE A PERCENTAGE DISCOUNT OFF POSTED PRICES OR CATALOG PRICES FOR THE LOCATION OF THE STORE OR IN SOME SPECIFIC MANNER THAT FITS YOUR BUSINESS MODEL.

When using line item pricing, vendor should provide on pricing template 2 a maximum price increase percentage for annually for renewal years. Complete all excel pricing forms.

PROPOSAL SCORING AND EVALUATION

TIPS staff evaluates and scores all responsive proposals. Recommendations for award will be made to the Region 8 Education Service Center Board of Directors. Awards will be granted or denied at the monthly stated meeting of the Region 8 ESC Board of Directors or as delegated by

the Board of Directors. TIPS will base a recommendation for award on several factors mandated by the Texas Education Code section 44.031. The factors which will be considered and assigned points in each area as follows (100 total points possible).

TIPS utilizes a value approach for awarding agreements under this solicitation and applies the mandated evaluation criteria under Texas Education Code §44.031. TIPS reserves the right to assign any number of point awards or penalties it considers warranted if an offeror stipulates exceptions, exclusions, or limitations of liabilities. TIPS shall reserve the right to reject any or all proposals or any part of any proposal.

The following evaluation criteria are mandated for consideration by Texas Education Code § 44.031 (b).

1. **Purchase Price:** (22) point weight. Per prices quoted as related to information within the request for proposals and the discount off MSRP or other published list pricing or stated prices of goods. Points are awarded based on the prices and or discount, and the reasonableness in the market of the pricing offered.
2. **The reputation of the vendor and of the vendor's goods or services;** (3) point weight. References or TIPS staff knowledge and any other available information known to TIPS may be used to score this criterion.
3. **The quality of the vendor's goods or services;** (21.5) point weight. References or TIPS staff knowledge or any other available information known or available through the RFP or otherwise to TIPS may be used to score this criterion.
4. **The total long-term cost to TIPS and its members to acquire the vendor's goods or services;** (10) point weight. **Points will be assigned to this criterion based on your answer to Attribute 88** of this solicitation in the ION Wave bidding system. Points are awarded if you agree not increase your **catalog prices (as defined herein)** more than X% annually over the previous year for years two and three and potentially year four, **unless an exigent circumstance exists in the marketplace and the excess price increase which exceeds X% annually is supported by documentation provided by you and your suppliers and shared with TIPS, if requested.** If you agree NOT to increase prices more than 5%, **except when justified by supporting documentation**, you are awarded 10 points; if 6% to 14%, **except when justified by supporting documentation**, you receive 1 to 9 points incrementally. Price increases 14% or greater, **except when justified by supporting documentation**, receive 0 points.
5. **Extent to which the Goods or Services meet the Needs:** (21.5) point weight. TIPS evaluators will determine if the proposal provides value to TIPS members and if the goods and/or services offered by the proposer meets the needs outlined in the solicitation. In the judgment of TIPS points are awarded incrementally 0-22 points depending if the proposal meets the needs outlined in the solicitation.

6. **Vendor's Past Relationship:** (10) point weight – No past relationship scores 5 points and a good relationship scores 6 to 10 points and a poor relationship scores 0 to 4 points
7. **Impact on the Ability of the District to Comply with Laws and Rules Relating to Historically Underutilized Businesses:** (2) point weight –**Points are assigned if the vendor agrees to abide by the federal regulations in the Attribute number 86 and 87** of this solicitation in the ION Wave bidding system. related to underutilized businesses in its subcontracting practices related to this proposal, when applicable. NOTE: Failure to agree to comply with the federal regulations herein shall make use of federal funds to purchase the goods or services proposed unallowable.
8. **Residency: for a contract for goods and services, other than goods and services related to telecommunications and information services, building construction and maintenance, or instructional materials,** whether the vendor or the vendor's ultimate parent company or majority owner:
- (A) has its principal place of business in this state; or
 - (B) employs at least 500 persons in this state; and
- (0) point weight- federal funds may be utilized by ESC Region 8 or TIPS member entities during the life of this contract, and residency is a prohibited criterion under federal regulation, it has been considered and assigned a weight of **0 points**.
9. **Experience:** (10) points weight TIPS wants to know that our vendors are experienced in their field and that they have sufficient experience to supply our needs. Attribute question #44 asks how many years of experience the proposing company has in this RFP title category. Points are awarded per the following scale: 0 years = 0 points; 1-3 years = 5 points; 4 to 5 years = 8 points; over 5 years = 10 points.

PROPOSERS FALLING BELOW AN 70-POINT THRESHOLD WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR AN AWARD.

About TIPS

It is the purpose of this SOLICITATION to establish awarded vendor agreements to satisfy the procurement needs of participating member entities in this particular commodity category. These awarded agreements will enable member entities to purchase on an “as needed” basis from competitively awarded agreements with high performance vendors. Proposers are requested to submit a proposal for offering their line of available products that are commonly purchased by government agencies, cities, counties and educational entities.

- Awards will be made to the successful proposer(s) for the products and/or services. (Unless proposer has submitted inappropriate items for the commodity category. Those items will not be awarded. Example: a software company may not propose to perform construction

work)

- TIPS reserves the right to award multiple vendors for each solicitation.
- This proposal is requested for the benefit of the current list of members and other new members as they execute TIPS membership Agreements in the future. Member List: <http://www.tips-usa.com/assets/documents/docs/membership.pdf>
- TIPS reserves the right to extend the proposal deadline for any reason.
- TIPS reserves the right to make changes to this Solicitation by way of one or more posted addenda.

Benefits of TIPS

- Provide government entities opportunities for greater efficiency and economy in acquiring goods and services through competitively procured vendor agreements.
- Provide comprehensive purchasing practices according the Laws of the State of Texas and Federal Regulation 2 CFR part 200, when appropriate, and is designed to result in competitive agreements that meet a wide variety of needs.
- Provide competitively priced purchasing options for multiple government entities that yields economic benefits usually unobtainable by the individual entity.
- Provide quick and efficient delivery of goods and services by entering into pricing agreements with “high performance” vendors.
- Equalized purchasing power for smaller entities.
- Maintain credibility and confidence in business procedures by maintaining free, full and open competition for purchases and by complying with purchasing laws and ethical business practices.
- Provide document retention for competitive procurement process for all TIPS Awarded Agreements.

Customer Service

- TIPS staff is available to members for assistance in viewing/contacting awarded vendors for categories to make purchases and agreement decisions.
- TIPS provides a way for government entities to avoid the time and expense of seeking competition for purchases on an agency-by-agency basis.
- TIPS enables vendors to become more efficient and competitive by reducing the number of proposals that require responses to be made to individual entities.

Purchasing Procedures

- Agreements are established through free, full and open competition as described by the laws of the State of Texas and are available for piggy-back by other government entities anywhere in the United States, subject to each entities’ jurisdictional law and regulation. Purchase orders or equivalent are issued by participating governmental entities directly to the Vendor or vendor assigned dealer. Purchase orders or equivalent are usually sent to the TIPS office where they are reviewed by the TIPS staff and forwarded to the Vendor within one working day. In some instances, the entity may send the purchase orders or equivalent directly to the vendor and report the purchase to TIPS.

- NOTE: It is always the vendor's responsibility under the TIPS agreement to report all sales under the agreement to TIPS.
- Vendors deliver goods/services directly to the participating member agency and then invoice the participating member agency. The Vendor receives payment directly from the participating member agency.

Notice of Confidentiality of Proposed Information

The proposal submitted and all information therein is available to TIPS members. Also, according to the Texas Public Information Act, any documents or information held by TIPS "may" be public information. In the documents for the proposer to complete is a declaration form entitled "CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT REQUESTS OF EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER REGION 8 AND TIPS IS GOVERNED BY TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE, CHAPTER 552" that must be completed by the proposer that designates specified pages as confidential or waives confidentiality of the entire proposal.

Proposal Instructions

1. Electronically sealed proposals are the preferred and most accurate method and is highly encouraged through our online procurement software, ION Wave.
2. Proposals may be amended by the proposer on the electronic site at any time prior to the due date and time. ION wave permits you to withdraw and resubmit your proposal.
3. If an addendum is posted, you are required to login to the ION Wave bidding software and address the addendum. No addendum will be issued within five calendar days of the opening unless it is to extend the opening or address a non-substantive issue. Legal holidays not counted as calendar days are New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Easter, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas.
4. Proposals may be submitted on any or all sections, related to the category, unless stated otherwise. TIPS reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to accept any proposal(s) deemed advantageous to the TIPS members and to waive any informality in the proposal process.
5. Deviations to any Terms, Conditions and/or Specifications shall be clearly noted in writing by the contractor and shall be included with the proposal. There are attributes that you must respond to in order to submit a proposal that address deviations.
6. Withdrawal of proposals will not be allowed for a period of 90 days following the opening unless approved by TIPS.
7. Addenda, if required, will be issued by TIPS by email to the proposer's designated contact to all those vendors known to have reviewed the SOLICITATION documents through our electronic bidding software, ION Wave.

PROPOSAL FORMAT - PROPOSERS PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO DETAILS LISTED.

TIPS reserves the right to waive any informality and/or reject any or all proposals.

All responses should be direct, concise, complete, and unambiguous. With regard to those items that cannot be answered in the affirmative, clearly explain the precise portion to which you disagree and why you disagree. Proposers must propose pricing that is calculable based on the prices presented or discounts proposed as they relate to a published price of the goods or services. Published prices are prices that are provided by a catalog, website, shelf, price list accessible to TIPS and its members at any time during the term of an awarded agreement with the vendor or specifically proposed. Other methods of publishing prices will be considered if proposed but must be calculable.

Felony Conviction Notice (Required in Texas) -Notification of Criminal History “A person or business entity that enters into an agreement with a school district must give advance notice to the district if the person or an owner or operator of the business entity has been convicted of a felony. The notice must include a general description of the conduct resulting in the conviction of a felony. A school district may terminate an agreement with a person or business entity if the district determines that the person or business entity failed to give notice as required or misrepresented the conduct resulting in the conviction. The district must compensate the person or business entity for services performed before the termination of the agreement.” This notice is not required of a publicly held corporation. Texas Education Code § 44.034. See FELONY CONVICTION NOTICE document on the “Attachments” tab. Felony conviction notice document must be uploaded to the “Response Attachments” FELONY CONVICTION NOTICE section.

References

The proposal response should contain a minimum of Three (3) references of customers you have served that would be considered eligible for membership in TIPS (i.e. K-12 School Districts, College/Universities, and/or City/County Government Entities, Water or Fire Districts, etc.). In addition to the name of the entity, a contact name, email and phone number shall be included. The references document must be downloaded from the “Attachments” section, completed and uploaded to the “Response Attachments” REFERENCES section.

Resellers/Dealers

Vendors with Resellers/Dealers must provide the Resellers/Dealers document from the “Attachments” section, complete and uploaded to the “Response Attachments” RESELLERS/DEALERS section.

Vendor Certifications

Vendor certifications should include applicable D/M/WBE, HUB and manufacturer certifications for sales and service (if applicable). Certificates must be scanned and uploaded to the “Response Attachments” D/M/WBE, HUB and/or ALL OTHER CERTIFICATES section. Whether or not you are a D/M/WBE, HUB or similar business will have no bearing on the evaluation score, but provides our members the information if it is part of their entities’ policies.

There is a form that relates to all vendors that is required by Federal Regulation when federal funds are expended by a member. Vendors should complete all requested forms agreeing to comply with regulations.

Vendor Agreement

Vendor Agreement must be downloaded from the “Attachments” section, completed and uploaded to the “Response Attachments” VENDOR AGREEMENT section. If proposer has deviations to the agreement language to negotiate with TIPS, there are attributes in the electronic process that address this possibility and you may insert your deviations there.

Agreement Signature Form

Agreement Signature Form must be downloaded from the “Attachments” section, completed, signed, scanned and uploaded to the “Response Attachments” AGREEMENT SIGNATURE FORM section. If proposer has deviations to the agreement language to negotiate with TIPS, the agreement signature page may be submitted unsigned until all terms and conditions are agreed.

Warranty (If applicable)

Warranty documentation should be scanned and uploaded to the “Response Attachments” WARRANTY section.

Protest Procedure

If a contractor/proposer (contractor) desires to protest a process or decision by TIPS, the contractor must follow the following process:

http://www.tips-usa.com/assets/documents/docs/letters/Protest_Procedures_for_Vendor.pdf

Supplementary Catalogs and Information (If applicable)

Supplementary Catalogs and Information documentation should be scanned and uploaded to the “Response Attachments” SUPPLEMENTARY section. You may provide a link to catalogs or pricing that is published for all customers to see when shopping for your goods or services.

Links to catalog pricing must be kept current during the term of the awarded agreement. It is the intent of TIPS to award a manufacturer’s complete line of products, when possible.

LIMITATIONS OF THE SOLICITATION AND THE USE OF AWARDED AGREEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Depending on different entities’ and jurisdictions’ laws and regulations, members may be prohibited from participating in one or more of the TIPS agreements. TIPS has no control over those legal restrictions and does not warrant that a member entity will be able to utilize a TIPS awarded agreement.

Terms and Conditions

1. **Exclusivity**- Any award under this solicitation is not exclusive and TIPS reserves the right to multi award or not award. TIPS reserves the right to solicit same or similar categories again for additional awards during the life of an existing agreement with one or more awarded vendors of another solicitation, if TIPS decides it is in the best interest of our members.
2. **Confidentiality of Proposal** - If you believe part of your proposal is confidential and not subject to sunshine laws such as the Public Information Act, there is a form to complete to make such a declaration. Read it carefully.
3. **Best and Final Offer** – There will be NO best and final offer, your proposal will be your final offer for solicitation competition purposes. Vendor may lower prices at any time during agreement period. See pricing section.
4. **Non-Responsive Proposals**: All proposals will be reviewed for responsiveness to the material requirements of the solicitation. A proposal that is not materially responsive shall not be eligible for further consideration for award of the agreement. There may be required specifications for this proposal and desired and other specifications. IF YOUR PROPOSAL FAILS TO MEET ANY OF THE DESIGNATED **REQUIRED** SPECIFICATIONS, YOUR PROPOSAL SHALL BE DEEMED NON-RESPONSIVE AND WILL NOT BE EVALUATED FURTHER OR CONSIDERED FOR AWARD.
5. **Deviations and Exceptions**: Deviations or exceptions stipulated as non-negotiable in the response by the proposer may result in disqualification if they are not acceptable to TIPS.
6. **Equal Pricing** – Pricing proposed shall be provided to any TIPS member and regardless of the quantity of product or service purchased from the awarded vendor. Pricing may always be lowered by the vendor if circumstances permit to provide better value to TIPS members and for the vendor to be more competitive in that particular circumstance of sales opportunity. If prices are lowered in a specific circumstance, the same lowered pricing must be offered to all TIPS members if the quantities, timing and all other circumstances are identical.
7. **Estimated Quantities**: Because TIPS cannot accurately anticipate which members will utilize the awarded agreements due to the thousands of members and the different government entity types, TIPS makes no guarantee or commitment of any kind concerning quantities or usage of agreements resulting from this solicitation. This information, if provided, is provided solely as an aid to vendors in preparing proposals only. The successful Vendor(s) discount and pricing schedule shall apply regardless of the total cumulative volume of business under the agreement.
8. **Conditions of Agreement** - The terms and conditions of this solicitation shall control in the order that best serves the TIPS members’ needs and deciding the controlling order is at the sole discretion of TIPS. The terms and conditions of this solicitation shall be incorporated by reference in a resulting agreement unless expressly agreed otherwise by the parties in writing.

9. **Name brands** – If name brands are required to be priced but other products of equal or similar type and quality may also be represented in the pricing and will be considered. TIPS want pricing either in a fixed price or a discount off published or available to TIPS Members catalog price or both if applicable to your proposal. A “catalog” is defined above and includes pricing of goods and /or services.
10. **Evaluation** – TIPS will evaluate the best value by rating the proposals submitted by the vendors. The point score received will be the weighted score which will be used to determine awarded vendors. See Evaluation criteria sheet with applicable point weights in this document. If applicable, extensions of unit prices shown will be subject to verification by the district. In case of variation between the unit price and the extension, the unit price will be considered to be the proposal.
11. **LIMITATION OF LIABILITY – Waiver:** BY SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL, OFFERER EXPRESSLY AGREES TO WAIVE ANY CLAIM IT HAS OR MAY HAVE AGAINST BOTH THE INTERLOCAL PURCHASING SYSTEM REGION 8 EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER, ITS DIRECTORS, OFFICERS, ITS TRUSTEES, OR AGENTS ARISING OUT OF OR IN CONNECTION WITH (1) THE ADMINISTRATION, EVALUATION, RECOMMENDATION OF ANY PROPOSAL; (2) ANY REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE SOLICITATION, PROPOSAL PACKAGE, OR RELATED DOCUMENTS; (3) THE REJECTION OF ANY PROPOSAL OR ANY PART OF ANY PROPOSAL; AND/OR (4) THE AWARD OF AN AGREEMENT, IF ANY. NEITHER REGION 8 ESC NOR TIPS SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE OR LIABLE FOR ANY COSTS INCURRED BY PROPOSERS OR THE SELECTED CONTRACTOR IN CONNECTION WITH RESPONDING TO THE SOLICITATION, PREPARING FOR ORAL PRESENTATIONS, PREPARING AND SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL, ENTERING OR NEGOTIATING THE TERMS OF AN AGREEMENT, OR ANY OTHER EXPENSES INCURRED BY A PROPOSER. THE PROPOSER OR SELECTED CONTRACTOR IS WHOLLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY SUCH COSTS AND EXPENSES AND SHALL NOT BE REIMBURSED IN ANY MANNER BY REGION 8 ESC OR TIPS.
12. **RESERVATION OF RIGHTS** - TIPS expressly reserves the right to:
 - a) Reject or cancel any or all proposals;
 - b) Waive any defect, irregularity or informality in any proposal or SOLICITATION procedure provided the waiver is equally applied to all Offerors and an Offeror is not prejudiced by the waiver as compared to other Offerors;
 - c) Waive as an informality, minor deviations from specifications for goods or services at a lower price than other proposals meeting all aspects of the specifications if it is determined that total cost is lower and the overall function is not impaired;
 - d) Reissue a SOLICITATION;
 - e) Consider and accept an alternate proposal as provided herein when most advantageous to TIPS and its members;
 - f) TIPS has the right to terminate the agreement for cause or no cause for convenience with a thirty-day written notice, unless otherwise agreed in writing in an executed agreement between the parties;

- g) This is not an exclusive award and no guaranteed volumes of purchases are guaranteed. TIPS and its members reserves the right to procure any items or services by other means at the sole discretion of TIPS or its members.