

**Mississippi State University  
Request for Proposals (RFP) 22-96  
Procurement Card Services**

ISSUE DATE: June 14, 2022

ISSUING AGENCY: Office of Procurement and Contracts

Mississippi State University  
610 McArthur Hall  
245 Barr Avenue  
Mississippi State, MS 39762

Sealed Proposals, subject to the conditions made a part hereof, will be received **July 19, 2022 at 2:00 PM in the MSU Office of Procurement and Contracts, same address above**, for furnishing services and potentially, optional services as described herein.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Indicate firm name, and RFP number on the front of each sealed proposal envelope or package.

All inquiries concerning this RFP should be directed to:

Jennifer Mayfield  
Office of Procurement and Contracts, (Same address above)  
[jmayfield@procurement.msstate.edu](mailto:jmayfield@procurement.msstate.edu)  
662-325-2550

Any addendum associated with this RFP will be posted at <http://www.procurement.msstate.edu/procurement/bids/index.php> located under RFP 22-96. It is the respondent's responsibility to assure that all addenda have been reviewed and if applicable, signed and returned.

## **1. UNIVERSITY and PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

Mississippi State University (MSU) is a comprehensive land grant university of 23,000+ students and approximately 6,000 faculty and staff. The main campus is located adjacent to the community of Starkville in northeast Mississippi, with a remote campus located in Meridian with an enrollment of around 700 students. Additionally, the university operates several remote agricultural experiment stations and has an Extension office located in each of the eighty-two Mississippi counties.

MSU utilizes a Procurement Card Program to reduce the costs associated with the acquisition of commodities, supplies, equipment and travel related expenses.

Each of the cards under our current program are on a Purchasing Card platform. MSU is willing to look at alternate platforms (One card, Corporate, etc) if the proposal offers adequate justification and it is deemed to be in the best interest of MSU. Each of the cards under the current program are custom cards and not Logo cards.

Pictures of each of the card are located in Appendix B. MSU will consider using different photos if the proposal offers adequate justification and it is deemed to be in the best interest of MSU.

Currently we receive a statement which includes the Small Purchase Card and the Equipment Card as well as the “Ghost” cards, with a cycle from the 18<sup>th</sup> through the 17<sup>th</sup> of the following month. The payment for the ghost cards is drafted 10 days from when the statement is available, and the Small Purchase and Equipment card is drafted 12 days from when the statement is available. MSU will consider alternative arrangements if the proposal offers adequate justification, and it is deemed to be in the best interest of MSU.

The current contract has a “hard” expiration date of January 1, 2023, so MSU may move forward with a new contract in a manner that is in the best interest of MSU. Anticipated dates shown herein may be altered if it is determined to be necessary.

MSU currently has over 1100 cards issued and did around \$54,000,000 in purchases during 2021. We anticipate the Travel portion of this spend to increase as we implement the Travel Card program. We anticipate that other expenditures under the program could continue to grow based upon support and resources provided by the Procurement Card Services provider.

Additional information about MSU can be found at our website [www.msstate.edu](http://www.msstate.edu).

## **2. INVITATION TO SUBMIT PROPOSAL ON RFP**

Mississippi State University is seeking proposals from qualified organizations which can provide Procurement Card Services in accordance with the requirements set forth herein. MSU intends to enter into a three (3) year contract with an option to renew for up to two (2) additional 12-month periods.

MSU is seeking to replace the existing contract for Procurement Card Services. This Request for Proposals (RFP) will be used to establish a contract with a single vendor to meet MSU's purchasing card needs. It is the intent of MSU to maximize the use of MSU funds; therefore, at this time a procurement card program with rebates/revenue sharing is required.

The MSU Office of Procurement and Contracts is soliciting competitive written proposals from qualified vendors to establish a contract with a vendor, who shall provide procurement cards, travel cards, equipment cards and other applicable services for use in making small dollar purchases by MSU departments. The contract will be available for use by all MSU departments.

MSU currently has a Procurement Card Program, which includes more than 190 departments. Under the program, cards are issued to individual employees and departments, which allow employees to make small dollar purchases (under \$5,000) of commodities and services. Purchases in excess of \$5,000 can be approved by the department's Purchasing Manager and then the MSU Procurement Card Administrators can raise the limit on the card to make purchase in excess of \$5,000.

MSU Central Purchasing Card Program data for 2021:

a. Small Purchase Card

- Number of departments: 190
- Number of cards: 829 accounts, 1016 plastics
- Number of transactions: 113,538
- Dollar volume on cards: \$47,875,383.57

b. Equipment Card

- Number of departments: 103
- Number of cards: 126 plastics
- Number of transactions: 1,881
- Dollar volume on cards: \$5,366,479.36

MSU Travel Card Program data for 2021:

- Number of departments: 10
- Number of cards: 24 plastics
- Number of transactions: 125
- Dollar volume on cards: \$24,190.08

MSU BTE Travel Ghost Card Program data for 2021:

- Number of departments: All
- Number of cards: 1 ghost account
- Number of transactions: 721
- Dollar volume on cards: \$209,974.29

MSU EBTA Travel Ghost Card Program data for 2021

- Number of departments: All
- Number of cards: 1 ghost account
- Number of transactions: 143
- Dollar volume on cards: \$30,273.98

MSU Athletics Travel Ghost Card Program data for 2021

- Number of departments: 1
- Number of cards: 1 ghost account
- Number of transactions: 946
- Dollar volume on cards: \$404,751.58

MSU Cheese Store Ghost Card Program data for 2021

- Number of departments: 1
- Number of cards: 1 ghost account
- Number of transactions: 58
- Dollar volume on cards: \$125,743.95

### 3. SCOPE OF SERVICES REQUIRED

The contractor will agree to provide its best efforts in performing the work set forth herein and within the estimates provided herein.

All Accounts are to be made visible to those persons with the MSU Department of Procurement and Contracts, Procurement Card Administrator Access. Overall transaction and credit limits may vary from card to card, department to department.

The MSU Procurement Card Program currently consists of the following:

- Small dollar procurement card – plastics held by departments to make small purchases. Carded accounts for purchases of commodities and services (transaction limits of up to \$5,000 with the ability to override based upon approval form the Procurement Manager); Departments may also require multiple strategies (i.e. transaction limits) within their department. Cards must have an individuals and department name on them.
- Equipment card – plastics held by departments to make equipment purchases. Carded accounts for purchases of items that must be added to inventory (transaction limits of up to \$5,000 with the ability to override based upon approval form the Procurement Manager). The statement download includes a generic equipment code so all equipment purchased with cards can be tracked to verify the completion of appropriate property documentation. Cards must have an individual's name on them.
- Travel card – plastics held by individuals to make limited travel purchases. Carded accounts for purchases of all travel related expenses such as airfare, hotel fees, transportation fees – rental vehicles, toll fees, taxi fare, fuel for rental vehicles, etc. At this time, the purchase of employee meals are not allowed with the Travel Card. It is our intent to allow the use of the Travel Card for meals, on a pilot basis only, to determine if the practice will be beneficial to MSU. If it is determined to be beneficial, we would anticipate expanding this practice.
- BTA – Business Travel Account – Ghost card to make travel purchases for non MSU employees
- EBTA - Employ Business Travel Account – Ghost card to make travel purchases for MSU employees
- Athletics Travel Account – Ghost card to make travel purchases for MSU Athletics employees and students

- Cheese Store Account – Ghost card to make shipping cost purchases by the MSU Cheese Store

All cards are to be EMV chip protected

MSU Procurement Card Administrators/MSU Travel Card Administrators will be given specific program coordinator access. This access includes but is not limited to:

- Program Administrator Access
- The ability to request/set up new accounts, close accounts no longer needed, to put an override strategy in place for declined purchases, international purchases, or the ability to remove a block on an account for suspected fraud
- The ability to increase transaction limits over \$5,000
- The ability to order up to 5 cards at a time online
- Assign account codes based on merchant category code
- The ability to retroactively edit default account information
- The unlimited access to all cards assigned to MSU
- The ability to communicate directly with the financial institution’s project manager.

**Card Format:**

- a. The following information shall be placed on the front of the card:
  - i. MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY
  - ii. FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY
  - iii. Tax-Exempt
  - iv. The cardholder's name
  - v. A picture provided by MSU. There will be different pictures for each of the three cards (small purchase, equipment, travel)
  - vi. An option for an extra embossing line
  
- b. The following information shall be placed on the back of the card:
  - a. Contractor 's toll free contact number
  
- c. The vendor should propose a card design to be used for the MSU purchase card program purchasing cards which conforms to the requirements above.

**Card Issuance and Program Functionality:**

The offeror shall be responsible for the embossing and printing of the procurement cards. The offeror will be required to mail all cards issued within five (5) to ten (10) business days or sooner after the offeror receives cardholder account set-up information. MSU would like an option for rush orders. Cards will only be mailed to the MSU Procurement Card Administrator/MSU Travel Card Administrators or designated location. All functionalities

should be in real time. The proposal must provide detailed information on the proposed card processes including, but not limited to:

- Card generation with immediate card number, paper process/electronic online process
- On-line activation
- Restrictions on how many lines or characters that can be embossed on a card
- Card delivery (time frames) and activation process
- Card security
- Card cancellation, temporary lock or suspension, card termination and replacement (lost and stolen cards) – including reporting
- Linking fraud cards to new cards
- Card re-issuance (time frame)
- Card reporting and notification process
- Card issuance and expiration time periods
- Addition of new cardholders within an established program
- Fraud, Disputes and Charge backs
- Billing Statements (Methods of how bills may be received; online, email, mail, etc.)
- Declining Balances (optional)
- Issuing a card to a new cardholder
- Creating and editing hierarchy levels
- Making Changes Online
- Setting transaction limits and increasing transaction limits electronically
- Increasing monthly limits electronically
- Address Change
- Name Change
- Closing accounts in real-time
- Checking Pending and Posted Authorizations against card
- Checking Current Status of Card
- Checking Current Balance
- Editing or lifting restrictions on Merchant Category Codes (MCC) or other codes
- Online Reconciliation of transactions
- Editing Fund, Organization, Account, Program and Activity Codes – Retroactively to beginning of billing cycle
- “Allow all” option for MCC codes
- Create MCC groupings
- Dual Authentication
- International overrides
- Locking hierarchies

## **Contractor's Electronic Operating System**

The Contractor shall have and maintain an electronic operating system(s) that would support MSU's procurement card program. The system utilized shall be maintained current during the life of the contract including any renewals. Upgrades to the system shall be performed in a manner that provides a transparent implementation or minimizes the impact to MSU's program. MSU shall be provided 60 day written notification unless extenuating circumstances prevent such a notice.

## **Compatibility with Operating Systems:**

MSU has implemented the Ellucian/Banner financial management systems. The Contractor must be willing to provide procurement card information and transaction detail to this system in a format compatible with the system.

The awarded contractor shall be able to provide data downloads of all transactions on cards in the following file outputs but not limited to: CSV (comma delimited), txt. and XLS.

The program utilized to manage the MSU procurement card program shall allow the program administrator to extract/download data at any given time so that a report can be generated. The data can be downloaded by the following areas:

- All Transactions (a data dump filtered by the date of transaction)
- Merchant Category Group
- Merchant
- Merchant Spend
- Card Spend

The data download file should be electronic and should include the following information:

- Vendor Name
- Charge Amount
- Accounting String (Fund, Organization, Account, Program, Activity, etc.) minimum 30 characters – each field contains 6 characters
- Travel or Equipment Code
- Date transaction processed
- Date transaction occurred
- Merchant Category
- Last 4 digits of Credit Card number
- Unique Merchant Transaction Number
- Agency Name
- Department/hierarchy Name
- Card Holder first name



- Card Holder middle name
- Card Holder last name
- Transaction Reference Number
- City of which the transaction occurred
- State of which the transaction occurred

The reconciliation program should be compatible with MSU's financial management system in order for a complete payment process to occur online.

### **Program and Transaction Data Reports**

Critical to the operation of MSU is the ability to obtain required transaction data as well as overall procurement card program information. The offeror will be required to provide versatile and comprehensive reporting capabilities. MSU has a system that has multiple reporting capabilities at all hierarchical program levels and that is deliverable through various media. The proposal must provide detailed descriptions of all on-line query and reporting capabilities including standard and optional reports and any electronic means by which they can be transmitted to MSU, including but not limited to:

- Ability to download transactions into excel spreadsheet
- Transaction Detail Report
- Decline Report
- Authorizations Report
- Cardholder Status Report
- Central Reconciliation Report
- Transaction Detail report for cardholder to verify transactions and receipts
- Ability to review reports that show a count of all active cards
- Ability to schedule various reports to run specific days
- Non-Activation Report
- Delinquency Reports
- Customized Reports (if applicable)
- Cardholder Statement (view online and print)
- Ghost Card Reports
- Locked Card Reports
- Fraud Card Reports
- Account Changes Report
- Fraud Override Report

## **Card Acceptance**

The intent of the MSU Procurement card program is to allow MSU departments to make purchases easily and economically. Card acceptance at a wide variety of merchants throughout the State of Mississippi and the nation, as well as international transactions, is of utmost importance in maintaining a successful procurement card program.

## **Training**

The Contractor shall be prepared to provide training at various levels during the contract period. This will include transition training, new cardholder training, training on new system capability, recertification training, fraud training for program oversight, and so forth.

Topics to be addressed include, but are not limited to, the proper use of the card, the responsibilities of the cardholder, agency, and the Procurement Card Administrator, procedures for setting up accounts, payment process, how to report lost/stolen cards, development of purchase restrictions, understanding billing and management reports, dispute resolution process, how to change account information, etc.

Each proposal should include information on the type of training materials, the location of training sessions, an estimate of time to budget for the training for each individual, and any other item necessary for training not already mentioned.

The offeror must provide training and any ongoing training for cardholders who utilize any systems offered in the contract. Cardholder training may be developed as a web-based training platform with abilities to create learning modules and testing capabilities.

## **Account Maintenance, Organizational Support, and Staffing**

Card account support, maintenance and troubleshooting is required on a “24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year” basis. This activity will include assistance for reporting lost or stolen cards, account inquiries, disputed transactions, limiting override authorization, and assisting MSU Procurement Card Administrators/MSU Travel Card Administrators in changing card attributes, limitations and restrictions, including the mechanism for requesting these changes and the time frames for processing these changes.

MSU expects a dedicated (i.e., a primary individual or group of individuals) service group or contact person to act as customer service representatives. This service group or person shall be able to work with MSU on an ongoing basis to improve and manage the program and shall be able to help facilitate change and resolve problems. While MSU understands that turnover occurs, frequent turnover rates of every few months would be unacceptable. It is also expected that the Contractor will provide the availability of dedicated toll free telephone, FAX numbers and e-mail contacts for the account maintenance function and the availability of an electronic account maintenance system.

The Procurement Card Administrator must have online capability to change individual procurement cards, including credit limits, transaction dollar limits, number of cards, account overrides for MCC, fraud or international transactions, cardholder name, cardholder contact information, default accounting information, and termination of a card, within the parameters of the MSU procurement card program. The MSU procurement card program administrator or delegated administrator shall be able to make any changes to established accounts on the card program and to any new account set ups.

The offeror must provide highly skilled personnel in sufficient number to support the MSU Procurement Card Program. In supporting the operation of the Procurement Card Program, the offeror must provide the following information regarding their organizational staffing:

- Identification of the account managers assigned
- Identification of all key support personnel assigned
- A statement indicating the responsibilities each staff member will have while supporting this program
- Contact information for Backup support

The Contractor shall communicate with the MSU Procurement Card Administrator/MSU Travel Card Administrators when significant problems occur (including fraudulent purchases, delinquent accounts, and disputes).

The Contractor shall reissue cards no less than 15 days prior to a card's expiration date.

### **Disputed Transactions**

The Contractor shall support multiple methods of handling and resolving disputed transactions which may include issuing a temporary credit pending dispute resolution.

### **Billing/Reporting**

Each participating entity shall receive a consolidated master billing statement by mail (or electronic statement) and by the online system set in place for administrators to utilize. The cardholder/departmental administrator reviews and verifies the expenditures and forwards the statement and supporting transaction documents to the program coordinator and department's accounts payable personnel.

The Contractor shall support a hierarchy access structure to data and reports. In other words, the MSU Procurement Card Program administrator (program administrator) can view and report on all program data, a department can view and report on only department data.

The Contractor shall be able to report transaction volume and dollars by vendor, by type of vendor, by minority or woman owned businesses, 1099 reportable transactions, sales tax reporting for those transactions that are not tax exempt, etc.

The Contractor shall make available transaction data for both billed and unbilled transaction data.

Data by hierarchy and select data ranges without retrieval restrictions.

### **Cardholder Information**

It is MSU's expectation that the contractor shall not sell, distribute or otherwise make available the list of participating department addresses, or any other information to any person, firm or other entity for any purpose.

### **Contract Succession/Transition**

At the end of the contract period, MSU expects the contractor to work with MSU to provide appropriate data and information to a successor contractor and to exercise its best efforts to affect a cooperative, orderly, and seamless transition to a successor. The contractor would also be expected to provide sufficient and experienced personnel to ensure that the quality of services during the phase out period are not diminished or sacrificed. It is understood that the contractor and the successor would not be able to work together on this effort, but that MSU would need to be the contact point for both parties.

The contractor would be expected to provide MSU with a complete, current, and accurate master copy of all non-proprietary account data in hard copy or other agreed upon medium in a format agreed upon by the State.

The contractor would be expected to settle all transaction disputes within 180 calendar days of the completed transactions.

### **Migration and Implementation Schedule**

Offerors must propose one (1) implementation schedule that addresses all activities necessary to achieve a successful implementation. The implementation schedule shall include a time line for the various steps required, as well as risk mitigation strategies, to ensure that the implementation stays on schedule. MSU will, through the evaluation process, choose the implementation date(s) that it deems to be in the best interest of MSU. At its discretion, MSU may reduce or extend the transition period. Items to be addressed in the implementation schedule should include but not be limited to:

- Contact information and roles and responsibilities for all Contractor Program Support Staff
- Schedule with dates and locations for program and technology solution training
- Information that will be discussed and estimated hours required
- Department training methods and training materials

- Department hierarchy establishment (i.e., Administrators, Coordinators, Liaisons, Reviewers, Cardholders, etc.)
- Billing process flow and associated reports
- Card controls and issuance options
- Card/account set-up
- Card/account production and distribution
- Card/account activation
- Electronic access set-up and testing
- Mapping for interface with the MSU's accounting system
- Sample instructional guidebooks
- Review of state-specific policies and procedures
- Contractor's Guidelines (Policies and Procedures)
- Costs associated with migrating from one provider to another provider, if applicable.

### **Liability**

MSU will not accept any liability or financial responsibility for an MSU employee's charges that have been incorrectly authorized by offeror, including but not limited to those that:

- Exceed any of the limits specified to the contractor by a cardholder's agency or the MSU Procurement Card Administrator/MSU Travel Card Administrators, or
- Violate any of the standard Industry Classification Code and/or Merchant Category Code restrictions specified to the contractor by MSU.

### **Program Information**

All program information concerning the MSU Procurement Card program including but not limited to card spend, transactions, vendors associated with those transactions, etc. shall be kept on file with the Contractor for the duration of the contract. If the MSU Procurement Card Administrators/MSU Travel Card Administrators request said information, the contractor shall be able to submit the information within five (5) to seven (7) business days. At the end of each calendar year, the data for that year shall be electronically sent to the program administrator. At the end of the contract, the contractor shall send all transaction data for the duration of the entire program to the program administrator electronically.

MSU shall be liable for the use of the card by authorized cardholders, provided that the use is within the transaction limits established by MSU. MSU will not accept liability for unauthorized use of credit cards and account numbers that are fraudulently used, lost or stolen. Please indicate your company's agreement to these terms or indicate what exceptions you would propose to apply in these scenarios.

Offeror should indicate an agreement in its proposal to the following statements:

- The Contractor shall not sell or distribute a list of participating Authorized Agencies, cardholder(s), addresses or any other information acquired from Authorized Agencies or cardholder(s) to any person, firm or other entity for any purpose. Note: (This does not intend to prevent the Contractor from complying with the requirements herein and the resulting contract for reports and reporting.)

Use of Government Employees' Names: The Contractor must agree not to use the names and addresses of MSU employees for any purpose not directly related to and necessary for, fulfilling the terms of the contract awarded pursuant to this request.

#### **4. INQUIRIES ABOUT RFP**

Prospective respondents may make written inquiries concerning this request for proposal to obtain clarification of requirements. **Questions should be submitted either via a Word document or plainly typed in the email itself.** Responses to these inquiries may be made by addendum to the Request for Proposal (RFP). Please send your inquiries to Jennifer Mayfield via electronic mail at [jmayfield@procurement.msstate.edu](mailto:jmayfield@procurement.msstate.edu).

All inquiries should be marked "URGENT INQUIRY. MSU RFP 22-96"

#### **5. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

##### **a) Issuing Office**

This RFP is issued by the following office:

Office of Procurement and Contracts  
Mississippi State University  
245 Barr Avenue, 610 McArthur Hall  
Mississippi State, MS 39762

##### **b) Schedule of Critical Dates**

The following dates are for planning purposes only unless otherwise stated in this RFP progress towards their completion is at the sole discretion of the university.

<b>RFP Posted</b>	<b>June 14, 2022</b>
<b>Questions from Vendors Due</b>	<b>June 28, 2022</b>
<b>MSU Q&amp;A Response Due</b>	<b>July 7, 2022</b>
<b>Proposal Submission Deadline – 2:00 p.m.</b>	<b>July 19, 2022</b>

**Award Date (Estimated)**

**September 1, 2022**

**Contract Effective Date (Estimated)**

**January 1, 2023**

## **6. PROPOSAL CONTENTS**

This is a two-step RFP process. The technical proposals and the cost proposals are to be submitted in separate sealed envelopes. Indicate firm name, RFP# and word “Technical Proposal” on the front of the sealed technical proposal envelope or package. Indicate the firm name, RFP# and the word “Cost Proposal” on the front of the sealed proposal envelope or package.

**At a minimum, the following items should be included in the contents of the Technical Proposal:**

- Cover letter, indicating the scope of the proposal. The letter should include an overview of the services being offered. The letter should include a statement of exceptions to any of the terms and conditions outlined in this RFP. (Cover letter should be no more than 3 pages in length.)
- Corporate Structure and Credentials
  - Describe the extent of offeror’s qualifications and experience in providing corporate cards to State and Federal governmental entities.
  - Provide at least four (4) references from current clients, at least two (2) of which should be from universities who conduct research and have a minimum of 20,000 students, with at least 100 cards and spend in excess of \$40,000,000. Each reference must contain the organization’s name, contact person, contact person’s title, and phone number. Indicate the type of program the client has with your company. If possible, include the number of students enrolled at the institution, annual dollar volume, number of cards and number of transactions.
  - List location(s) of your company’s customer service call center(s).
  - Provide the estimated number of merchants that accept the card within the United States. It is understood that all proposals offering the VISA card would be considered “equal” in this area. All proposals offering MasterCard would be considered “equal” in this area. All proposals offering “American Express” would be considered “equal” in this area. The intent is to determine which card, VISA, MasterCard, American Express, or another, offers the greatest coverage when compared to the other brands of cards.

- Provide the estimated number of merchants that accept the card outside the United States. It is understood that all proposals offering the VISA card would be considered “equal” in this area. All proposals offering MasterCard would be considered “equal” in this area. All proposals offering “American Express” would be considered “equal” in this area. The intent is to determine which card, VISA, MasterCard, American Express, or another, offers the greatest coverage when compared to the other brands of cards.
- Operations and Ability To Perform
  - Describe what equipment and or software will be provided and how equipment, software and services will be provided to MSU.
  - Describe your company’s customer service capabilities, including the following:
    - Hours of customer service operation
    - Toll-free numbers
    - Cardholder complaints
    - Cardholder account management
    - Response time for phone and email requests
    - Fraudulent transactions
  - Describe how inquiries requiring research are handled by your company and the established turnaround times for responses.
  - How many points of contact would we have with your company? (i.e. business account manager, card account representative, web-based solution/application manager, etc.)
  - Describe your company’s collections procedures and explain what actions are taken at specified dates in the past due cycle. Include the following:
    - The manner and frequency in which past due notices are sent
    - Please provide samples of all notices used
  - Under what conditions will a cardholder’s charging privileges be suspended? Will a suspension be reinstated if requested by MSU?
  - Describe any new concepts or innovative ideas. This could include e-payables as well as any other concepts that could improve the effectiveness, efficiency, revenues, or other aspects of the program.



- Describe any additional type of cards your company offers (i.e. virtual cards, one time use cards, etc.)
- What card platform(s) does your company offer? (e.g. VISA, MasterCard, AmEx, Discover, etc.)
- Authorized User Administrators must be notified in writing within 72 hours prior to any card suspension or cancellation. Describe the process for notification. (Internet and other electronic processes are preferred by MSU.)
- Describe the ability to indicate to vendors that purchases by MSU are “Tax Exempt”. (This may include embossing the words “Tax Exempt” and/or the tax-exempt number on the card or providing MSU with a unique number sequence.)
- Describe any audit tools that can be utilized by participating departments.
- The Program Card Administrator may establish single transaction dollar limits, monthly transaction limits, overrides, and vendor restrictions for cardholders. Describe or indicate any other limits or controls available.
- Electronic Data - What physical and software security measures does your company take to protect the confidentiality of your company’s client’s transaction information?
- Describe any unique features provided by your company’s product(s) that we should consider.
- What technical support is available for your company’s reporting package(s) and what hours are technical support available? What about after-hours support?
- Does your company have the ability to provide billing statements that will reflect the foreign currency transaction amounts (local currency) as well as the converted home currency equivalent (USD)? Are currency conversion fees listed on the statement together or separated?
- Describe what levels of data (i.e.: level 1, level 2, level 3), and line-item detail is captured at the point of sale. Can this be viewed before statement has been released?

- What differentiates your company's services from that of other providers?  
Please describe how your company can provide a value-added advantage in service and technology.
- What, if any, commercial card activities/services are outsourced to third parties?  
What is the third-party contact availability?
- Please describe any recent technological enhancements to your company's product(s) and service(s).
- On average, how quickly would your company pay our suppliers?
- Describe all payment and billing options, including methods of payment and billing, including electronic. (MSU reserves the right to migrate to another payment option at any time during the term of the contract based on MSU's best interest).
- Describe your company's specific capability to modify your system(s) to interface with MSU system(s) or system modification for MSU's benefit. Provide formats of any required remittance data formats.
- Describe and affirm your company's commitment to interface with MSU's system at no additional costs to MSU.
- Describe your company's billing dates and/or billing cycle(s).
- MSU currently requires that each cardholder receive a monthly statement and that the Procurement & Contract department receive a consolidated master statement
- The Procurement Card Program will require the awarded Contractor to have a diversified system of delivering accounting/billing information. MSU requires an electronic access system for data exchange.
- The program and transaction data must be provided through the Contractor's electronic access system. The system shall be able to provide electronic review and manipulation of all captured transaction information, including the ability to sort data by any field. The system shall also have the ability to filter out unnecessary information, edit account allocation manually, and split transaction amounts into sub-units for multi-account allocation. This includes summary

roll-up, review and manipulation at different hierarchical levels.

- Describe the global Value Added Tax (VAT) program.
- Describe any partnerships, marketing alliances, or other business relationships in place that could benefit MSU. It should be noted that MSU is using Concur Travel Management.

**At a minimum, the following items should be included in the contents of the Cost Proposal:**

- Proposed rebate structure for:
  - a. Annual purchases less than \$ \$40,000,000
  - b. Annual purchases of \$40,000,000 to 49,999,999
  - c. Annual purchases of \$50,000,000 to 59,999,999
  - d. Annual purchases of \$60,000,000 to 69,999,999
  - e. Annual purchases of \$70,000,000 to 79,999,999
  - f. Annual purchases of \$80,000,000 to 119,999,999
  - g. Annual purchases of \$120,000,000 and up
- Speed of Pay Incentive based on a 10-day payment schedule
- If the provider feels a different structure is needed, we will consider other structures, however, the provider should clearly explain why the proposed structure is superior to that which we have provided.
- Any additional costs or revenues to MSU.

## **7. DISCUSSIONS/EVALUATION CRITERIA/AWARD PROCESS**

MSU reserves the right to conduct discussions with any or all respondents, or to make an award of a contract without such discussions based only on evaluation of the written proposals. MSU reserves the right to contact and interview anyone connected with any past or present projects with which the respondent has been associated. MSU likewise reserves the right to designate a review committee to evaluate the proposals according to the criteria set forth under this section. MSU may make a written determination showing the basis upon which the award was made, and such determination shall be included in the procurement file.

MSU reserves the right to award this contract in whole or in part depending on what is in the best interest of MSU with MSU being the sole judge thereof.

The evaluation factors set forth in this section are described as follows:

- The Vendor’s ability to deliver an application meeting the overall objective and functions described in the RFP
- Competitive fees
- Availability and access technical support
- Vendor’s experience with similar systems
- Compliance with applicable State and Federal laws and regulations
- The committee may invite finalists for interviews and/or presentations

Failure to attend a requested interview presentation before the committee may result in a proposal not being considered.

Upon award of contract(s), successful respondent(s) will be asked to provide a transition plan and timeline and obtain MSU’s input and concurrence before moving forward.

Proposals will be scored based on the following weights (100 points total):

- Corporate Structure/Years of Experience/References – 30 pts
- Operation Plan/Ease of Use/Services Offered – 30 pts
- Fees – 40 pts.

## **8. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION**

Proposals shall be submitted in two packages (envelopes or boxes) as set forth in Section 7. Please make sure that the RFP number is clearly visible on the outside of the package.

**Technical Proposal** – One (1) original and one (1) electronic copy (of the complete technical proposal in one pdf file on a flash drive) of parts 7(b)(i) (Cover Letter), 7(b)(ii) (Corporate Structure and Credentials), and 7(b)(iii) (Operations and Ability to Perform) should be sealed in a package with “Technical Proposal” in the lower left hand corner. Each submitted package should be a complete copy. The original shall be marked on the first page “Original”.

**Revenue/Cost Proposal** – One (1) original and one (1) electronic copy (of the complete cost proposal in one pdf file on a flash drive). Should be sealed in a package with “Cost Proposal” in the lower left-hand corner. Each submitted package should be a complete copy. The original shall be marked on the first page “Original”.

The proposal package must be received on or before **2:00 p.m. on July 19, 2023**. It is the responsibility of the respondent to ensure that the proposal package arrives in the Procurement and Contracts office on-time. The proposal package should be delivered or sent by mail to:

**Office of Procurement and Contracts  
Mississippi State University**

**610 McArthur Hall  
245 Barr Avenue  
Mississippi State, MS 39762**

Your response must include the signature page included in this RFP (See Appendix A) and contain the signature of an authorized representative of the respondent's organization. The signature on the "Original" signature page should be in blue ink.

MSU reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive informalities and minor irregularities in proposals received and to accept any portion of a proposal or all items bid if deemed in the best interest of the University to do so.

Proposals received after the stated due date and time will be returned unopened. Submission via facsimile or other electronic means will not be accepted.

## **9. PCI COMPLIANCE ISSUES (IF APPLICABLE)**

The vendor must provide a PCI compliant processing environment using one of the approved options below. If the vendor is unable to fully adhere to one of these options, the proposal will be removed from consideration.

- **Option 1** – Integrate with MSU's existing third-party solution (NelNet Business Solutions – Commerce Manager), because all hardware, software and back end processing have been vetted and credit/debit card payments are automatically posted to Banner.
- **Option 2** – Use alternative third-party solution. Use a different MSU Merchant ID but same bank account.
  - Work with members of MSU's PCI Council and third-party PCI Compliance consultant to review business needs and proposed solution.
  - Ensure card transactions processed by university personnel are performed using a PCI-validated point to point encrypted (P2PE) solution. The solution must be listed on the PCI council's website (<https://www.pcisecuritystandards.org>), must not be expired, and devices to be used with the solution must have a PIN transaction security (PTS) expiration date at least 3 years past the date of installation.
  - Obtain the following solution information
  - Attestation of compliance (AoC) from all parties involved in handling or that affect the security of cardholder data.
  - Verify that all devices have a current PTS certification and have an expiration date at least 3 years past the installation date of the solution.

- Obtain a data flow diagram showing where payment card data will be introduced to the proposed solution and all steps/hops it will take until payment information is delivered to the merchant processing bank. This will determine all of the service providers that must provide an AoC.
- Require specific reporting requirements and interfaces to support Banner integration and automatic posting of credit/debit card payments to the ERP. The exact file layout will be provided upon request.
- **Option 3** – Use alternative third-party solution. Use vendor’s Merchant ID.
  - Work with members of MSU’s PCI Council and third-party PCI Compliance consultant to review the solution.
  - Ensure card transactions processed by university personnel are performed using a PCI-validated point to point encrypted (P2PE) solution. The solution must be listed on the PCI council’s website (<https://www.pcisecuritystandards.org>), must not be expired, and devices to be used with the solution must have a PIN transaction security (PTS) expiration date at least 3 years past the date of installation.
  - Obtain the following solution information
  - Attestation of compliance (AoC) from all parties involved in handling or that affect the security of cardholder data.
  - Verify that all devices have a current PTS certification and have an expiration date at least 3 years past the installation date of the solution.
  - Obtain a data flow diagram showing where payment card data will be introduced to the proposed solution and all steps/hops it will take until payment information is delivered to the merchant processing bank. This will determine all of the service providers that must provide an AoC.
  - Payments due MSU will be remitted on a predetermined basis, net of all applicable fees and merchant discounts. Banner integration not required.

## **10. TWO-PHASE, BEST AND FINAL OFFER**

If the initial proposals do not provide MSU with a clear and convincing solution, or if MSU feels it is appropriate to offer the potential providers an opportunity to submit revised proposals, MSU reserves the right to use a two-phase approach and/or invite Best and Final Offers (BAFO). Based on the information obtained through the proposal submittals (Phase-One), MSU may choose a specific business model, and potential providers may be asked to submit revised proposals based upon that specific model.

The evaluation committee may develop, for distribution to the top-ranked firms, refined written terms with specific information on what is being requested as a result of information obtained through initial RFP submittal process. Proposers may be asked to reduce cost or provide

additional clarification to specific sections of the RFP. Selected proposers are not required to submit a BAFO and may submit a written response notifying the solicitation evaluation committee that their response remains as originally submitted.

## **11. TERM OF CONTRACT**

It is MSU's intention to enter into a three (3) year contract with an option to renew for up to two (2) additional 12-month periods, upon the written approval of both parties.

MSU reserves the right to terminate this agreement with thirty (30) days-notice, by the Director of Procurement and Contracts via certified mail to the address listed on the signature page of this RFP (See Appendix A) if any of the terms of the proposal and/or contract are violated.

In the event the contractor fails to carry out and comply with any of the conditions and agreements to be performed under the specifications, MSU will notify the contractor, in writing, of such failure or default. In the event the necessary corrective action has not been completed within a ten (10) day period, the contractor must submit, in writing, why such corrective action has not been performed. The University reserves the right to determine whether or not such noncompliance may be construed as a failure of performance of the contractor.

Termination of contract by contractor without cause can only occur with at least one-hundred and twenty (120) days-notice prior to the proposed termination of the contract.

In the event MSU employs attorneys or incurs other expenses it considers necessary to protect or enforce its rights under this contract, the contractor agrees to pay the attorney's fees and expenses so incurred by MSU.

## **12. ACCEPTANCE TIME**

Proposal shall be valid for one-hundred and eighty (180) days following the proposal due date.

## **13. RFP CANCELLATION**

This RFP in no manner obligates MSU to the eventual purchase of any services described, implied or which may be proposed until confirmed by a written contract. Progress towards this end is solely at the discretion of MSU and may be terminated without penalty or obligations at any time prior to the signing of a contract. MSU reserves the right to cancel this RFP at any time, for any reason, and to reject any or all proposals or any parts thereof.

## 14. INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR CLAUSE

The contractor shall acknowledge that an independent contractor relationship is established and that the employees of the contractor are not, nor shall they be deemed employees of MSU and that employees of MSU are not, nor shall they be deemed employees of the contractor.

## 15. OTHER CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

**Award Terms:** This contract shall be awarded at the discretion of the University based on the capabilities and overall reputation of the Supplier, as well as the cost. Acceptance shall be confirmed by the issuance of a contract from the University.

**Standard Contract:** The awarded contractor(s) will be expected to enter into a contract that is in substantial compliance with MSU's standard contract [http://www.procurement.msstate.edu/pdf/standard\\_rfp\\_contract.pdf](http://www.procurement.msstate.edu/pdf/standard_rfp_contract.pdf). Proposal should include any desired changes to the standard contract. It should be noted that there are many clauses which the MSU cannot change (see Standard Addendum <http://www.procurement.msstate.edu/contracts/standardaddendum.pdf>) Significant changes to the standard contract may be cause for rejection of a proposal.

**The Procurement Process:** The following is a general description of the process by which a firm will be selected to fulfill this Request for Proposal.

- Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued to prospective suppliers.
- A deadline for written questions is set.
- Proposals will be received as set forth in Section 8.
- Unsigned proposals will not be considered.
- All proposals must be received by MSU no later than the date and time specified on the cover sheet of this RFP.
- At that date and time, the package containing the proposals from each responding firm will be opened publicly and the name of each respondent will be announced.
- Proposal evaluation: The University will review each proposal.
- At their option, the evaluators may request oral presentations or discussions for the purpose of clarification or to amplify the materials presented in the proposal
- Respondents are cautioned that this is a request for proposals, not a request to contract, and the MSU reserves the unqualified right to reject any and all proposals when such rejection is deemed to be in the best interest of the University.
- The proposals will be evaluated according to the criteria set forth in Section 7.



**APPENDIX A: SIGNATURE PAGE**

Provide information requested, affix signature and return this page with your proposal:

Name of Firm: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B: CURRENT CARD PICTURES

### Procurement Card:



### Equipment Card:



### Travel Card:

