

TIPS PART 2 SOLICITATION DOCUMENT



THE INTERLOCAL PURCHASING SYSTEM (“TIPS”)

A department of TIPS Lead Agency:



TEXAS REGION 8 EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER (“Region 8 ESC”)

TIPS RCSP 240503 Networking Equipment, Software, and Services JOC (PART 2)

I. NOTICE TO PROPOSERS.

Contact Information:

TIPS/Region 8 ESC
4845 US Hwy. 271 North
Pittsburg, Texas 75686
Toll Free: (866) 839-8477
Email: bids@tips-usa.com
Website: www.tips-usa.com

Part 2 Notice: This solicitation document applies to Part 2 of this opportunity only. All terms, conditions, information, and notices are applicable to Part 2. If you have questions about whether to respond to Part 1, Part 2, or both Parts 1 & 2, please carefully review the attachment entitled “TIPS Informational – Do I Respond to Part 1, Part 2, or Both?”

TIPS Solicitation:

TIPS RCSP 240503 Networking Equipment, Software, and Services

This solicitation document is a Request for Competitive Sealed Proposals as permitted in Texas Government Code § 2269. Regardless of potential informal or erroneous references to other solicitation terms such as: “solicitation”, “bid”, “request for competitive sealed proposal”, “RFP”, etc., this solicitation is the method of procurement identified at this location. This solicitation is for the sale of installation or construction projects considered a “public work” and whether a sale is classified as a “public work” is within the sole discretion of the purchasing TIPS Member entity based on the scope of work and applicable law.

Proposal Deadline:

All proposals shall be received electronically, or otherwise sealed, by: JUNE 21, 2024, AT 3:00 P.M. LOCAL TIME

Access to Solicitation Documents:

Solicitation documents are located online at <http://tips.ionwave.net>. If you encounter a problem while accessing the solicitation, please contact TIPS at the contact information provided for assistance.

Piggybacking Notice:

This IDIQ Solicitation is intended for the use of public entities and qualifying non-profit entities who join TIPS, now and in the future, (“TIPS Members”) to piggyback upon and utilize as their own solicitation for legal procurement purposes. TIPS Contracts are established through free, full and open competition as described by the laws of TIPS jurisdiction and are available for piggy-back by other government entities anywhere in the United States, subject to each entities’ jurisdictional law and regulation.

TIPS Administration Fee:

TIPS collection of fees is required pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 791.011 et. seq. The TIPS Administration Fee for this contract shall be 2% of the amount paid by the TIPS Member for each TIPS Sale, less shipping cost, bond cost, and taxes, if identifiable.

Incorporation of Solicitation:

If Vendor proposes and is awarded, the specifications, terms, and conditions of this solicitation shall be incorporated by reference into the final, awarded TIPS Contract.

TIPS Contract Jurisdictional Limitations:

Depending on different entities’ and jurisdictions’ laws and regulations, TIPS Member Customers may be prohibited from utilizing TIPS as a procurement method for any specific procurement or procurement-type. TIPS makes no representations about when a TIPS procurement will be appropriate for any particular expenditure. It is always up to the TIPS Member customer to determine whether a TIPS procurement is appropriate under their applicable laws and policies.

Vendor Questions & Pre-Bid Meeting Requests:

Substantive questions will be received until June 7, 2024, at 12:00 p.m. local time. Questions about the specific solicitation shall be submitted to bids@tips-usa.com with the subject line “240503 Networking (Part 2) – Vendor Question”. Vendor-specific questions about the process will often be answered directly. However, substantive questions that are not properly addressed in the solicitation information will be properly published to all vendors as an addendum or “Question & Answer” document.

Pre-Bid Meetings are not mandatory and, if requested, TIPS reserves the right to determine whether a Pre-Bid meeting shall be held. Pre-Bid Meetings may be requested by any proposer on or before May 16, 2024, by emailing bids@tips-usa.com with the subject line “240503 Networking (Part 2) – Pre-Bid Meeting Request”.

Anticipated Schedule of Solicitation Events:

These anticipated dates are subject to change at TIPS’ discretion. TIPS reserves the right to extend the proposal deadline for any reason.

Posting Date	MAY 2, 2024	8:00 A.M. Local Time
Proposal Deadline	JUNE 21, 2024	3:00 P.M. Local Time
Proposal Opening	JUNE 21, 2024	3:00 P.M. Local Time
Proposal Review Begins	JUNE 21, 2024	3:01 P.M. Local Time
Proposals Award	JULY 25, 2024	8:30 A.M. Local Time
Award Notifications	JULY 25, 2024	12:00 P.M. Local Time

Estimated Contract Value:

The estimated value for the life of the contract for all awarded vendors combined is \$32,801,948.00. This is an estimate and is not a guarantee of the minimum or maximum value of the contract because TIPS cannot speculate on TIPS Members’ future needs or budget allocations as they relate to this solicitation.

II. TIPS

The Interlocal Purchasing System (“TIPS”) is a department of Texas Region 8 Education Service Center, a government entity. TIPS, a governmental entity and a national purchasing cooperative operating under the Interlocal Cooperation Act¹, seeks to provide a valuable and necessary solution to public entities and qualifying non-profits by performing the legal public procurement solicitation process and awarding compliant contracts to qualified vendors. When permitted by TIPS Members’ law and policy, instead of public entities and qualifying non-profits expending time, money, and resources on the extensive legal competitive procurement process, the use of TIPS, allows public entities to quickly select and purchase their preferred products or services from qualified, evaluated Vendors on an as-needed basis. TIPS evaluates and scores all responsive, properly submitted proposals. Recommendations for award will be made to the Region 8 Education Service Center Board of Directors. Awards are ratified or rejected at the monthly meeting of Region 8 ESC Board of Directors, or as delegated by the Board of Directors. TIPS utilizes a value approach and bases its award recommendations on several factors mandated by the Texas Education Code section §44.031. The factors are allotted points as described herein. TIPS reserves the right to assign or deduct any number of points in any given category if warranted due to insufficient response or Vendor stipulated exceptions and limitations.

III. PROPOSAL GUIDANCE

1. TIPS strongly encourages all interested vendors to respond using the TIPS IonWave Electronic eBid System for proposal submission. The online submission has many safeguards built into the system that will notify proposers of mistakes or missing information. These safeguards will significantly minimize the potential for Vendor disqualification. If you encounter trouble with the TIPS IonWave eBid System, please contact TIPS.
2. If it is determined that Vendor cannot utilize the TIPS IonWave eBid System, Vendor must email bids@tips-usa.com seeking a manual submission packet which TIPS will send to you via US Mail or FedEx within two business days of receiving your request. All manual responses must be sealed in an envelope and must be physically received by TIPS at the TIPS Contact information provided herein and by the deadline provided herein.
3. If you are viewing this document, you have likely already logged into the TIPS IonWave eBid System. If not, you need to register/login to the TIPS IonWave eBid System online at <https://tips.ionwave.net/> and follow these instructions.
4. Once logged in, confirm that your Supplier Profile properly lists your accurate entity-name, EIN, d/b/a’s, and contact information, matching your current W9. If it does not, either correct it, or disable the inaccurate profile and create a correct profile before proceeding.
5. Next, confirm that all emails issued by the following domains can be received by your entity’s email servers to ensure that you do not miss vital messages: “@tips-usa.com”, @tipsconstruction.com”, and “ionwave.net”
6. Once that review/update is complete, Vendor shall carefully read through all bid Event Details, Bid Notes, Attachments, Addenda, Instructions, and Attribute Questions before submitting questions to TIPS.
7. TIPS recommends starting Vendor’s proposal response by answering the required “Attribute” questions within the IonWave eBid System. These responses are required and it is beneficial to start with the Attribute questions as some of the bid Attachments are only required depending on your responses to those questions.
8. Once Vendor has completed the Attribute Questions, Vendor must download, properly complete, and upload into the correct “Response Attachments” location all required Attachments for Part 2.
9. Once Vendor has completed the Attribute Questions and uploaded all required Attachments for Part 2, Vendor must submit the proposal before the legal Proposal Deadline. The system will notify you of errors and allow you to correct those errors where you would otherwise risk unintentional disqualification through paper submission.
10. Proposals may be retracted, amended, and resubmitted by the proposer on the electronic eBid System at any time prior to the legal deadline.
11. If an addendum is posted, you will receive an email notification and you are required to login to the IonWave eBid System to address the Addendum.
12. TIPS reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to accept any proposals, and to waive any informality in the proposal process provided waiver is equally applied to all proposers and another proposer is not prejudiced by the waiver.
13. If Vendor has proposed deviations to TIPS’ standard terms, there is an Attribute Question where Vendor can assert that it has proposed negotiations. If Vendor responds to that attribute question asserting deviations, after this solicitation legally closes and TIPS begins evaluating Vendor's file, TIPS will provide Vendor with a draft Word Document Vendor Agreement and instruct Vendor to include all requested negotiations as redline edits for TIPS consideration. This is the only proper way to submit proposed deviations for TIPS consideration. TIPS reserves the right to accept, decline, or modify Vendor's requested negotiated terms. For this reason, asserting deviations or negotiations may ultimately delay or prevent award.
14. Withdrawal of proposals will not be allowed for a period of 90 days following the opening unless approved by TIPS in writing.
15. If a Vendor desires to protest a process or decision by TIPS, the Vendor must follow the following process: http://www.tips-usa.com/assets/documents/docs/letters/Protest_Procedures_for_Vendor.pdf

¹ See Texas Government Code, Chapter 791.

Proposal Format

All responses should be direct, concise, complete, and unambiguous.

1. Attribute Questions.

Vendor must respond carefully and accurately to all “Attributes” within the IonWave eBid System.

2. Completion of Attachments & Required Uploads.

Part 2 Required Bonding Capacity Letter

If Proposing on Part 2, Vendor is required to upload a Bonding Capacity Letter from its surety as described herein. Please see the attachment entitled “Instructions and Sample – Part 2 Required Bonding Capacity Letter” for complete instructions. On Part 2, Vendor will be scored on the aggregate bonding capacity displayed in the accepted letter. Vendor must provide a current letter (issued on or after the first day of the month preceding the date on which the solicitation was posted) from its surety verifying Vendor’s bonding capacity as described herein. (Ex. if the solicitation/bid posted on February 4, 2022, the letter must be dated on or after January 1 2022. The letter must be issued from Vendor’s Surety companies, on surety company letterhead, must specify the maximum bonding capacity of the Vendor, and must be signed by an authorized representative of the surety company. The issuing surety must be authorized to do business in the State of Texas and must be listed on the Department of the Treasury's Listing of Approved Sureties (Department Circular 570).

Vendor Agreement (Part 2)

If responding to Part 2, the Vendor Agreement (Part 2) must be downloaded from the “Attachments” section of the IonWave eBid System, reviewed, properly completed, and uploaded to the “Response Attachments” section requesting the Vendor Agreement (Part 2). If Vendor has proposed deviations to the Vendor Agreement (Part 2), Vendor may assert so in the Attribute Questions and those shall be addressed during evaluation.

Vendor Agreement Signature Form (Part 2)

If responding to Part 2, the Vendor Agreement Signature Form (Part 2) must be downloaded from the “Attachments” section of the IonWave eBid System, reviewed, properly completed, and uploaded to the “Response Attachments” section requesting the Vendor Agreement Signature Form (Part 2). If Vendor has proposed deviations to the Vendor Agreement (Part 2), Vendor may leave the signature line of this page blank and assert so in the Attribute Questions and those shall be addressed during evaluation.

Reference Form

The Reference Form must be downloaded from the “Attachments” section of the IonWave eBid System, reviewed, properly completed, and uploaded to the “Response Attachments” section requesting the Reference Form. The Reference Form must be uploaded in Excel format.

Required Confidentiality Claim Form

The Required Confidentiality Claim Form must be downloaded from the “Attachments” section of the IonWave eBid System, reviewed, properly completed, and uploaded to the “Response Attachments” section requesting the Required Confidentiality Claim Form. This is the only way for Vendor to assert confidentiality of any information submitted.

Conflict of Interest Questionnaire – Form CIQ

Do not upload this form unless you have a reportable conflict with TIPS. There is an Attribute entitled “Conflict of Interest Questionnaire Requirement” immediately followed by an Attribute entitled “Conflict of Interest Questionnaire Requirement – Form CIQ – Continued.” Properly respond to those Attributes and only upload this form if applicable/instructed. If upload is required based on your response to those Attributes, the Conflict of Interest Questionnaire – Form CIQ must be downloaded from the “Attachments” section of the IonWave eBid System, reviewed, properly completed, and uploaded to the “Response Attachments” section requesting the Conflict of Interest Questionnaire – Form CIQ.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities – Standard Form - LLL

Do not upload this form unless Vendor has reportable lobbying activities. There are Attributes entitled, “2 CFR Part 200 or Federal Provision - Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment – Continued.” Properly respond to those Attributes and only upload this form if applicable/instructed. If upload is required based on your response to those Attributes, the Disclosure of Lobbying Activities – Standard Form - LLL must be downloaded from the “Attachments” section of the IonWave eBid System, reviewed,

properly completed, and uploaded to the “Response Attachments” section requesting the Disclosure of Lobbying Activities – Standard Form – LLL.

Current Form W-9

Vendor must upload their current IRS Tax Form W-9. The legal name, EIN, and d/b/a's listed should match the information provided herein exactly. This form will be utilized by TIPS to properly identify your entity.

Certificates & Licenses (Supplemental Vendor Information Only)

Optional. If Vendor would like to display any applicable certificates or licenses (including HUB certificates) for TIPS and TIPS Member Customer consideration, Vendor may upload those at the “Response Attachments” section requesting “Certificates & Licenses (Supplemental Vendor Information Only).” These supplemental documents shall not be considered part of the TIPS Contract. Rather, they are Vendor Supplemental Information for marketing and informational purposes only.

Vendor’s Warranties, Terms, and Conditions (Supplemental Vendor Information Only)

Optional. If Vendor would like to display any standard warranties, terms, or conditions which are often applicable to their offerings for TIPS and TIPS Member Customer consideration, Vendor may upload those at the “Response Attachments” section requesting “Vendor’s Warranties, Terms, and Conditions (Supplemental Vendor Information Only).” These supplemental documents shall not be considered part of the TIPS Contract. Rather, they are Vendor Supplemental Information for marketing and informational purposes only.

Supplemental Vendor Information (Supplemental Vendor Information Only)

Optional. If Vendor would like to display or include any brochures, promotional documents, marketing materials, or other Vendor Information for TIPS and TIPS Member Customer consideration, Vendor may upload those at the “Response Attachments” section requesting “Supplemental Vendor Information (Supplemental Vendor Information Only).” These supplemental documents shall not be considered part of the TIPS Contract. Rather, they are Vendor Supplemental Information for marketing and informational purposes only.

Vendor Logo (Supplemental Vendor Information Only)

Optional. If Vendor desires that their logo be displayed on their public TIPS profile for TIPS and TIPS Member viewing, Vendor may upload that logo at the “Response Attachments” section requesting “Vendor Logo (Supplemental Vendor Information Only).” These supplemental documents shall not be considered part of the TIPS Contract. Rather, they are Vendor Supplemental Information for marketing and informational purposes only.

IV. SPECIFICATIONS

Category: Networking Equipment, Software, and Services

Nothing herein is seeking services that are considered architectural and engineering services. This is a solicitation for “public works” construction projects.

Specifications.

It is the intention of TIPS, as a Department of Region 8 ESC, to contract with quality vendors to supply installation and construction of networking systems to public entity and qualifying non-profit TIPS Members in the United States. Proposals shall include, but not be limited to: building, constructing, wiring, installing, site preparation, repairs, and renovations of networking systems. Proposals should include all listings of networking system installation and construction projects that Vendor seeks to offer under the contract. Do not propose offerings that are not considered networking system installation and construction projects.

Vendor shall furnish all necessary labor, materials, tools, supplies, equipment, transportation, supervision, management and shall perform all operations necessary and required for the TIPS sale. All work shall be performed in accordance with the requirements set forth in any Supplemental Agreement with a TIPS Member Customer.

ENGINEERING AND ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES

It is impermissible in Texas and some other jurisdictions for engineering and architectural services (A&E) to be procured or provided through an interlocal cooperative contract such as this one. The TIPS Member Customer, if required by law, must engage independent A&E providers according to the laws of their jurisdiction.

V. JOB ORDER CONTRACTING

Texas Government Code § 2269 permits Job Order Contracting as a method of procurement. Job Order Contracting is a solicitation method utilized to obtain competitive, fixed-price, multi-year construction contracts based on established or published unit prices via a unit price book or a price list with a coefficient applied to those unit prices. TIPS utilizes the RS Means Unit Price Book for this purpose. This solicitation is for the sale of installation or construction projects considered a “public work” and whether a sale is classified as a “public work” is within the sole discretion of the purchasing TIPS Member entity based on the scope of work and applicable law.

Job Order Contracting Definitions:

City Cost Index: Is a pricing index published by the Unit Price Book (UPB) allowing the comparison of the national average cost of construction to the cost of the same project in a specific location.

Coefficient: Is the Vendor’s coefficient multiplier that is applied to the UPB. It will include all overhead items such as office, safety equipment, vehicles and fuel, computers, communication devices, printers, programs, insurance maintenance, two percent TIPS management fee, final site cleanup and all contingencies.

Job Order: Is a line item estimate taken from a job order proposal using the coefficient and UPB which upon agreement to by the TIPS member becomes a lump sum fixed price contract and a notice to proceed for the stated scope attached to the purchase order.

Job Order Contracting (JOC): Is a variable term indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contract for construction services on an on-call basis through negotiated line item delivery orders (job orders) to include, under State of Texas law, minor construction, repair, renovation, alterations, and maintenance projects. It is based upon the Vendor’s coefficient multiplier that is applied to UPB. When the line items are agreed upon, it becomes a lump sum firm fixed price contract for that negotiated scope of services.

Job Order Proposal: Is Vendor’s line-item proposal to the TIPS Member for a specific TIPS project. It will contain a line-item estimate for the project pursuant to the RS Means Price Book and Vendor’s applicable coefficients.

Non Pre-priced Items: Items that cannot be found or reasonably compared to listed line items in the applicable UPB. Vendor must provide TIPS with manufacturer documentation reflecting the cost of any non pre-priced item at the time of the TIPS sale so that TIPS can verify that the proposed percentage markup is being honored.

VI. VENDOR PART 2 PRICING SUBMISSION

Required RS Means Price Book Pricing:

Texas Government Code § 2269 permits Job Order Contracting as a method of procurement. Job Order Contracting is a solicitation method utilized to obtain competitive, fixed-price, multi-year construction contracts based on established or published unit prices via a unit price book or a price list with a coefficient applied to those unit prices. TIPS utilizes the RS Means Unit Price Book for this purpose. The RS Means Unit Price Book is a unit price book adjusted for different geographic areas by using the City Cost Index for each location. You may visit <https://www.rsmeans.com> for more information. TIPS Member Customers often have to designate either Davis Bacon Act wage rates or similar wage rates for their construction contracts. The RS Means Unit Price Book accounts for local wage rates and the contractor must comply with RS Means and any additional wage rate requirements of the TIPS Member Customer.

It is urgent that Vendor understands the coefficients and percentage proposed and can price TIPS sales within those limitation for the duration of Vendor's Contract. In response to the corresponding attribute questions, Vendor must propose: (1) Vendor's Regular Hours RS Means Coefficient; (2) Vendor's After-Hours RS Means Coefficient, and; (3) Vendor's Percentage Markup of Items not Pre-Priced within the RS Means Price Book.

Vendor must correctly and timely respond to the attribute questions within the IonWave eBid System seeking Vendor’s RS Means Coefficients and Non Pre-Priced Percentage or Vendor will be disqualified.

Vendor must carefully read the TIPS RS Means JOC Pricing Explanation and Rubric attachment. The TIPS RS Means JOC Pricing Explanation and Rubric attachment may be found under the “Attachments” tab in the IonWave eBid System. It is provided to assist Vendors in responding the required pricing attribute questions seeking Vendor's required RS Means Coefficients and Non Pre-Priced Percentage. Do not submit pricing questions until you have thoroughly reviewed this explanation and rubric. Do not upload the form as it is informational only.

Vendor's Regular Hours RS Means Coefficient;

To propose the RS Means Price Book pricing exactly, Vendor would insert a 1.0 as their Regular Hours RS Means Coefficient below, to propose a 5% discount off of the RS Means Price Book Vendor would insert a .95 as their Regular Hours RS Means Coefficient below. To see the full scoring rubric and use TIPS scoring calculator, please view the TIPS RS Means JOC Pricing Explanation & Rubric under the "Attachments" tab.

Vendor's After-Hours RS Means Coefficient, and;

The most common After-Hours RS Means Coefficient is "time-and-a-half" of the standard RS Means Unit Price Book. For example, if Vendor's Regular Hours Coefficient above is .95, Vendor would assert an After-Hours RS Means Coefficient of 1.45 for "time-and-a-half" pricing. To see the full scoring rubric and use TIPS scoring calculator, please view the TIPS RS Means JOC Pricing Explanation & Rubric under the "Attachments" tab.

Vendor's Percentage Markup of Items not Pre-Priced within the RS Means Price Book.

If Vendor sells items which cannot be found in the RS Means Price Book, this will be the Percentage Markup at which Vendor agrees to sell those Non Pre-Priced items. This is a maximum Percentage Markup and Vendor may always offer customers a lesser markup. Vendor must provide TIPS with manufacturer documentation reflecting the cost of any non pre-priced item at the time of the TIPS sale so that TIPS can verify that the proposed percentage markup is being honored.

Example: In this example, Vendor is selling a project to a TIPS Member school district and some of the contract pricing for special materials cannot be verified because it cannot be found in the RS Means Price book. Vendor may sell those specialty items to the Member this percentage markup from cost. In this example, if one of the specialty items cost Vendor \$100 from the manufacturer and Vendor proposed a Percentage Markup of 30% here, then Vendor could sell the item to the TIPS Customer for \$130.00 or less in this example.

Additional Pricing Terms

- 1. TIPS Pricing and Line Item Estimate Pricing Requirements.** If awarded on this TIPS Contract, for the duration of the contract, Vendor shall provide a RS Means line-item estimate to TIPS for each anticipated TIPS project or sale. When a TIPS Member Customer seeks a quote or proposal for a TIPS sale, Vendor shall always supply a line-item estimate to TIPS for review and approval.
- 2. Maintaining and Updating TIPS Pricing During Contract.** Vendor agrees and understands that for each TIPS Contract that it is awarded, Vendor submitted, agreed to, and received TIPS' approval for specific pricing, discounts, and other pricing terms and incentives which make up Vendor's TIPS Pricing for that TIPS Contract ("TIPS Pricing"). Vendor hereby certifies that Vendor shall only offer goods and services through this TIPS Contract if those goods and services fall within the scope of the TIPS Contract and are priced according to Vendor's TIPS Pricing. TIPS reserves the right to review Vendor's proposals and quotes line-item by line-item to determine compliance. However, Vendor contractually agrees that all TIPS quotes and proposals shall be within the original terms of the Vendor's TIPS Pricing (scope, coefficients, percentage markups, and other pricing terms and incentives originally proposed by Vendor) such that TIPS may approve Vendor's quotes and proposals without additional vetting at TIPS discretion.
- 3. Brands.** If a name brand is included in this solicitation, proposals on any reputable manufacturers regularly produced equipment of such items of a similar nature or similar use which are substantively equivalent will be considered.
- 4. TIPS Fee Considered.** Vendor confirms that all TIPS Pricing includes the TIPS Administration Fee and Vendor will not show adding the TIPS Administration Fee as a charge or line-item in a TIPS Sale.
- 5. Vendor's Self-Imposed Pricing Limitations.** Within Vendor's TIPS Pricing, Vendor may include express, written limitations on geographical regions, volume of order, expediency, etc., for TIPS consideration and approval, as long as Vendor honors their applicable TIPS Pricing, proposed coefficients/percentage markups, the terms and conditions of this Contract, and the terms and conditions of any Supplemental Agreement entered into directly with the customer TIPS Member. (Example: If Vendor sells nationally but a specific product can only be sold in Texas).
- 6. Shipping Cost, Bond Cost, and Taxes.** TIPS fees are not assessed to Vendors for shipping cost, required bond cost, or any taxes that may be applicable as long as they can be identified as separate line-items. For that reason, TIPS encourages Vendors

not to include shipping price, bond price, or taxes within the TIPS “catalog pricing” for an item. If it is included in the TIPS price, TIPS will have no way to differentiate and the TIPS Administration fee will be assessed on the total.

VII. PART 2 PROPOSAL SCORING AND EVALUATION

TIPS evaluates and scores all responsive, properly submitted proposals. Recommendations for award will be made to the Region 8 Education Service Center Board of Directors. Awards are ratified or rejected at the monthly meeting of Region 8 ESC Board of Directors, or as delegated by the Board of Directors. TIPS utilizes a value approach and bases its award recommendations on several factors mandated by the Texas Education Code section §44.031 and Texas Government Code §2269. The factors are allotted points as described herein. TIPS reserves the right to assign or deduct any number of points in any given category if warranted due to insufficient response or Vendor stipulated exceptions and limitations. TIPS reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or any part of any proposal. TIPS is the sole arbiter of scoring. TIPS reserves the right to award multiple vendors for each solicitation.

- 1. Purchase Price: (28) Points.** Vendor must correctly and timely respond to the attribute questions within the IonWave eBid System seeking Vendor’s RS Means Coefficients and Non Pre-Priced Percentage or Vendor will be disqualified. Vendor shall submit, pursuant to the instructions included herein: (1) Vendor's Regular Hours RS Means Coefficient; (2) Vendor's After-Hours RS Means Coefficient, and; (3) Vendor's Percentage Markup of Items not Pre-Priced within the RS Means Price Book, which make up Vendor’s “TIPS Pricing”. Points will be assigned exactly as displayed in the TIPS RS Means JOC Pricing Explanation and Rubric attachment which Vendor is required to review.
- 2. Experience: (27) Points.** Points will be assigned based on the number of years proposing Vendor has been operating the proposing business in this capacity as presented in response to the corresponding attribute question seeking the same. <2 years will receive 5-10 points depending on their bonding capacity proposed. If Vendor has <2 years’ experience and bonding is less than \$100,000.00, Vendor will receive 5 points or less. If Vendor has <2 years’ experience and bonding is more than \$100,000.00, Vendor will receive 6-10 points. 2-3 years will receive 15 points, 4-5 years will receive 20 points, and > 5 years will receive 27 points.
- 3. Reputation of Vendor and Vendor’s Offerings: (25) Points.** Points will be assigned based on Vendor’s references, to be submitted as instructed herein, reference inquiry response from provided references, and any past history with Vendor, and any other information available to TIPS regarding Vendor’s reputation.
- 4. Vendor’s Financial Capability: (18) Points.** Points will be assigned based on Vendor’s bonding capacity letter, to be submitted as instructed herein. Aggregate bonding capacity greater than \$2,000,000.00 will receive maximum points. Bonding capacity less than \$25,000.00 will receive no points. All other amounts will be scaled accordingly: \$25,000 – 5 points; \$100,000 – 10 points; \$250,000 – 12 points; \$500,000 – 14 points; \$750,000 – 15 points; \$1,000,000 – 16 points; \$1,250,000 – 16.5 points; \$1,500,000 – 17 points; \$1,750,000 – 17.5 points; \$2,000,000 – 18 points.
- 5. Impact on the Ability of TIPS Members to Comply with Laws and Rules Relating to Historically Underutilized Businesses (“HUB’s”): (2) Points.** Points are assigned if, where applicable herein, Vendor agrees that if they anticipate subcontracting under this award, they will abide by the required affirmative steps provided in 2 CFR 200. Please see the corresponding Attribute Questions regarding, “Subcontracting and Affirmative Steps for Small and Minority Businesses, Women's Business Enterprises, and Labor Surplus Area Firms.” A response that Vendor does anticipate subcontracting but does not agree to the federal subcontracting practices will give Vendor 0 points for this category and deem Vendor unacceptable to receive federal funds under this contract, any other responses accurate responses will give Vendor 2 points for this category.
- 6. Residency: 0 Points.** 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. Vendor’s response to the corresponding attribute question will be considered, as required by law, but no points shall be assigned because federal funds may be utilized by TIPS Members, and residency is a prohibited criterion under federal regulation.

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

VIII. TERMS & CONDITIONS

- 1. Incorporation of Solicitation.** As previously stated, if Vendor proposes and is awarded, the specifications, terms, and conditions of this solicitation shall be incorporated by reference into the final, awarded TIPS Contract. In the event of conflict between the terms herein and the final Vendor Agreement, the terms and conditions which are in the best interest of governmental/qualifying non-profit TIPS Members shall control at TIPS sole discretion.

2. **Deviations.** If Vendor has proposed deviations to TIPS' standard terms, there is an Attribute Question where Vendor can assert that it has proposed negotiations. If Vendor responds to that attribute question asserting deviations, after this solicitation legally closes and TIPS begins evaluating Vendor's file, TIPS will provide Vendor with a draft Word Document Vendor Agreement and instruct Vendor to include all requested negotiations as redline edits for TIPS consideration. This is the only proper way to submit proposed deviations for TIPS consideration. TIPS reserves the right to accept, decline, or modify Vendor's requested negotiated terms. For this reason, asserting deviations or negotiations may ultimately delay or prevent award.
3. **Term of the Agreement.** If awarded, the resulting Agreement with TIPS is for approximately two years with an option for renewal for an additional two consecutive one-year terms. The first renewal year shall be automatic unless Vendor notifies TIPS of its objection to the first one-year renewal. The second one-year renewal shall only be effective if offered by TIPS at its sole discretion. If TIPS offers the second renewal option, the Vendor will be notified via email issued to Vendor's then-listed Primary Contact. The renewal option shall be deemed accepted by Vendor unless Vendor notifies TIPS of its objection to the renewal option in writing and confirms receipt by TIPS.

Actual Effective Date: Agreement is effective upon signature by authorized representatives of both Parties. The Effective Date does not affect the "Term Calculation Start Date."

Term Calculation Start Date: To keep the contract term consistent for all vendors awarded under a single TIPS contract, Vendor shall calculate the foregoing term as starting on the last day of the month that "Award Notifications" are anticipated as published in the Solicitation, regardless of the actual Effective Date.

Example of Term Calculation Start Date: If the anticipated "Award Date" published in the Solicitation is May 22, 2023, but extended negotiations delay award until June 27, 2023 (Actual Effective Date), the Term Calculation Start Date shall be May 31, 2023 in this example.

Contract Expiration Date: To keep the contract term consistent for all vendors awarded under a single TIPS contract, the term expiration date shall be two-years from the Term Calculation Start Date.

Example of Contract Expiration Date: If the anticipated "Award Date" published in the Solicitation is May 22, 2023, but extended negotiations delay award until June 27, 2023 (Actual Effective Date), the Term Calculation Start Date shall be May 31, 2023 and the Contract Expiration Date of the resulting initial "three-year" term, (which is subject to an extension(s)) will be May 31, 2026 in this example.

Option(s) for Renewal: Any option(s) for renewal shall begin on the Contract Expiration Date, or the date of the expiration of the prior renewal term where applicable, and continue for the duration specified for the renewal option herein.

Example of Option(s) for Renewal: In this example, if TIPS offers the second one-year renewal and the Contract Expiration Date is May 31, 2026, then the one-year renewal is effective from May 31, 2026 to May 31, 2027.

TIPS may offer to extend Vendor Agreements to the fullest extent the TIPS Solicitation resulting in this Agreement permits.

4. **Termination.** If awarded, TIPS reserves the right to terminate the resulting agreement for cause or no cause for convenience with a thirty (30) days prior written notice. This Agreement may be terminated for cause by either party if the other party breaches the terms or materially defaults on the performance of any of its duties or obligations set forth herein, provided that such default is not cured within thirty (30) days, or as otherwise may be agreed to by both parties, after written notice is given to the defaulting party by the non-defaulting party which specifies the faulty performance and acceptable means of correction. In such event, termination of the Agreement shall be effective as of the date specified in such notice of such termination. Upon termination, all TIPS Sale orders previously accepted by Vendor shall be fulfilled and Vendor shall be paid for all TIPS Sales executed pursuant to the applicable terms. All TIPS Sale orders presented to Vendor but not fulfilled by Vendor, prior to the actual termination of this agreement shall be honored at the option of the TIPS Member. TIPS shall submit to Vendor an invoice for any outstanding TIPS Administration Fees and approved expenses and Vendor shall pay such fees and expenses within 30 calendar days of receipt of such valid TIPS invoice. Vendor acknowledges and agrees that continued participation in TIPS is subject to TIPS' sole discretion and that any Vendor may be removed from the TIPS program at any time with or without cause. This termination clause does not affect TIPS Sales Supplemental Agreements pursuant to this term regarding termination and the Survival Clause term.

5. **TIPS Pricing.** Vendor agrees and understands that for each TIPS Contract that it holds, Vendor submitted, agreed to, and received TIPS' approval for specific pricing, discounts, and other pricing terms and incentives which make up Vendor's TIPS Pricing for that TIPS Contract ("TIPS Pricing"). Vendor confirms that Vendor will not add the TIPS Administration Fee as a charge or line-item in a TIPS Sale. Vendor hereby certifies that Vendor shall only offer goods and services through this TIPS Contract if those goods and services are included in or added to Vendor's TIPS Pricing and approved by TIPS. TIPS reserves the right to review Vendor's pricing update requests as specifically as line-item by line-item to determine compliance. However, Vendor contractually agrees that all submitted pricing updates shall be within the original terms of the Vendor's TIPS Pricing (scope, proposed discounts, price increase limitations, and other pricing terms and incentives originally proposed by Vendor) such that TIPS may accept Vendors price increase requests as submitted without additional vetting at TIPS discretion. Any pricing quoted by Vendor to a TIPS Member or on a TIPS Quote shall never exceed Vendor's TIPS Pricing for any good or service offered through TIPS. Vendor certifies by signing this agreement that Vendor's TIPS Pricing for all goods and services included in Vendor's TIPS Pricing shall either be equal to or less than Vendor's current pricing for that good or service for any other customer. TIPS Pricing price increases and modifications, if permitted, will be honored according to the terms of the solicitation and Vendor's proposal, incorporated herein by reference.
6. **Initiation of TIPS Sales.** If awarded, when a public entity initiates a purchase with Vendor under this resulting contract, if the Member inquires verbally or in writing whether Vendor holds a TIPS Contract, it is the duty of the Vendor to verify whether the Member is seeking a TIPS purchase. Once verified, Vendor must include the TIPS Contract Number on all purchase communications and sales documents exchanged with the TIPS Member.
7. **TIPS Sales and Supplemental Agreements.** If awarded, when making a sale under this awarded contract, the terms of the specific TIPS order, including but not limited to: shipping, freight, insurance, delivery, fees, bonding, cost, delivery expectations and location, returns, refunds, terms, conditions, cancellations, defects, order assistance, etc., shall be controlled by the purchase agreement (Purchase Order, Contract, AIA Contract, Invoice, etc.) ("Supplemental Agreement" as used herein) entered into between the TIPS Member Customer and Vendor only. TIPS is not a party to any Supplemental Agreement. All Supplemental Agreements shall include Vendor's Name, as known to TIPS, and TIPS Contract Name and Number. Vendor accepts and understands that TIPS is not a legal party to TIPS Sales and Vendor is solely responsible for identifying fraud, mistakes, unacceptable terms, or misrepresentations for the specific order prior to accepting. Vendor agrees that any order issued from a customer to Vendor, even when processed through TIPS, constitutes a legal contract between the customer and Vendor only. When Vendor accepts or fulfills an order, even when processed through TIPS Vendor is representing that Vendor has carefully reviewed the order for legality, authenticity, and accuracy and TIPS shall not be liable or responsible for the same. In the event of a conflict between the terms of this TIPS Vendor Agreement document and those contained in any attachment, the provisions set forth herein shall control unless otherwise agreed to by the Parties in writing. The Supplemental Agreement shall dictate the scope of services, the project delivery expectations, the scheduling of projects and milestones, the support requirements, and all other terms applicable to the specific sale(s) between the Vendor and the TIPS Member.
8. **Payment for TIPS Sales.** TIPS Members may make payments for TIPS Sales directly to Vendor, or as otherwise agreed to in the applicable Supplemental Agreement after receipt of the invoice and in compliance with applicable payment statutes. Regardless of how payment is issued or received for a TIPS Sale. Vendor is responsible for all reporting and TIPS Administration Fee payment requirements as required by the TIPS Contract.
9. **Right of Refusal.** If awarded, Vendor has the right not to sell to a TIPS Member under the awarded agreement at Vendor's discretion unless otherwise required by law.
10. **Reporting TIPS Sales.** If awarded on this TIPS Contract, for the duration of the contract, Vendor shall provide a RS Means line-item estimates to TIPS for each anticipated TIPS project or sale. When a TIPS Member Customer seeks a quote or proposal for a TIPS sale, Vendor shall always supply a line-item estimate to TIPS for review and approval. If awarded, Vendor must report all TIPS Sales to TIPS. If a TIPS sale is initiated by Vendor receiving a TIPS Member's purchase order from TIPS directly, Vendor may consider that specific TIPS Sale reported. Otherwise, with the exception of TIPS Automated Vendors, who have signed an exclusive agreement with TIPS regarding reporting, all TIPS Sales must be reported to TIPS by either: (1) Emailing the line item quote and purchase order or similar purchase document (with Vendor's Name, as known to TIPS, and the TIPS Contract Name and Number included) to TIPS at tipspo@tips-usa.com with "Confirmation Only" in the subject line of the email within three business days of Vendor's acceptance of the order, or; (2) Within 3 business days of the order being accepted by Vendor, Vendor must login to the TIPS Vendor Portal and successfully self-report all necessary sale information within the Vendor Portal and confirm that it shows up accurately on your current Vendor Portal statement. No other method of reporting is acceptable unless agreed to by the Parties in writing. Failure to report all sales pursuant to this provision may result in immediate cancellation of Vendor's TIPS Contract(s) for cause at TIPS' sole discretion. Please refer to the TIPS [Accounting FAQ's](#) for more information about reporting sales and if you have further questions, contact the Accounting Team at accounting@tips-usa.com.

11. **TIPS Administration Fees.** The collection of administrative fees by TIPS, a government entity, for performance of these procurement services is required pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 791.011 et. seq. The administration fee (“TIPS Administration Fee”) is the amount legally owed by Vendor to TIPS for TIPS Sales made by Vendor. The TIPS Administration Fee amount is typically a set percentage of the amount paid by the TIPS Member for each TIPS Sale, less shipping cost, bond cost, and taxes if applicable and identifiable, which is legally due to TIPS, but the exact TIPS Administration Fee for this Contract is published herein. TIPS Administration Fees are due to TIPS immediately upon Vendor’s receipt of payment, including partial payment, for a TIPS Sale. The TIPS Administration Fee is assessed on the amount paid by the TIPS Member, not on the Vendor’s cost or on the amount for which the Vendor sold the item to a dealer or Authorized Reseller. Upon receipt of payment for a TIPS Sale, including partial payment (which renders TIPS Administration Fees immediately due), Vendor shall issue to TIPS the corresponding TIPS Administration Fee payment as soon as possible but not later than thirty-one calendar days following Vendor’s receipt of payment. Vendor shall pay TIPS via check unless otherwise agreed to by the Parties in writing. Vendor shall include clear documentation with the issued payment dictating to which sale(s) the amount should be applied. Vendor may create a payment report within their TIPS Vendor Portal which is the preferred documentation dictating to which TIPS Sale(s) the amount should be applied. Failure to pay all TIPS Administration Fees pursuant to this provision may result in immediate cancellation of Vendor’s TIPS Contract(s) for cause at TIPS’ sole discretion as well as the initiation of collection and legal actions by TIPS against Vendor to the extent permitted by law. Any overpayment of participation fees to TIPS by Vendor will be refunded to the Vendor within ninety (90) days of receipt of notification if TIPS receives written notification of the overpayment not later than the expiration of six (6) months from the date of overpayment and TIPS determines that the amount was not legally due to TIPS pursuant to this agreement and applicable law. Any notification of overpayment received by TIPS after the expiration of six (6) months from the date that TIPS received the payment will render the overpayment non-refundable. Region 8 ESC and TIPS reserve the right to extend the six (6) month deadline if approved by the Region 8 ESC Board of Directors. TIPS reserves all rights under the law to collect TIPS Administration Fees due to TIPS pursuant to this Agreement.

12. **Confidentiality of Vendor Data.** Vendor understands and agrees that by signing this Agreement, all Vendor Data is hereby released to TIPS, TIPS Members, and TIPS third-party administrators to effectuate Vendor’s TIPS Contract except as provided for herein. The Parties agree that Vendor Data is accessible by all TIPS Members as if submitted directly to that TIPS Member Customer for purchase consideration. If Vendor otherwise considers any portion of Vendor’s Data to be confidential and not subject to public disclosure pursuant to Chapter 552 Texas Gov’t Code (the “Public Information Act”) or other law(s) and orders, Vendor must have identified the claimed confidential materials through proper execution of the Confidentiality Claim Form which is required to be submitted as part of Vendor’s proposal resulting in this Agreement and incorporated by reference. The Confidentiality Claim Form included in Vendor’s proposal and incorporated herein by reference is the sole indicator of whether Vendor considers any Vendor Data confidential in the event TIPS receives a Public Information Request. If TIPS receives a request, any responsive documentation not deemed confidential by you in this manner will be automatically released. For Vendor Data deemed confidential by you in this manner, TIPS will follow procedures of controlling statute(s) regarding any claim of confidentiality and shall not be liable for any release of information required by law, including Attorney General determination and opinion. In the event that TIPS receives a written request for information pursuant to the Public Information Act that affects Vendor’s interest in any information or data furnished to TIPS by Vendor, and TIPS requests an opinion from the Attorney General, Vendor may, at its own option and expense, prepare comments and submit information directly to the Attorney General stating why the requested information is exempt from disclosure pursuant to the requirements of the Public Information Act. Vendor is solely responsible for submitting the memorandum brief and information to the Attorney General within the time period prescribed by the Public Information Act. Notwithstanding any other information provided in this solicitation or Vendor designation of certain Vendor Data as confidential or proprietary, Vendor’s acceptance of this TIPS Vendor Agreement constitutes Vendor’s consent to the disclosure of Vendor’s Data, including any information deemed confidential or proprietary, to TIPS Members or as ordered by a Court or government agency, including without limitation the Texas Attorney General. Vendor agrees that TIPS shall not be responsible or liable for any use or distribution of information or documentation by TIPS Members or as required by law.

13. **Conflicts of Interest.** Vendor confirms that they have not offered, given, or accepted, nor intend to give at any time hereafter any economic opportunity, future employment, gift, loan, gratuity, special discount, trip, favor, service to the other in connection with this Agreement. Vendor affirms that, to the best of Vendor’s knowledge, its proposal has been arrived at independently, and is awarded without collusion with anyone to obtain information or gain any favoritism that would in any way limit competition or give an unfair advantage over other vendors in the award of this Agreement. Vendor agrees that it will/has disclosed any necessary affiliations with Region 8 Education Service Center and the TIPS Department, if any, through the Conflict of Interest attachment provided in the solicitation.

14. **Volume of TIPS Sales.** Nothing in this Agreement or any TIPS communication may be construed as a guarantee that TIPS or TIPS Members will submit any TIPS orders to Vendor at any time.
15. **Exclusivity.** Any award under this solicitation is non-exclusive and TIPS reserves the right to award multiple vendors or not award any vendors. TIPS reserves the right to re-issue a solicitation or solicit the same or similar solicitation categories for additional similar awards at any time at TIPS sole discretion.
16. **Best and Final Offer.** Vendor's proposal shall be their best and final offer although deviations may be addressed and Vendor's TIPS Pricing may be updated as provided for herein.
17. **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.

