



# CHICAGO STATE UNIVERSITY

## **Illinois Public Higher Education Cooperative (IPHEC) and using their awards**

### **What is IPHEC?**

**The Illinois Public Higher Education Cooperative (or IPHEC) is a cooperative organization comprised of all thirteen public institutions of higher education**, including: University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana, University of Illinois Chicago, University of Illinois Springfield, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, Illinois State University, Chicago State University, Northeastern Illinois University, Governors State University, Northern Illinois University, Eastern Illinois University, and Western Illinois University.

The mission of the group is **“to support and advance the collective activities of public institutions of higher education in the State of Illinois as a means to improve management.”**

Their goal is **“to encourage, promote, plan, develop, support, and provide increasing cooperation, coordination, and sharing between and among public institutions of higher education in the State of Illinois, in the utilization of their resources, facilities, and personnel, in order to strengthen, enrich, and improve the cost efficiency of their functions, activities, and operations.”**

The goal is achieved in a few different ways, but the three that affect CSU purchasing most directly are:

1. Efforts are made by IPHEC through direct contact with legislators to advocate for a simplified and streamlined procurement processes for the campuses in the group – there are many opportunities for improvement.
2. The solicitations conducted by IPHEC on behalf of the member institutions cover many of the needs that are encountered by all of the representative campuses. The awards resulting from the RFP's, bids, and sole source procurements IPHEC processes allow us to engage with vendors without having to conduct lengthy solicitations of our own.
3. IPHEC can request that the Chief Procurement Officer for Higher Education (CPO-HE) review and approve other cooperative purchasing organization's awards – like awards made by MHEC (Midwestern Higher Education Compact) or E&I (Educational and Institutional). This provides us further opportunities to source goods and/or services without having to conduct our own solicitations.



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## How does this all work?

If you have any need on campus, whether it be for textbooks, furniture, IT services, scoreboards, background checks, classroom furniture – really, anything at all – it is worth visiting the IPHEC page to search for awards that may cover the need and reduce cost.

<https://www.iphec.org/awards>

**As noted in many other locations, if you encounter an estimated expense that is for \$100,000 or more, you must conduct a bid/RFP,**

**OR, if you can identify one that covers your need, you may utilize one of the IPHEC awards and you don't need to conduct a new bid/RFP.**

That is an amazing benefit to us, as solicitations like bids or RFP's require a lot of time and effort. Most of the hard work has been done for us when an IPHEC award applies. IPHEC awards can be used for small purchases, too – and alleviate the need for collecting competitive quotes.

## I found an award that applies, now what?

If the award is made to a single vendor, you simply contact that vendor for a quote/estimate/statement of work – be certain to mention the IPHEC award and that you need a quote based on the vendor's award. If the vendor's offer is agreeable, you create a requisition with all of the normal supporting documents attached. If you are engaging for services greater than \$10,000 a contract is required.

## What if multiple vendors have been awarded on the award I want to use?

Recent guidance indicates that we must evaluate ALL AWARDED VENDORS' OFFERS before selecting a vendor if multiple vendors have been awarded. If an award to multiple vendors is the one that is best suited to your need, please contact the Director of Procurement Services and the vendors' proposals will be obtained and provided for the requesting department's review. While we do not need to rescore proposals, we must be able to demonstrate how we went about selecting the vendor that was identified as the best value for the University.

**\*Please contact the Purchasing Department with any questions about IPHEC or using the awards.**

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