

Invitation for Bid **AEPA #022 - G** **TECHNOLOGY CATALOG**

Part B – Technical Specifications

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1. SCOPE OF BID

AEPA member agencies are seeking qualified, experienced contractor(s) who possess the necessary resources and capabilities to provide a comprehensive array of technology products, supplies, equipment, materials, services, consulting, labor, and delivery to all participating member states (up to 29) contained in a comprehensive, Commercially Available Catalog of technology products and services, defined as a “Technology Catalog.”

AEPA and Member Agencies prefer a single Vendor with a comprehensive array of products. An award will be made to the lowest, responsive, responsible Bidder.

Because of the unique nature of the technology products industry, individual AEPA members may, at their sole discretion, make multiple awards upon recommendations where, among competing Bidders, a Bidder made the Lowest Price Catalog Offer with:

- A supplemental network of partner businesses who have status as a Historically Under-Utilized Business (HUBs)
- Cloud data storage solutions as part of its catalog
- The ability to extend sales to government agencies, special districts, eligible non-profits, and higher education entities – all in addition to the requirement to serve Pre-K-12 schools
- A product brand assortment of manufacturers that is at least 50 percent different than the other lowest Bidder

2. Type of Bid

AEPA requests Bidders to submit primary pricing in the form of either “catalog pricing,” or “line-item pricing.” This category is constructed in the form checked below. An explanation of each can be found in the table below. Additional information on permissible pricing strategies can be found in Part A – General Terms and Conditions under “Pricing.”

This bid is considered a:

YES	NO	TYPE OF BID
✓		CATALOG: A catalog bid is utilized when the products and/or services solicited are clearly identified with set and specific characteristics, attributes and configurations that are identifiable as a stand-alone single unit and can be listed and priced as a single unit with options that can be added to enhance and/or improve its operation and functionality. The Bidder offers a fixed discount(s) off retail price or prices in a Commercially Available Catalog. The discounts may be for the entire Commercially Available Catalog, for specific products, product lines, manufacturers or category of products as determined by the Bidder. See Pricing section for detailed information on Catalog Pricing.
	✓	LINE ITEM: A line-item bid is utilized when the products and services solicited cannot be identified or listed as a single unit; consists of a number of different variables and configurations, it is necessary to identify the specific project or application; the end product or solution is made of individually priced elements or components and the end product's or solution's cost is derived by the Vendor Partner specially prepared and providing a quote based on the project's terms, conditions and requirements. See Pricing section for detailed information on Line-Item Pricing.

3. Anticipated AEPA Member Agency Participation

State	Participate?	Other States Member Sells In
California	Yes	AZ, NV
Colorado	Undecided	
Connecticut	Yes	ME, NH, NY, RI, VT
Florida	Yes	AL
Georgia	Yes	
Illinois	Yes	
Indiana	Yes	
Iowa	Yes	SD
Kansas	Yes	OK
Kentucky	Yes	AL, LA, MS, NC, TN
Massachusetts	Yes	
Michigan	Yes	
Minnesota	Yes	SD
Missouri	Yes	AR, LA, SD
Montana	Yes	ID
Nebraska	Yes	
New Jersey	Yes	
New Mexico	Yes	
North Dakota	Yes	
Ohio	Yes	
Oregon	Yes	
Pennsylvania	Yes	DE, HA, MD, NY
South Carolina	Yes	NC
Texas	Yes	
Virginia	Yes	
Washington	Yes	AK, ID
West Virginia	Yes	
Wisconsin	Yes	
Wyoming	Yes	SD,UT

Please note that individual AEPA Member Agencies that have indicated that they intend to participate in any contract approved under this solicitation, does not guarantee or mean that the individual AEPA Member Agency will enter into a contract with any AEPA approved Vendor Partner. Each AEPA Member Agency will make that determination after reviewing Vendor Partner responses and AEPA's recommendation for acceptance and bid award. The AEPA Member Agency's contracting decision shall be final.

4. Anticipated Volume

The Technology Catalog category is a currently awarded group of contracts by AEPA members. The resulting bid will be an Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract(s). AEPA Member Agencies estimate approximately \$149 million in sales in the first contract term. AEPA Member Agencies anticipate that purchase volumes will increase over the course of contract years two (2) through four (4). This information is provided as an aid to Bidders in preparing responses only. It is not to be considered a guarantee of volume under this IFB. The successful Vendor Partner's discount and pricing schedule shall apply regardless of the volume of business under the contract.

5. Voluntary Pre-Bid Conference Call

AEPA will host a voluntary pre-bid conference call for any interested Bidders or potential Bidders. The conference call times are set in the following schedule for each of the four contiguous United States time zones. No pre-registration will be required. Recording of the conference call will be posted on the AEPA Website.

Voluntary Pre-Bid Conference Call Schedule (All Categories) – August 12, 2021

Solicitations	Eastern	Central	Mountain	Pacific
022-A Furniture	11:00 AM	10:00 AM	9:00 AM	8:00 AM
022-B Health & Wellness	11:30 AM	10:30 AM	9:30 AM	8:30 AM
022-C Institutional Kitchen Equipment	12:00 PM	11:00 AM	10:00 AM	9:00 AM
022-E LED Lighting	1:00 PM	12:00 PM	11:00 AM	10:00 AM
022-F Event Seating & Staging Solutions	1:30 PM	12:30 PM	11:30 AM	10:30 AM
022-G Technology	2:00 PM	1:00 PM	12:00 PM	11:00 AM

Conference Call Number/Online Connection:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89655631428?pwd=Qno1L1cxcDhwNjZvZzErMzZmYWtyQT09>

Conference Call Code: g1QWHk

Dial In Information:

+1 312 626 6799

Meeting ID: 896 5563 1428

Passcode: 691841

6. Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Cloud Services: "Cloud Services" is considered a general term for various hosted services delivered over the internet. It is the use of remote, rented, or leased servers and/or space to store and manage data, rather than the use of a local, privately maintained server. Cloud services can include a wide range of applications, ranging from mere data storage, uploading, and downloading files, or real-time integrations, to email applications, disaster recovery, platform as a service, software as a service and other designs as a Vendor may define. For the purpose of qualification in this category, AEPA expects customizable Cloud Services from the Vendor Partner and potential wholesale suppliers, distinct from third-party apps such as Microsoft Outlook, Dropbox, Adobe Creative Cloud, and Sharefile.

Catalog: “Catalog” is a grouping of products and services representing merchandise and services from multiple manufacturers aggregated by a company for a one-stop shopping experience in the form of a commercially available, published paper book, booklet, single website, or mobile application.

Commercially Available Catalog: A “Commercially Available Catalog” is a publication of products and services uniformly visible to a wide population or set of businesses across the United States. This is as opposed to being a one-off catalog created for the purposes of responding to this solicitation for bids or a narrow niche catalog targeted to a small geographic location or specific group of business. Prices published in this print, digital, or website catalog will be considered its “Commercially Available Catalog,” “Base Pricing,” or “Commercially available Pricing,” the purpose being that a Bidder will not be able to create an artificial Base Price to affect an unfair or corrupt offer in response to this IFB. All pricing shall be in U.S. Dollars. Base pricing will be used in the calculation of a Final Effective Price for Rest-of-Catalog products, when the Bidder’s discount quote is factored in.

Historically Under-Utilized Business: An “Historically Under-Utilized Business” (HUB) is a category for companies that have traditionally failed to reap the benefit from full and equal procurement opportunities. Typically, these types of companies may include women-owned, disabled veteran-owned, and minority-owned businesses or operations defined as small business, micro businesses, or businesses operating in enterprise zones. For the purpose of the IFB, a Bidder opting to offer a HUB program, may self-define the types of HUB businesses it includes in its network of HUB partners and the role they play; however, the Bidder must ensure that the partner-authorized HUBs provide a “Commercially Useful Function.”

Commercially Useful Function: As it related to HUB businesses, a “Commercially Useful Function” (CUF) is work that is integral to sales, delivery, or supply-chain solution, and not a mere façade for the pass through of goods. Examples of HUB work that qualify as a Commercially Useful Function include instances when HUBs:

- Execute a specific element of the scope of work including supplying of goods and services.
- Provide services work that is normal for the firm’s assortment of business services.
- Are fully or partially responsible for paying for wholesale materials, conducting sales, installation of products, delivery of products.
- Do not subcontract a portion of the work greater than expected by industry practices.
- Act as resellers, buying products wholesale from the awarded Vendor/Contractor.

7. Special Terms and Conditions

Item	Description
7.1.1.	The Vendor Partner will pass through any manufacturer warranties on all products sold and make instructions available to buyers on how to claim rights based on a warranty when necessary.
7.1.2.	The Vendor Partner will endeavor to include products in its catalog that are made in the United States of America.
7.1.3.	The Vendor Partner will endeavor to include products in its catalog that are Green Star certified or ecologically friendly.

8. Standard Specifications

Item	Description
8.1.1.	The Vendor Partner will have access to a full inventory of the awarded product line.
8.1.2.	The Vendor Partner shall maintain a minimum monthly overall average fill rate of 95% or above. Line items that are reordered, backordered, or partially filled are not considered

Item	Description
	filled line items when calculating this service level. Exceptions are granted for the fulfillment of Chromebooks and other products where the supply chain has been disrupted due to the COVID 19 pandemic.
8.1.3.	Orders must be shipped within 48 hours after receipt of an order 90% of the time. The Vendor Partner will notify the Buyer if product ordered cannot be shipped within this time period to provide the opportunity to secure product elsewhere.
8.1.4.	Vendor Partners must be a manufacturer's authorized sales and service dealer for all proposed equipment/software. An authorized sales and service dealer is defined in this solicitation as one purchasing their products for resell directly from the manufacturer(s) or the manufacturer's approved channels. Products that result from new authorized sales and service dealer arrangements between the Vendor Partner and the manufacturer during the term of this contract may be added and offered through AEPA members' contracts.
8.1.5.	All charges and components necessary for performance of the contract shall be clearly identified even if such are not specifically addressed in any paragraph or sub-paragraph or form that is a part of this request.
8.1.6.	If the Vendor Partner intends to utilize independent agents/distributors, subcontractors and/or third-party agents to perform and/or provide any part of the products and services offered herein, the Vendor Partner must identify all providers and any and all associated costs with these providers.
8.1.7.	Optional services must be identified separately, and they must include descriptions of proposed services with a corresponding bid discount structure.
8.1.8.	Vendor Partners must provide a product or mix of products in a manner that will allow Buyers to migrate to emerging technologies/services and between legacy technologies with no penalty charge associated with maintaining the most appropriate selections of goods and services throughout the life of the contract.
8.1.9.	If providing paper catalogs, the catalog shall have a cover label indicating that the catalog's contents are available through the participating Member Agency and the AEPA-related contract. The label shall give reference to discount level(s) and any special ordering instructions. When providing a Commercially Available Catalog on a website or through other digital means, the bid-discounted prices must appear for each product or service.
8.1.10.	Packing slips shall accompany all deliveries and shall contain Buyer's purchase order number, Vendor name, and name of article. Cartons shall be identified by purchase order number and Vendor name.
8.1.11.	Orders not filled and partials shall be indicated on the packing list. Vendor Partner shall inform member of anticipated availability date for unfilled and partial orders.
8.1.12.	All products sold by the Vendor Partner must be new, unless specifically identified within a category of products such as "remanufactured" or "refurbished," where such remanufactured or refurbished products have a Commercially Available Price and an applicable bid discount formula. Awarded Vendor must be able to offer the newest versions of software and equipment available from manufacturers.
8.1.13.	A Bidder's Commercially Available Catalog must advise customers of applicable return policies or any money-back guarantees.
8.1.14.	Vendor Partner has the option to offer private label products. Vendor Partner shall maintain the same manufacturer specifications for private label products throughout the term of contract. Any change of manufacturers for a private label shall result in offerings equal to or superior to the originally approved manufacturer at a price equal to or lower than the original offering.

Item	Description
8.1.15.	If the Vendor Partner makes an error in pricing (typographical or photographic error, for example), the Buyer reserves the right to return the product. The Vendor Partner agrees to pay for cost of any returned product due to a pricing error.
8.1.16.	Vendor Partner shall provide a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for all items sold, if required. A separate sheet shall be provided for each individual item when purchase is made.
8.1.17.	Orders that are \$250.00 or more shall include standard shipping in the total price. Vendor Partner shall bid a flat rate for all orders that are less than \$250.00 regardless of where to be shipped in the continental United States.

9. Category Specific Catalog Specifications

Item	Description
9.1.1.	Vendor Partner shall provide a broad-based line of at least <u>100,000-line items</u> in its catalog, covering the commodity categories listed in the scope of bid (Sections 10 and 11).
9.1.2.	Vendor Partner shall have a website, including search capabilities, browsing, a shopping cart, acceptance of purchase orders, posting of the exact contract price, and order confirmation, Other desired features include the ability for an agency to set up users within agency accounts, set purchasing authorization limits, views of order history, order tracking, online returns, and quoting.
9.1.3.	The Vendor Partner agrees that full refund, credit, and/or exchange will be granted to any defective-on-arrival (DOA) merchandise, if reported within thirty (30) days of receipt of the order. If orders are received when school is not in session (spring break, summer vacation, and Christmas break), the thirty (30) days will be extended for a reasonable period.
9.1.4.	A Vendor Partner must agree to assign a dedicated senior-level contract manager (one authorized to make decisions) to a Member Agency's account. This employee will have a working knowledge of the contract and all contract documents in his or her possession.
9.1.5.	Optional: A Bidder may include, as part of its offer, a program for the inclusion of HUB business to fulfill Vendor obligations under this contract. If offering such a program, the Bidder must include a separate attachment to its bid packet describing the program, the roles of HUB businesses, and naming the HUB business that may be included at the onset of the program. If awarded a contract, the Vendor may change participating HUBs from time to time, and the participating HUB businesses must be reported to the Technology Oversight Committee, no less than once a quarter if there are any changes.

10. Hardware to be Included in Catalog

Item	Description
10.1.1	At a minimum, a Bidder who becomes a Vendor Partner must be able to provide the following types of products as part of its catalog:
10.1.2	Major brand computers, including servers, desktops, laptops, tablets with operating systems based on Windows, Apple, and Chrome
10.1.3	Computer peripherals including storage, monitors, web cameras, speakers, keyboards, cases, mice, memory, graphic cards, card readers, graphics pen tablets and laptop charging stations, etc.
10.1.4	Tablet accessories including cases, stands, keyboards, protective screens, stylus, and cables, etc.
10.1.5	Computer backup equipment and solutions.
10.1.6	Computer storage media including, but not limited to, optical, flash drives, and compact flash.
10.1.7	Ink, toner, and print supplies, including Original Equipment Manufacture products and

Item	Description
	after-market products.
10.1.8	Digital still and video cameras, with related accessories.
10.1.8	Computer and audio-visual cables.
10.1.10	Networking products including servers, wireless, routers, hard drives, switches, hubs, rack mounting equipment, surge suppressors, battery backup, and test equipment.
10.1.11	Audio equipment and peripherals including mixers, PA systems, recorders, headsets, microphones, and speakers.
10.1.12	Multimedia monitors and projectors including peripherals such as mounting hardware, screens, cases, DVD, Blu-ray and 4K players, 3D glasses, and replacement lamps.
10.1.13	Whiteboards, both projection and interactive flat panels, and document cameras.
10.1.14	Calculators and accessories.
10.1.15	Bar-coding solutions from major manufacturers.
10.1.16	Robotics and Virtual Reality products.

11. Software to be Included in Catalog

Item	Description
11.1.1	At a minimum, a Bidder who becomes a Vendor Partner must be able to provide the following types of products as part of its catalog:
11.1.2	Major software operating systems as they may exist in isolation or as part of a device with unique configurations, licenses, or subscriptions, such as Apple MacOS, Microsoft Windows, Google's Android OS, Linux Operating System, Apple iOS, and Chrome OS.
11.1.3	Major daily work applications with any available configurations, licenses, or subscriptions, including Adobe software products, and Adobe Creative Cloud, Microsoft Office, Microsoft 365, and Google Workspace.
11.1.4	Networking, data, and server software, with examples being products like Microsoft Power BI and Azure, Barracuda, Arcserve, VMware, SolarWinds and other equivalents.

12. Optional for Inclusion in Catalog

Item	Description
12.1.1	Cloud data, storage, integration, management, consulting, and other Cloud-related services and solutions may be offered, customized, and sold under this agreement provided that the Vendor/Contractor has published an underlying Commercially Available Price basis for at least one corresponding package or compilation of products and services in its catalog. Given the dynamic nature of Cloud solutions, new packages, compilations, configurations, subscriptions, and their bundled commercially available prices may change from time to time, but the Bidder's discount formula must be applied consistently to the configurations and commercially available base prices during the term of the contract. In a separate Exhibit, Vendors must designate which SKUs in its Rest-of-catalog template apply to one or more Cloud Services.

13. Pricing

AEPA members have identified and stipulated the type of bid and the pricing methodologies that are to be utilized to price and submit bid prices. The Vendor Partner agrees that the cost for any item bid or offered on this contract will be uniform for all states, and that any differences in pricing are due to state-specific installation and local labor costs, AEPA Member Agency's Administrative Fee, or other approved reasons.

The Bidder/Vendor Partner must agree that they will offer prices equal to or better than what they

ordinarily offer to individual entities or cooperatives with equal or lesser volume. Please note the following that relate to pricing:

a. **Catalog Pricing:** Bidders are required to complete the Excel bid pricing templates with their offers.

i. **A Core List Template** of curated products and services garnered through research and most-commonly purchased products by AEPA members in the year 2020. To be responsive with regard to pricing, a Bidder must be able to price at least 60 percent of the items on this pre-populated Core List. For each product specified, the Bidder must provide a base price from its Commercially Available Catalog, a discount formula consistent with the discounts offered on Part F, tab F1 and the final effective bid price after applying the percentage discount against the Commercially Available Base Price.

Bid prices for the Core List are subject to the fixed discount during the term of the contracts, but the underlying base price may fluctuate based on changes to the identified Commercially Available Price published broadly to buyers through the United States.

Where the specification for a Core List product states a named brand, an equivalent substitution may be bid; however, the burden is on the Bidder to provide evidence that a proposed substitution meets or exceeds the specified named product and its attributes and that it provides an equal or better warranty.

If substitute equivalent products are proposed in the bid, the Bidder must provide a detailed comparison for each to include a list of all the significant qualities of the product named in the specification and those of the proposed alternate product(s). Significant qualities include attributes such as performance, weight, size, durability, visual effect and specific features and requirements indicated. AEPA members reserve the right to reject a proposed substitute product if upon review, it is judged not equal to or better than the named product in the specification. It is in the best interests of Bidders to price more than 60 percent of the items on the Core List in case any substitutions are deemed not equivalent or if insufficient information is given to establish an equivalency.

ii. **A Rest-of-Catalog Template** to be populated by Bidders with a minimum of 100,000 products (the specified minimum for a responsive bid), but no more than 300,000 products, representing the most likely technology products and services to be purchased by education and public-sector entities.

The Bidder must offer a fixed discount(s) off the identified Commercially Available Base Price. Bidders may self-identify the categories for discounts, whether for the entire Commercially Available Catalog, for specific products, product lines, manufacturers, category of products, or products in like groups.

b. **Discounts:** Discount offers must clearly identify the percent discount to apply to a Commercially Available Catalog, manufacturer, MSRP, retail or nationally published price lists. Bidders shall identify and stipulate if the discounts apply to the entire catalog/price list, specific product lines, manufacturers and/or categories of products. Bidder shall agree that there will be no reduction in discount(s) during the term of the contract.

c. **New Catalogs/Price Changes:** New catalogs and corresponding nationally published price lists may be submitted throughout the term of the contract and shall be submitted to the AEPA Technology Oversight Committee for review prior to release to all AEPA Member Agencies. Prices may change based on manufacturer's price changes, new published pricing, or price lists, but the original discount bid formula shall remain firm for the duration of the contract.

- d. **Product Addition/Discontinuation:** New products, within the same scope of work, may be added at the established percentage discounts at any time. Discontinued products may be dropped at any time during the year. In the event a Core item is discontinued by the manufacturer during the term of the contract, Vendor Partner is required to add a functionally equivalent substitute at the same discount structure.
- e. **Secondary Pricing Methods:** While Bidders are required to offer formula-discounted prices for items in their catalogs, they are encouraged to offer Volume Discounts as follows:
- i. **Customized Price List:** While Bidders are required to offer formula-based price lists to Participating Entities for items within the Bidder's Commercially Available Catalog, it is in the interest of Vendor Partners and public-sector buyers to agree upon greater discounts in certain circumstances without having to offer the same price nationwide. Customized price lists can be created for a customer under the following conditions:
 - Items shall be from within the Vendor Partner's Commercially Available Catalog
 - Participation of the Vendor Partner in offering further discounts is voluntary.
 - Notwithstanding terms in Part A, up to 100 unique SKUs per calendar year per buying agency may be discounted without the Vendor Partner having to extend the same discounts to other agencies.
 - Items on the customized price list shall be sold with an additional discount that is deeper than what was originally bid on the non-core or catalog discount.
 - Items may not include special order or customized service products unless agreed to by the Vendor Partner.
 - ii. **Short Term Pricing Reductions/Incentives and Regional Promotions:** Respondents are invited, at their option, to offer a selection of products/services at greater discounts than those listed in the standard catalog or core list discounts. Special time-limited reductions are permissible under the following conditions:
 - The price reduction is for a specific period, no less than thirty (30) days.
 - The reduction/incentive may be used to discount and liquidate close-out and discounted products/services if those items are clearly labeled as such.
 - The original price for products/services is not exceeded after the time limit.
 - The AEPA Category Committee and any affected AEPA Member state shall be notified of any special or time-limited price reduction.
 - New prices must be on record fifteen (15) days prior to any offer of the new priced being proposed or offered to AEPA Member Agencies and Participating Entities.
 - Pricing for all items must be submitted to all affected AEPA Member Agencies in an electronic format so that specials can be posted to websites, emailed, and shared with Participating Entities/Buyers.
 - iii. **Volume Price Discounts:** Bidders are encouraged to offer additional pricing discounts that may be offered for a group of agencies in a local geographic area that desire to combine requirements (one-time purchase, or annual spend), i.e., local city, county, school district(s), etc. and/or for large one-time purchases. Additional volume price discounts are permissible under the following conditions: Discounts should be tiered and based on spend ranges as established by the Bidder on the Pricing Forms. Volume determination shall be determined between the Vendor Partner and the individual Buyers on a case-by-case basis. All additional discounts are to be offered equally to all AEPA Member Agencies and Participating Entities and be based on the Volume Price Discounts originally bid providing the same or similar volume commitment, specific needs, terms and conditions, a similar time frame, seasonal considerations and provided the same manufacturer support is available to the Vendor Partner.

2. Part F - Pricing Workbook

- a. This bid category has 1) a Core Item List of most frequently purchased products and 2) a requirement for Bidders to price up to 300,000 products representing the remainder of their catalog.
- b. Pricing shall be completed on the provided pricing sheets (Microsoft Excel Workbook) with the individual tables to be completed as follows:
 - i. F.1 – Catalog Discount (Required)
 - ii. F.2A – Core List Price Schedule (Required)
 - iii. F.2B – Non-Core, Rest of Catalog Price Schedule (Required)
 - iv. F.3 – Services Price Schedule (Optional)
 - v. F.4 – Volume Discounts (Optional)
- c. Bid pricing will be evaluated on a combination of items from both the Core List and Non-Core List Rest-of-Catalog Price Schedules. Pricing evaluation may include other considerations, including the total cost of acquisition. See Evaluation, Approval and Award in Part A – Terms and Conditions for additional information.
- d. Note: To be considered for an award for a Vendor having a Cloud Services solution, at least one or more SKUs for a Bidder-defined Cloud solution must be included in the rest-of-catalog pricing spreadsheet.
- e. Upload your current catalog as a PDF.

14. Evaluation

The AEPA Committee for this category will evaluate bid responses based on the entire response, and according to the criteria detailed in Part A for AEPA's definition of Responsive and Responsible bids. A recommendation may be made to recommend a single response, or to recommend multiple Bidders based on differentiation of product or service between Bidders. AEPA members will vote to recommend or not recommend a bid for an award by individual state members. Please note, evaluation may include other considerations, such as responsiveness to terms and conditions, presence of required forms, and the total cost of acquisition. The evaluation committee may also consider such factors as life-cycle costs, and total cost of ownership.