

Sole Source Written Determination

Agency Identification: University of South Carolina

Requisition ID#: 1000094945

PO#:

Amount: \$275,000

Commodity Code: 920

Description of the agency need that this procurement fulfills:

The University of South Carolina Graduate School requires an electronic graduate admissions application management system to receive, process, review, and manage applications for admission to graduate degree programs. The system must support applicant submission, application fee processing, workflow management, document collection, admissions review activities, reporting, and ongoing graduate admissions operations.

The Graduate School requires uninterrupted operation of this system to ensure prospective student applications are received, processed, and evaluated without disruption during the admissions cycle.

Describe the Market Based on Research Performed:

The Graduate School reviewed its current operational requirements and assessed the marketplace for graduate admissions application management solutions. The market includes several vendors that offer admissions management and applicant tracking platforms for higher education institutions.

The University has utilized the CollegeNET admissions platform since 2008 and has established business processes, user procedures, workflows, historical applicant records, and operational practices within that environment. Transitioning to a different platform would require significant planning, implementation, configuration, testing, user training, data review, and operational changes to ensure continuity of admissions services.

The University has determined that replacing the current platform during the upcoming contract period would create operational risks and potential disruptions to applicant processing and admissions activities. Therefore, the University intends to use this one-year contract period to conduct a formal evaluation of available solutions and determine the most advantageous long-term procurement strategy through a competitive solicitation process.

Sole Source Vendor Name: CollegeNet

Based upon the following determination, Agency proposes to acquire the supplies, construction, information technology, and/or services described herein from the vendor named above per SC Code Ann § 11-35-1560 and SC Regulation 19-445.2105, Sole Source Procurement.

Description of supplies, construction, information technology, and/or services vendor will provide under the contract:

CollegeNET will provide its graduate admissions application management platform and related support services utilized by the Graduate School for the receipt, processing, management, and review of graduate admissions applications.

Services include:

- Online graduate admissions application processing
- Application fee collection and payment processing support
- Applicant data management

Admissions workflow management
Document collection and storage
Reporting and administrative functionality
System maintenance and support
Hosting and ongoing platform access

The platform supports all graduate admissions operations conducted by the Graduate School and serves as the University's primary system for graduate applicant processing.

Explain why the described solution is the only solution that meets the agency's need and how no other identified solutions were sufficient.

The Graduate School has utilized CollegeNET continuously since 2008 as its graduate admissions application management platform. The University's admissions processes, operational workflows, user training, historical applicant data, and administrative procedures have been developed and maintained within the CollegeNET environment.

Immediate replacement of the platform would require a substantial implementation effort, including system configuration, workflow redesign, user training, testing, data migration activities, and transition planning. Implementing a new admissions platform during an active admissions cycle presents significant operational risks and could adversely impact the University's ability to receive and process applications in a timely and effective manner.

Continuity of service is critical to maintaining graduate admissions operations and ensuring uninterrupted service to prospective students. Because CollegeNET is the University's current operational platform, continuation of the existing solution for a limited period is necessary to avoid disruption while a comprehensive review of available alternatives is conducted.

This procurement is limited to a one-year term and is intended to bridge the gap necessary to maintain continuity of service while the University develops requirements, evaluates available solutions, and conducts a competitive procurement for future graduate admissions software services. The University intends to competitively solicit these services prior to the expiration of this agreement.

Accordingly, the University has determined that continuation of the existing CollegeNET platform for one additional year is necessary to preserve continuity of operations, maintain compatibility with established admissions processes, and avoid interruption of critical graduate admissions services while a competitive procurement is conducted.