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3.423 Purchasing, Request for Proposal and Ethical Sourcing

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ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY

Type of Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>University</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Campus</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Department/Unit</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Interim</i>		Purchasing, Request for Proposal and Ethical Sourcing Policy Policy 3.423	
Business Management Policies		Effective date: July 1, 2022	
Policy History:	Approved by:	Resolution #	Date:
Approved	Chancellor	N/A	July 1, 2022
Revised			
Responsible Office:	Responsible Administrator:	Contact information:	Applies to:
Finance Office	Vice Chancellor of Finance/CFO	(937) 769-1324	All Employees

I. Introduction

As a nonprofit university, Antioch is committed to careful stewardship of its resources. This commitment extends from its educational programs to its administrative functions. The University intends its purchasing function to have a positive impact on the University’s finances, while reflecting and furthering the University’s mission and values. This policy sets forth Antioch’s fiscal controls for purchasing, Request for Proposal process and guidelines for ethical sourcing of goods and services.

II. Purchasing

Responsibility for purchasing goods and services is shared between University offices and individual campuses, schools, programs and departments. To the extent possible, the University will coordinate purchases to achieve efficiency and cost savings.

A. Purchasing Authority. Antioch’s Board of Governors approves University budgets on an annual basis. Purchasing authority within specific cost centers is delegated by the

Chancellor to campus, school, program and department leaders, who may further delegate authority for purchasing decisions. Employees shall make purchases in accordance with the signature authority limits set forth in [Expenditure, Contract and Signature Authority Policy 2.403](#).

B. Authorized Purchases. Employees to whom purchasing authority has been delegated may purchase goods and services in accordance with approved budgets and delegated authority. Generally, purchases must be:

1. Necessary: needed to fulfil a valid University business purpose;
2. Reasonable: not excessive, and a prudent use of University resources;
3. Appropriate: suitable and fitting to meet the need; and
4. Allowable: authorized by an approved University budget or by a third party contract or grant.

Employees with questions about whether a specific purchase meets these criteria should speak with their supervisor.

C. Methods of Purchase. University purchases may be made through several methods, including:

1. PCard (to be used in accordance with Antioch's [Credit Cards Policy 3.467](#));
2. Payment Request (accessed through AUDirect).

D. Purchasing Guidelines. Employees must purchase goods and services that meet the criteria set forth in Section B above. In addition, employees should consider the following guidelines to ensure that the purchase reflect the University's values:

- 1. Conflict of Interest; Gifts and Benefits.** The University prohibits conduct or activities that compromise an employee's judgment regarding expenditure of University funds. Employees are required to disclose potential conflicts of interest, such as personal, professional, financial, familial, or other interests (including any offers of gifts, gratuities or other benefits in return for University business) in accordance with the University's [Conflicts of Interest and Commitment Policy 2.105](#).
- 2. Cost of Goods and Services.** Cost of goods and services must be "reasonable" as set forth in Section B above. Although employees are required to make the most prudent use of the University's financial resources, this may not always result in choosing the lowest cost option. Employees shall consider factors such as value, quality, timing and availability in selecting goods and services.

3. **Ethical Sourcing.** Antioch’s Board of Governors “strongly encourages investment in corporations that are providing solutions to social and environmental problems.” ([Investment Policy Objectives and Guidelines Policy 3.443](#)) Likewise, in fulfillment of the University’s social justice mission, employees with purchasing authority should consider the following ethical sourcing concerns in choosing vendors, products and services:

a. **Anti-discrimination.** Avoid vendors with an ongoing record of significant controversies, judgments and/or administrative fines resulting from discrimination based on gender, race, age, marital status, religion, sexual preference or the nationality of its employees or customers.

b. **Human Trafficking and Forced Labor.** Avoid vendors whose operations are aligned with governments with significant human rights abuses or repressive regimes. Seek certifications such as Rainforest Alliance.

c. **Environment.** Avoid vendors whose actions have harmed the local or global environment. For example, in keeping with Antioch’s Investment Policy Objectives and Guidelines Policy 3.443, avoid vendors whose business practices cause substantial environmental damage, including companies represented in the Carbon Underground 200.

d. **Corruption.** Vendors that have been charged with or convicted of crimes, that have engaged in bribery, or have been debarred from public contracting.

e. **Health and safety.** Vendors whose policies or practices endanger its employees or those of the University community, particularly those with an ongoing record of health and safety violations.

f. **Other.** Other conduct or activity that is inconsistent with the University’s mission and values, or that could expose the University to adverse publicity.

g. **Supplier Diversity.** Purchasers shall promote supplier diversity by considering businesses owned and operated by an individual or group that is part of a traditionally underrepresented or underserved group, such as small-business enterprises (SBEs), minority-owned business enterprises (MBEs), and woman-owned business enterprises (WBEs). Purchasers may rely on third party certifications such as the Women’s Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC), the National Minority Supplier Diversity Council (NMSDC), the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC), and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Vets

First Verification Program or other nationally-recognized third-party certification services.

h. Third-party Designations. Third party designations (such as B Lab-certified B Corp or other applicable industry standard) may be relied upon in determining compliance with these Purchasing Guidelines.

III. Requests for Proposals. Employees are encouraged to comparison shop to obtain the best value for all purchases. However, at certain cost thresholds, it is necessary for the University to document its decision making process by conducting a formal Request for Proposal (“RFP”) process.

A. RFP Threshold. Antioch will normally require an RFP process for any expenditure over \$20,000.

B. RFP Process

1. The Responsible Purchaser, who is the employee with budgetary or contract authority to make a purchase, shall conduct or delegate and oversee the RFP process.
2. The Responsible Purchaser (or delegate) shall obtain quotes or proposals from at least three qualified sources for goods or services.
3. The Responsible Purchaser shall select a vendor/service provider based on the Purchasing Guidelines set forth in Section II above, and shall document the decision-making process.
4. The Responsible Purchaser shall submit the completed RFP to the Finance Office for approval prior to purchase.
5. The Responsible Purchaser shall submit any contracts, purchase orders or agreements (including click through electronic agreements) to Office of General Counsel for legal review in accordance with [Contract Review Policy 3.425](#) prior to purchase.
6. Purchases subject to the RFP process require Provost, Dean, Vice Chancellor or Chancellor signature. The Responsible Purchaser shall obtain a signature commensurate with the signature authority schedule set forth in [Expenditure, Contract and Signature Authority Policy 2.403](#).

C. Exceptions to RFP Process. In certain limited conditions, such as market shortages, specialized goods or services for which there are a limited number of vendors; and emergency situations, the Responsible Purchaser may request permission to modify the Purchasing Guidelines, or to modify or forgo the RFP process. The Responsible Purchaser shall notify the Finance Office of the condition as soon as possible, prior to selecting a vendor, product or service. The Finance Office will review and approve, modify or deny the request.

IV. Financial Misconduct. Failure to use prudence in management of University funds, including but not limited to violation of this policy, may be grounds for revocation of PCard and purchasing authority, and for other discipline, up to and including termination, in accordance with Antioch’s [Corrective Action and Discipline Policy 4.617](#).

V. Policies Referenced

Expenditure, Contract and Signature Authority	Policy 2.403
Credit Cards	Policy 3.467
Conflicts of Interest and Commitment	Policy 2.105
Investment Policy Objectives and Guidelines	Policy 3.443
Contract Review	Policy 3.425
Corrective Action and Discipline	Policy 4.617