

Mississippi State University
Notice of Proposed Sole Source Purchase

245-131

Mississippi State University anticipates purchasing the item(s) listed below as a sole source purchase. Anyone objecting to this purchase shall follow the procedures outlined below.

1. Commodity or commodities to be purchased (make, model, description):

RT 020 flow control, RT 030 pressure control, RT 040 temperature control & product/software setup

2. Explanation of the need to be fulfilled by this item(s), how is it unique from all other options, and why it is the only one that can meet the specific needs of the department:

The GUNT RT Series uniquely integrates physical experimentation with advanced software-based simulations in a unified control platform. Unlike other available training systems, the RT 020, RT 030, and RT 040 units: Allow full control of P, PI, PID, and switching algorithms, with real-time and simulated experiments configurable within the same platform. Include Remote Learning and multi-workstation viewing, enabling experiments to be prepared and monitored by multiple users across a local network without additional seat licenses or fees. Feature true hardware/software integration (HSI) for both lab and remote access, supporting simulation and visualization of first and second-order-dynamic systems. Provide unlimited installation rights on university and student computers, eliminating recurring software licensing costs. The RT 040 uniquely uses a Peltier element for heating and cooling a metal rod, with temperature measured at three distinct points along its length to demonstrate time lag and thermal response - a feature unmatched by other systems. These attributes support MSU's curriculum goals in real-time control systems, automation, and process engineering education in a way no other vendor matches.

3. Name of company/individual selling the item and why that source is the only possible source that can provide the required item(s):

G.U.N.T.Geratebau GmbH (Germany), represented in the U.S. exclusively by Instructional Engineering-Systems LLC (IES, LLC). IES is the sole authorized distributor of GUNT devices in the United States. No other vendor can supply these specific units, nor can any competitor offer identical hardware/software integration or the instructional materials provided via GUNT's Media Center.

4. Estimated cost of item(s) and an explanation why the amount to be expended is considered reasonable:

The combined estimated cost for the three systems (RT 020, RT 030, RT 040) is based on Quote #551 dated March 31, 2025. These systems include the experimental units, USB-integrated GUNT software, accessory sets, and full instructional manuals. The pricing reflects competitive European manufacturing standards and includes features (e.g. stainless steel components, compact footprint, etc.) not available in any other such devices.

Armfield Inc (UK) is the only other company we have identified that supplies this type of modular-training equipment. A separate quote for Armfield units is provided for comparison. While the overall cost for these three units is slightly less for Armfield (\$24,981) compared to \$29,816 for the three units from GUNT) the materials of manufacturing for the GUNT equipment (i.e. stainless steel versus PVC plastic for some components) and the ease of replacing parts with the GUNT units justifies the slightly higher cost. The GUNT units offer greater durability for service in our curriculum which will have 50+ students using these units continuously each spring semester for ChE 4223 Automatic Process Controls.

5. Explanation of the efforts taken by the department to determine this is the only source and the efforts used to obtain the best possible price:

Faculty reviewed available U.S. and international educational process control systems and found no other supplier offering integrated hardware/software systems with remote learning, network-capable experiments, and full simulation modes. Only one other company (Armfield, UK) produces something similar but the components are of lower quality materials used in their units. Dr. Elmore (the faculty responsible for all instructional laboratories in the School of Chemical Engineering) has worked with Armfield equipment and is very familiar with equipment performance and limitations of this manufacturer.

Instructional Engineering Systems, as the exclusive U.S. agent for GUNT, provides direct academic pricing, and the quote reflects institutional discounts for educational use.

Any person or entity that objects and proposes that the commodity listed is not sole source and can be provided by another person or entity shall submit a written notice to:

Jennifer Mayfield, CPPO

Director and CPO, Procurement & Contracts

jmayfield@procurement.msstate.edu

Subject Line must read "Sole Source Objection"

The notice shall contain a detailed explanation of why the commodity is not a sole source procurement. Appropriate documentation shall also be submitted if applicable.

If after a review of the submitted notice and documents, MSU determines that the commodity in the proposed sole source request can be provided by another person or entity, then MSU will withdraw the sole source request publication from the procurement portal website and submit the procurement of the commodity to an advertised competitive bid or selection process.

If MSU determines after review that there is only one (1) source for the required commodity, then MSU will appeal to the Public Procurement Review Board. MSU will have the burden of proving that the commodity is only provided by one (1) source.