

# Invitation for Bid AEPA #026-A FURNITURE SOLUTIONS

**BID SECURITY REQUIRED: NONE**

## Part A – Instructions and Specifications

### Notice to Respondents

Solicitation offers will be received by the Association of Educational Purchasing Agencies (AEPA) on behalf of its Member Agencies until: **September 16, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. ET**

**Each package consists of multiple parts:**

- Part A – Instructions and Specifications**
- Part B – AEPA General Terms and Conditions**
- Part C – Member Agency (State) Terms and Conditions**
- Part D – Questionnaire**
- Part E – Signature Forms**
- Part F – Discount & Pricing Workbook**

All offers must be submitted online via the Bonfire eProcurement website by the due date and time listed above. AEPA solicitation documents can be downloaded after registering, at no cost, on Bonfire, <https://aepacoop.bonfirehub.com/>. Bonfire has recently changed its name to EUNA Procurement. Therefore, the names Bonfire and EUNA Procurement are interchangeable in this solicitation.

AEPA and/or the respective Member Agencies reserve the right to reject any or all offers in whole or in part; to waive any formalities or irregularities in any offers, and to accept the offers, which in its discretion, within state law, are for the best interest of any of the AEPA Member Agencies and/or their Participating Entities. Note that Respondents must be able to provide their proposed products and services in up to 31 states including Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. Note that not all states participate in each solicitation. The complete list of participating states is found below.

**Solicitations will be opened online on September 16, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. ET. at EducationPlus, 1460 Craig Road, St. Louis, MO 63146.**

**The online opening link is below:**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85896115580?pwd=DOTCZooyJWXAubz66IBckFnr8Oxp4.1>

**Meeting ID 858 9611 5580**

## Bid & Contract Timeline:

July 31, 2025	Release of IFBs/RFP via Bonfire
August 18, 2025	Voluntary Pre-Bid Conference Call
August 29, 2025	Deadline for questions from Respondents
September 16, 2025	Deadline for Submittals and Reading via Bonfire
September 17, 2025	Opening Record posted on the AEPA website, <a href="http://www.aepacoop.org">www.aepacoop.org</a>
December 1-3, 2025	AEPA Approval of Offers
After December 3, 2025	Director of Solicitations submits contracts to AEPA Member Agencies to be forwarded to Vendor Partners for signature.
	Initial contract term–See Term of Contract and Extensions in General Terms & Conditions. Annual contract renewal dates subject to approval by AEPA

## I. General Solicitation Procedures

### A. Issuing Agency

The great benefit to the Vendor is that one response may be prepared for approval by AEPA and awarded by multiple AEPA Member Agencies and utilized by their Participating Entities located throughout many states. Solicitations may be issued as an IFB or an RFP depending on the category of goods/services being solicited. Respondents to a solicitation will submit their response in the required formats (PDF, Excel) of all files requested along with current pricing via Bonfire, a free online bidding platform, by the published due date and time. Respondents selected in response to this solicitation have the potential to provide products and services to local education agencies serving over 36,000,000 (excludes non-represented AEPA states) students, with additional local government agencies as permitted by state law.

Each AEPA Member Agency will individually publish notice of the solicitation. Respondents will submit responses online, electronically via Bonfire (<https://aepacoop.bonfirehub.com/>). Instructions on registering for AEPA solicitations on Bonfire can be found on the AEPA website, <https://aepacoop.org/registration-solicitations/>. Responses deemed complete at opening will be evaluated by solicitation category committees comprised of AEPA Member Agencies representatives who have indicated they will participate in the category of products and services being solicited, and after AEPA approval, individual AEPA Member Agencies may award contracts to the AEPA Approved Vendor Partners or reject their offers.

The procurement activities of AEPA are limited to document preparation, distribution of the solicitation, initial evaluation, and recommendation for possible approval to AEPA Member Agencies. AEPA consists of agency officials who have agreed to assist one another in meeting the public purchasing needs of local school districts and other political subdivisions.

Contracts awarded through cooperative purchasing must meet the procurement laws of the states of each AEPA Member Agency. When these laws are satisfied, an individual entity using these contracts is deemed in compliance with competitive procurement regulations. As allowed by specific state statutes, they can issue purchase orders for any amount without the necessity to prepare their own solicitation./ This saves the entity time and allows for economical and efficient purchasing.

**AEPA requires that Respondents only respond if they can offer prices equal to or better than what they ordinarily offer to individual entities or cooperatives with equal or lesser volume.** State laws that permit or encourage cooperative purchasing contracts do so in the belief that it saves the participants both time and money. Time is saved by having access to volume discounted contracts publicly solicited and being able to purchase what is needed without having to wade through the solicitation process (write solicitation, advertise the solicitation, open each response, evaluate, and select). Money is saved in procurement cost and lower prices will be the result of volume purchasing. Therefore, a contract issued by a cooperative can be used by hundreds of separate political units; but if it has the same or higher prices than what a single agency or state contract can get through its own solicitation, a cooperatively solicited contract may not be attractive to these members. **We request that Respondents respond with advantageous pricing and package so that together we can attract members to prefer the cooperatively awarded contract.**

The AEPA policy for membership permits new agencies to become AEPA Member Agencies upon approval of existing members. If additional Agencies are added, they and their members may procure from existing contracts upon approval of the awarded Vendor Partners and in accordance with their state laws.

**B. Questions**

All questions from Respondents must be submitted online through Bonfire, AEPA will not accept questions in any other format during the solicitation process. All questions received during the solicitation process will be available via Bonfire. All Respondents will be automatically notified through email when AEPA responds to a question asked by a potential respondent. It is the Respondent's responsibility to check Bonfire for any questions and answers before the deadline. Questions received after the deadline date will not be answered.

Should AEPA issue addenda during the solicitation process, all Respondents will be automatically notified through email of the released addenda. AEPA is not responsible for Respondents not acknowledging the issued addenda and not submitting a response according to those changes.

Questions regarding accessing this solicitation through Bonfire can be directed to the Director of Solicitations at [bid-committee@aepacoop.org](mailto:bid-committee@aepacoop.org).

**C. Respondent Qualifications**

An essential part of the solicitation process is an evaluation to qualify the company being considered. All solicitations must contain answers, responses, and/or documentation to the information requested in the documents. Any Respondent failing to provide the required information/ documentation may be considered non-responsive, this includes submitting a response not in the proper format.

Respondents must demonstrate their ability, capacity, and available resources to provide the proposed products and services to 90% of the AEPA Member Agencies indicating an interest in participating in the categories being solicited, or at least one Region for solicitations involving a Regional component. The Respondents are required to communicate and demonstrate within their response they have extensive knowledge, background, and at least five (5) years of experience with manufacturing, obtaining, delivering, installing, maintaining, and/or supporting the product lines of products, equipment, services, or software offered. AEPA and/or its Member Agencies reserve the right to accept or reject newly formed companies or companies failing to demonstrate their abilities or capacity solely based on information provided in the solicitation response and/or its own investigation of the company.

#### **D. Bid/Proposal Security**

If required as noted at the top of this Part, bids or proposals must be accompanied by a satisfactory security bond. Please note that not all AEPA Bid categories require a security bond.

If a security bond is required, a hard copy of the bid security must be in the possession of AEPA on or before, the exact due date and time. Original copies of the security must be submitted to AEPA c/o EducationPlus, ATTN: Purchasing Dept, 1460 Craig Road, St. Louis, MO 63146 in a sealed envelope with the Solicitation Number, Solicitation Category, and Respondent's name and address clearly indicated on the envelope or box. A copy of the bid security must be submitted via Bonfire. AEPA will not reject a response from a Vendor whose bid bond has not arrived by the due date and time as long as a scanned copy of the bid bond dated prior to the due date is uploaded with their response and the actual bond is in transit. If the designated location for receiving the bid security is closed due to an unforeseen circumstance on the day the security is due (due date), the security will be due at the same time on the next day the building is open.

An acceptable bid/proposal security will have the principal being the Respondent and the Association of Educational Purchasing Agencies listed as the Agency of Record. The Security may be a one-time bond underwritten by a surety company licensed to issue bonds in the state of Nevada and said surety to be approved in federal circular 570 as published by the United States treasury department or the equivalent in cash or an irrevocable letter of credit from a FDIC financial institution. The security bond must remain in force for one hundred twenty (120) days of the solicitation opening.

#### **E. Solicitation Submittal**

##### **1. Preparation of the Response**

- a. The solicitation is published in multiple parts.
  - i. Part A contains the solicitation instructions, and the technical specifications.
  - ii. Part B is the general terms and conditions for all AEPA agencies.
  - iii. Part C includes specific state terms and conditions. This is where you will find information about each AEPA state member and any specific procurement rules of each state.
  - iv. Part D is a required Questionnaire found and completed in Bonfire.
  - v. Parts E and F are to be filled out in their entirety and submitted online via Bonfire in their required formats with the Respondent's offer. Some categories may request additional forms. All forms must be uploaded before the published solicitation due date and time of opening.
- b. All responses must be on the forms provided by AEPA for each solicitation found in Bonfire unless otherwise noted. Respondents will submit all documents, in their required formats, online via Bonfire by the due date and time of the solicitation.
- c. Forms requiring signatures must be submitted by the person authorized to sign the bid or proposal response. Failure to properly sign the solicitation documents may result in the offer being deemed non-responsive.
- d. In case of an error in extension of prices in the solicitation, unit prices must govern.
- e. Periods of time stated as a number of days must be in calendar days, not business days.
- f. It is the responsibility of all Respondents to examine the entire solicitation package, to seek clarification of any item or requirement that may not be clear, and to check all responses for accuracy before submitting an offer. Negligence in preparing an offer confers no right of withdrawal after due time and date.

- g. The Respondents' ability to follow the preparation instructions set forth in this solicitation will also be considered as an indicator of the Respondents' ability to follow instructions should they receive an award as a result of this solicitation. Any contract between the AEPA Member Agency and a Respondent requires the delivery of information and data. The quality of organization and writing reflected in the offer will be considered to be an indication of the quality of organization and writing which would be prevalent if a contract was awarded. As a result, the offer will be evaluated as a sample of data submission.
2. **Document Development:** Forms for this solicitation are published in Bonfire, in Excel, and PDF formats. Some forms (questionnaire) may be completed directly in Bonfire. Respondents must scan and upload all documents to Bonfire following the Solicitation Checklist, along with any additional documents or files other than those listed below that may be requested and/or related to the solicitation.
  - a. **Part C – Member Agency (State) Terms and Conditions:** Some states require additional documentation and signature forms. Review Part C and submit the required state documents with your offer. Submit all state-specific forms as one (1) form in PDF format.
  - b. **Part D – Questionnaire:** Complete directly in Bonfire. The questionnaire seeks information about the Respondent's pricing structure, service areas, past performance, and commerce processes. The Company Information form provides background information on the Respondent's company.
  - c. **Part E – Signature Forms:** Complete the forms provided. The signature form includes multiple areas where signatures are required. Submit the form as one (1) individual form in PDF format.
  - d. **Part F – Discount & Pricing Workbook:** Complete the Excel workbook provided. Be sure to complete the **REQUIRED** tabs as outlined in Part F.
  - e. **Price Lists and/or Catalogs:** For catalog bids, Respondent's most recent catalog(s) or price lists must be included. If a hard copy is submitted, it should be in pdf format. Links to online pricing are acceptable as long as pricing is included, not just descriptions of product.
3. **Solicitation Transmittal**
  - a. It is the responsibility of the Respondent to be certain that its submittal has been uploaded in its entirety to Bonfire, on or prior to the exact published due date and time.
  - b. Submitted responses will be opened, and the Opening Record will be posted on the AEPA website.
- F. **Solicitation Evaluation, Approval, and Award:** Solicitation responses received will be evaluated in accordance with acceptable standards of cooperative procurement, set forth in and governed by the Procurement Codes of AEPA Member Agency's states; AEPA by-laws, policies, and procedures; AEPA Member Agencies' policies and procedures.

For IFB categories, approval of prospective Vendor Partners and recommendation of contracts will be made to the lowest responsive and responsible respondents utilizing the criteria listed in this solicitation. As a reminder, AEPA recommends offers to Respondents. Final contract awards are subsequently made by individual AEPA Member Agencies.

1. **Responsive Offer:** A responsive offer reasonably and substantially conforms to all material requirements of the solicitation. Offers must be responsive and

approved by AEPA to receive award consideration by AEPA Member Agencies. To be determined responsive, the response must meet all of the requirements below:

- a. Submitted on time.
  - b. Materially satisfy all mandatory requirements identified throughout the solicitation.
  - c. Must substantially conform to all of the specified requirements in the solicitation in the judgment of AEPA and its AEPA Member Agency representatives.
  - d. Any deviation from the requirements indicated herein must be stated, in writing, and included with the offer submitted. Otherwise, it will be considered that responses are in strict compliance with all requirements, and any successful vendor will be held responsible, therefore.
  - e. Deviations or exceptions stipulated in response may result in the offer being classified as non-responsive. Language to the effect that the Respondent does not consider this solicitation to be part of a contractual obligation will result in that Respondent's offer being disqualified. Terms of the solicitation that any Respondent considers particularly unwarranted, and to which that would have to take significant exception in his/her offer, should be stated clearly and concisely as exceptions and/or deviations.
  - f. In preparing a proposal, the Respondent's inability to follow the proposal preparation instructions set forth in this solicitation and its inability to provide written responses, narratives, requested and support documentation relating to the Respondent's qualifications; abilities; capacity; products; specifications; delivery, installation, setup, maintenance; support services and pricing utilized by AEPA evaluators may result in the Respondent's offer to be deemed non-responsive.
2. **Non-responsive Offer:** Any offer that does not conform to all material requirements of the solicitation including, but not limited to: offers received in a manner other than via Bonfire; offers that do not contain required items and/or provided in the format required, such as proper and/or signed forms, pricing, catalogs, electronic files; offers that do not contain the proper security bond where required; failure to meet the specified qualifications, product specifications, stipulated documentation or pricing equal to or better than individual entities or cooperatives with equal or lesser volume. AEPA reserves the right to request documents that do not affect pricing, waive minor irregularities, and/or seek clarification following its Board approved procedures. Offers deemed non-responsive will not be considered for approval and award.
3. **Responsible Respondent:** A responsible Respondent is a firm or person with the qualifications, capability, and capacity to perform the contract requirements with integrity and reliability, which will ensure good faith performance. As a part of the process of determining responsible respondents during the evaluation period, the category committee may request reports that describe the financial soundness of your organization. You may be asked to include a third-party report or reports that demonstrate your firm's strength. Accepted financial reports may include balance sheets and Profit & Loss statements for the past three years, a Letter of Credit or Line of Credit from a bank or lending institution indicating the line of credit limit and the average outstanding balance, Dun & Bradstreet reports, a complete Annual Financial Report (for publicly traded companies).

AEPA's approval of a response will make the Respondent available for consideration to the AEPA Member Agencies for contract award. Factors to be considered in determining whether the standard of responsibility has been met may include but are not limited to whether a Vendor Partner has:

- a. Submitted a responsive offer;
- b. The qualifications stipulated in this solicitation, such as adequate financial resources, production or service facilities, personnel, service reputation and experience to make satisfactory delivery of the products, services, or construction;
- c. A demonstrated and documented satisfactory track record of performance in the national marketplace;
- d. A satisfactory record of integrity and a reputation of responding to and meeting educational and local government institutions' needs, adherence of and compliance with federal, state, local and industry standards, rules, regulations, and codes;
- e. Quality and suitability of products and services offered to meet and perform to the specifications, expectations, and requirements identified in this solicitation;
- f. Supplied all necessary information and data in connection with determining whether a Respondent meets the standard of responsibility.

**4. Cost Evaluation:**

- a. Cost and price schedules conform to and provide the information required in this part of the bid or proposal;
- b. Pricing offered that is equal to or better than what they ordinarily offer to individual entities or cooperatives with equal or lesser volume;
- c. Methodology used by AEPA and its AEPA Member Agencies to approve prospective Vendor Partners and award contracts for a Catalog Bid is as follows;
  - i. Lowest responsive, responsible Bidder(s) is/are determined based on the price evaluation criteria; and by a "Core List" and/or by creating a "Market Basket Study" to compare overall pricing between Respondents. A "Market Basket" is a list of items typically purchased by AEPA Member Agencies and their Participating Entities that represent a cross-section of the types of those items purchased. The selection and quantity of line items evaluated will be at the sole discretion of the AEPA evaluators. Based on the cost evaluation, a recommendation will be made to approve a single Bidder or make a multiple Bidder award. The evaluation committee may consider such factors as life-cycle costs, total cost of ownership, quality, and the suitability of an offering in meeting AEPA members' needs.

**G. Contract Award and Implementation**

An AEPA category committee will perform an initial response review and evaluation and will prepare and make a recommendation to AEPA for its consideration and approval. Those selected Respondents who are approved by AEPA will then be considered by the individual AEPA Member Agencies for contract award. It should be noted that once AEPA has approved the response, a Respondent becomes a "Vendor Partner" for AEPA.

All respondents will be notified of the outcome of the solicitation. Vendors recommended for award by AEPA states will be posted on the AEPA website.

Once approved by the AEPA Board, each Member Agency will be provided with a copy of Part E Signature Forms (contract) to complete and send to the Vendor Partner. Each

AEPA Member Agency will review, evaluate, and determine which Vendor Partner, if any, it will award contracts to.

If necessary, the approved Vendor Partner and the AEPA Member Agency will hold final contract negotiations, if allowed by state laws, prior to the Member Agency submitting the contract to the Vendor Partner, to work out state-specific details of contract implementation including:

1. Acquiring additional information and having discussions on how the awarded contract will be executed.
2. Signing the contract with the AEPA Member Agency.
3. Jointly develop marketing strategies and a plan for contract roll-out activities to the AEPA Member Agency's Participating Entities (Advertising, flyers, website access, etc.).
4. Establish how orders will be processed, handled, and reported.
5. Contract management: Establish how and by whom the day-to-day contract management will be handled and who will be the AEPA Member Agency's representative.

It is not guaranteed that each AEPA Member Agency will enter into a contract with AEPA approved Vendor Partners. The final decision as to the appropriateness of a contract for a Member Agency rests solely with that AEPA Member Agency.

## **II. Responsibilities of a Vendor Partner**

A. As an approved AEPA Vendor Partner, the following is expected in support of the contract:

1. Designate and assign a dedicated senior-level contract manager (one authorized to make decisions) to each of the Member Agency accounts. This employee will have a complete copy and must have a working knowledge of the contract.
2. Train and educate sales staff on what the AEPA cooperative contract promised, including pricing, who can order from the contract (by state), terms/conditions of the contract, and the respective ordering procedures for each state. It is expected that Vendor Partners will lead with AEPA contracts.
3. Develop a marketing plan to support the AEPA contract in collaboration with respective AEPA Member Agencies. The plan should include, but not be limited to, a website presence, electronic mailings, sales flyers, brochures, mailings, catalogs, etc.
4. Create an AEPA-specific sell sheet with a space to add a Member Agency logo and contact information for use by the Member Agencies and the Vendor Partner's local sales representatives to market within each state.
5. Quarterly, complete the sales and administrative fee report (see PDF example included along with other solicitation documents in Bonfire) and submit them to each Member Agency along with the respective administrative fees to be paid. If there are no sales, a \$0 report is required.
6. Report sales and administrative fees to AEPA, by participating state, if requested by AEPA.
7. Have ongoing communication with the Category Committee Chairperson, AEPA Member Agencies, and the Member Agencies Participating Entities.
8. Annually attend two (2) AEPA meetings: Annual meeting which is typically in April or May and the Winter Meeting which is typically the week after Thanksgiving. At the Annual Meeting, Vendor Partners participate in engagement activities with AEPA Member Agencies. Vendor Partners that have paid the registration fees can participate in the meetings.



9. Trade show support: Strongly encourage participation in national and local conference trade shows to promote the AEPA contracts such as, but not limited to, the Association of School Business Officials (ASBO), the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP), and the National Association of Educational Procurement (NAEP).
10. Increasing sales over the term of the contract with all participating AEPA Member Agencies.

### **III. Responsibilities of AEPA Member Agencies**

- A. In support of the Vendor Partner and respective contract, each AEPA Member Agency should provide the following support:
  1. Designate a staff member(s) that will serve as a point person for the AEPA program within that state.
  2. Provide a staff member to work collaboratively with the Vendor Partner to determine the best marketing plan for the respective Member Agency state. Marketing efforts may include but not be limited to the education and use of sales force, a website presence, electronic mailings, brochures, mailings, etc.
  3. Develop marketing materials for the Member Agency to use that would include representation of the awarded contracts. Materials may include, but not be limited to, a website presence, electronic mailings, sales flyers, brochures, mailings, catalogs, etc. as determined by the respective Member Agency and what works best within their state.
  4. Assist the Vendor Partner to jointly market the contract to potential Participating Entities within the state.
  5. Work with the Vendor Partner to identify eligible Participating Entities within the state possibly including providing a list of potential customers.
  6. Work with the Vendor Partner to identify and help manage costs associated with fulfilling this contract.
  7. Attendance at the two (2) AEPA meetings which provides for an opportunity to interact with Vendor Partners.

### **IV. Category Specifications**

#### **1. Scope of Bid**

AEPA is seeking qualified, experienced contractor(s) who possess the necessary resources and capabilities to acquire, deliver and perform the required supplies, materials equipment and labor to all participating member states (up to 31) in the category of Furniture Solutions.

- a. Respond to requests from a number of different types of educational, governmental and public institutions seeking a broad-line of furniture solutions.
- b. These parts and supplies will include but are not limited to:
  - i. Ancillary Furniture: A comprehensive catalog selection for an agency's less-formal settings (lounges, in-between spaces, etc.).
  - ii. Soft Seating: A comprehensive catalog selection for areas including, but not limited to, lounges, flexible learning spaces, reception.
  - iii. Classroom: A comprehensive catalog selection including, but not limited to, case goods, desks, tables, seating/chairs (stacking, multiple and single use, flexible), accessories, vertical surface attachment panels and accessories, acoustical wall treatments, work surfaces.
    - i. Early Childhood/Pre-K: A comprehensive catalog selection including, but not limited to, case goods, desks, seating/chairs (stacking, multiple and single use, flexible).

- ii. Special Furniture: A comprehensive catalog selection including but not limited to: Cafeteria; Science Laboratory; Art; Career and Technical Education; Music Furniture and Storage.
- iv. Office: A comprehensive catalog selection including, but not limited to, case goods; modular and demountable walls; cubicles; collaboration; desks; seating/chairs (stacking, multiple and single use, flexible); workstations.
- v. Storage: A comprehensive catalog selection including, but not limited to, cabinets (stationary and mobile), filing systems (high-density, lateral, vertical), bookcases.
- vi. Patio or outdoor
- vii. Library/Media Center: A comprehensive catalog selection.
- c. Types of services may include, but are not limited to, design and layout services, fabric and color design services, installation, and any other related products and services or solutions.

All products offered must be considered new, unused, of the latest design and technology and from the most current and popular product lines available. A company must be an authorized dealer for the manufacturer(s).

AEPA and Member Agencies prefer a single vendor with a comprehensive array of products. However, because of the unique nature of Furniture Solution products, Member Agencies may consider multiple awards, if the lowest, best-value bids come from Bidders whose business concentrates on a subset of furniture industry, such as:

- a. Manufacturers
- b. Dealers representing multiple manufacturers
- c. Broadline catalog providers
- d. Specialized lines

## 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 B – General Terms and Conditions under “Pricing.”

**This bid is considered a:**

YES	NO	TYPE OF BID
X		<b>CATALOG:</b> 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.
	X	<b>LINE ITEM/CONSTRUCTION:</b> A construction/installation 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

### 3. Anticipated AEPA Member Agency Participation

State	Participate?	Other States Member Sells In
Arkansas	Yes	
California	Yes	AZ, NV
Colorado	Yes	
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	No	
New Mexico	Yes	
North Carolina	Yes	
North Dakota	Yes	SD
Ohio	Yes	
Oregon	Yes	
Pennsylvania	Yes	DE, HI, MD, NY
South Carolina	Yes	NC
Texas	Yes	
Virginia	Yes	
Washington	No	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

Furniture is a currently held category for AEPA. The resulting bid will be an Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract(s). AEPA Member Agencies estimate approximately ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) 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. 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. First, there will be a call that will include general information about AEPA and an opportunity for Bidders or potential bidders to ask questions. There will then be separate calls, one for each category in the solicitation cycle, in which the focus will be on the individual AEPA categories being bid in this cycle. 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-Solicitation Conference Call Schedule (All Categories)

**August 18, 2025**

Solicitations	Eastern	Central	Mountain	Pacific
AEPA 026 Voluntary Pre-Bid Conference Call - All Categories	11:00 AM	10:00 AM	9:00 AM	8:00 AM
Furniture Category	12:30 PM	11:30 AM	10:30 AM	9:30 AM
Health & Wellness Category	1:00 PM	12:00 PM	11: AM	10:00 AM
LED Lighting Category	1:30 PM	12:30 PM	11:30 AM	10:30 AM
Technology Catalog Category	2:00 PM	1:00 PM	12:00 PM	11:00 AM
Student Transportation Category	2:30 PM	1:30 PM	12:30 PM	11:30 AM
Emergency Response Supplies & Equipment Category	3:00 PM	2:00 PM	1:00 PM	12:00 PM
HVAC Equipment and Installation Category	3:30 PM	2:30 PM	1:30 PM	12:30 PM

#### Conference Call Number/Online Connection:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81233120395?pwd=WBuvwDgqWERkUvacCaffaq9qP0s9aj.1>

**Meeting ID:** 812 3312 0395

**Passcode:** 585895

**Dial In Information:** +1 564 217 2000 US

**Meeting ID:** 812 3312 0395

**Passcode:** 585895

## 6. General Specifications

Item	Description
6.1.1	The Vendor Partner will have access to a full inventory of the awarded product line.
6.1.2	The Vendor Partner shall maintain a minimum monthly overall average fill rate of 95% or above. Items that are reordered, backordered, or partially filled are not considered filled items when calculating this service level. Exceptions will be approved with notification of supply disruptions.
6.1.3	Vendor Partners must be a manufacturer's authorized sales and service dealer for all proposed products. 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 the AEPA contract.
6.1.4	All charges and components necessary for the 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.
6.1.5	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. A request form will be available for adding additional independent agents/distributors, subcontractors and/or third-party agents after the solicitation due date, and throughout the term of the contract. The Vendor Partner will submit the completed form to the Category Chair for consideration and determination.
6.1.6	Optional services must be identified separately and must include clear descriptions of proposed services.
6.1.7	Vendor partners will be required to provide their complete product offerings in an electronic catalog upon request.
6.1.8	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.
6.1.9	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.
6.1.10	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.
6.1.11	Products that have a money back guarantee will be clearly identified in the catalog and on the web site (if applicable).
6.1.12	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.
6.1.13	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 the cost of any returned product due to a pricing error.
6.1.14	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.

## 7. Product | Category Specific Specifications

Item	Description
7.1.1	Products shall meet or exceed all appropriate established codes and standards regarding durability, performance, and life safety including warning labels, safety devices, guards, etc., required to meet fire codes and safety standards recognized and established by state agencies, federal agencies, industry, councils or organizations.
7.1.2	All products, supplies, parts, and related accessories must be new, and not have been previously used, and must be current and actively marketed products by the manufacturer's authorized dealers. The above must conform to manufacturer specifications and shall be of new manufacture and in current standard production.
7.1.3	Offer a selection of standard products with a variety of options of finishes and materials and an extensive line of accessories and options to enhance the products and services offered.
7.1.4	Provide product specification sheets and installation directions with all products, supplies and related accessories.
7.1.5	Notify AEPA and its participating agencies immediately of any equipment or product recalls. The vendor will issue a credit or comparable substitute for any delivered, recalled product at the participating agencies' discretion. All costs associated with voluntary and involuntary equipment and product recalls shall be borne by the vendor
7.1.6	All deliveries must occur during normal hours of operation on weekdays, unless at the convenience of the participating agency and through mutual agreement with the Respondent.
7.1.7	Respondents will be expected to process and ship orders to various destinations. Each order shall be delivered based upon the needs of the participating agency. Delivery shall be made in accordance with the instructions from each participating agency.
7.1.8	Participating agencies shall be relieved from risks or loss or damage to all equipment purchased or leased during shipment prior to equipment receipt and/or installation at the agencies' designated location. Participating agencies will be responsible for risks of loss or damage to the equipment once it has been delivered/installed and accepted by the agencies' representative. Respondents shall demonstrate they have informed the customers of this responsibility prior to order placement. The Respondent will pay return shipping and give full credit on any defective product within 30 business days. All products must be 100% guaranteed.
7.1.9	Invoice all items directly to participating agencies.
7.1.10	Respondent must be able to provide, upon request, detailed and specific information regarding product specifications including at minimum: <div style="margin-left: 40px;">Product Material: Description of the materials that make up the legs, support brackets, bins, seat, ergonomic details, grommets, drawers, mechanisms, casters, fabric, and any other facet of the product's general composition.</div> <div style="margin-left: 40px;">Product Measurables: Description of the furniture's: height, weight, adjustable height, surface areas, shipping size, and packaged weight.</div> <div style="margin-left: 40px;">Product Options: Please indicate all of the options that are available for each product category in your catalog such as: type of surface, finish, size, seat count, additional features, or varied materials within the same product line.</div>

## 8. Design Layout and/or Installation Services (Response is OPTIONAL)

Item	Description
8.1.1	Pricing for design layout and/or installation is either by hourly rate or percentage of project cost. The Respondent must outline the option that applies to their response in Part F – Discount & Pricing. If the Respondent charges for installation by a method other than hourly or percentage, a complete explanation and breakdown of how charges are calculated must be included with the proposal.
8.1.2	Possession of and maintain in current status all federal, state, and local licenses, bonds, and permits required for the performance, design, delivery and installation of any and all products and services in response to this solicitation. A Respondent must have the ability to furnish all required labor, materials, equipment, parts and supplies necessary for the services requested.

8.1.3	Possess the ability to assess and determine existing site conditions and the participating agencies' expectations for the products being purchased and installed. Products shall be installed by certified manufacturer installers.
8.1.4	Installation times must be coordinated with the purchasing agency. All areas will be kept clean and free of debris. All packing materials and debris must be removed from the premises and properly disposed of at vendor's expense. The Respondent shall also be responsible for the cost of repairing any damage to existing work that is caused by them during the installation of their equipment. The Respondent must provide the purchasing agency with a list of participating agency required responsibilities for installation, prior to the start of installation.
8.1.5	All personnel that are working in participating agencies must be bonded and insured and follow any and all participating agencies' requirements for contractors and subcontractors.
8.1.6	Use of Subcontractors. a. The Respondent is responsible for ensuring that all subcontractors who provide goods or services under this contract comply with the terms and conditions of the contract. b. A participating agency reserves the right to require that a subcontractor be removed from the contract. Any damage done to the purchasing agencies' property by contractors or subcontractors shall be repaired or replaced at no cost to the purchasing agency.
8.1.7	All services must be 100% guaranteed. Any service provided, which does not meet the end users' expectations must either be redone until the end users' expectations are met, or the charges for the services are refunded to the end user.
8.1.8	Installed furniture shall be placed, leveled and accurately fastened into place according to manufacturer's specifications. Vendors are responsible for obtaining dimensions via field measurements and other such data that may be required to assure exact fit.

## 9. Shipping and Freight

Item	Description
9.1.1	All deliveries shall be F.O.B. Destination, freight prepaid and allowed
9.1.2	Additional delivery and/or installation charges may only be charged if mutually agreed upon by the purchasing agency.
9.1.3	Responsibility and liability for loss or damage will remain the Contractor's until final inspection and acceptance when responsibility will pass to the purchasing agency except as to latent defects, fraud, and Contractor's warranty obligations.
9.1.4	All products must be delivered in the manufacturer's standard package. Costs must include all packing and/or crating charges. Cases must be of durable construction, in good condition, properly labeled and suitable in every respect for storage and handling of contents.

## 10. Pricing

AEPA has 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 labor costs, AEPA Member Agency's Administrative Fee, or other approved reasons. The Bidder must provide their pricing as requested utilizing the various pricing methodologies specified. 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:

- Primary Pricing Strategies:** All Bidders will be required to submit "Primary Pricing" in the form of either "Catalog Pricing" or "Line-Item Pricing." Bidders are also encouraged to offer OPTIONAL pricing strategies including "Hot List" and "Volume Discounts".
  - Catalog Pricing:** Catalog pricing 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, catalog price, published


price or list price. 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.

- i. **Discounts:** Discount offers must clearly identify percent of 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. Discounts should be identified as a single minimum discount percentage for each line; ranges of discounts, or discount averages, will not be allowed on a single line.
- ii. **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 Category 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 shall remain firm for the duration of the contract.
- iii. **Core List:** In a Catalog Priced bid, a category (e.g.-office supplies) may include a "core list" which contains a selection of the most commonly used products/services with the expectation that a deeper discount would be bid for these items. If a new catalog and price list are published during the contract term, the original discounts shall be applied to the new published prices to establish the AEPA price for these core items.
- iv. **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.

New products or manufacturers added after the award may only be included if they fall within an established percentage discount category of the original bid submission. Alternatively, for new products or manufacturers not included in the original bid submission, the bidder must stipulate a minimum catalog discount on Tab F.2 of the Part F Pricing Workbook, that would apply to new products or manufacturers. Bidder may stipulate discounts off specific brands or lines of goods, or state a minimum discount that would apply universally to any additions made after the original bid submission (see Sample below). Products that do not align with either of these existing discount structures cannot be added.

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 <b>Association of Educational</b> <small>PURCHASING AGENCIES</small>	<b>Part F.2 – Pricing Schedule</b> <b>AEPA #026-A Furniture Solutions</b>																																											
	<b>Part F.2 is REQUIRED.</b>																																											
<b>Bidding Company Name:</b>		<b>Widget Furniture Sales Company</b>																																										
<b>Instructions.</b> For EACH manufacturer and/or CATALOG you're proposing, provide information in the table below. <b>Additional tables may be added to this worksheet OR copied to a new worksheet within the workbook.</b> New worksheets <u>must be</u> labeled according to the manufacturer name (example: 5.1 - Manufacturer Name). Also see pricing section of Part A.																																												
<table border="1"> <tr> <td rowspan="8"> <b>Manufacturer or Catalog:</b> </td> <td colspan="3"> <b>Any new products or manufacturer added after initial bid.</b> </td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Tier</b></td> <td><b>List Price of Order</b></td> <td><b>Discount</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Any</td> <td>5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4"> <b>Minimum Order - If any, provide details</b> </td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4"> <b>Price List Date</b> September 15, 20XX         </td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4"> <b>Comments/Notes</b> This is a minimum discount. Actual discounts at the time products or manufacturers are added may         </td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4"> <i>*Discount <u>does not</u> include delivery and installation. Delivery and installation to be quoted separately and added to invoice.</i> </td> </tr> </table>				<b>Manufacturer or Catalog:</b>	<b>Any new products or manufacturer added after initial bid.</b>			<b>Tier</b>	<b>List Price of Order</b>	<b>Discount</b>	1	Any	5%	2			3			4			5			6			<b>Minimum Order - If any, provide details</b>				<b>Price List Date</b> September 15, 20XX				<b>Comments/Notes</b> This is a minimum discount. Actual discounts at the time products or manufacturers are added may				<i>*Discount <u>does not</u> include delivery and installation. Delivery and installation to be quoted separately and added to invoice.</i>			
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2. **Secondary Pricing Methods (Catalog Bids only--**Bidders are required to offer Customized Price Lists (Catalog Bids ONLY) and encouraged to offer Hot Lists and Volume Discounts as follows:
  - a. **Customized Price List:** Bidders are required to offer customized price lists to Participating Entities for items within the Bidder's Commercially Available Catalog for Catalog Bids ONLY (not pertinent to Line-Item Bids). Customized price lists shall be allowed under the following conditions:
    - i. Items within the Vendor Partner's Commercially Available Catalog may be included on the customized price list providing they are not already on the Core Item list.
    - ii. Items are to be determined by the Participating Entity; Vendor Partner may object to up to ten (10) of the suggested items proposed by the customer and must offer substitutes until an agreement of the customized list is reached.
    - iii. Items on the customized price list shall be sold with an additional discount (deeper than what was originally bid on the non-core or catalog discount)
    - iv. Items may not include special order or customized service products unless agreed to by the Vendor Partner.
  - b. **Hot List Pricing:** Bidders are invited, at their option, to offer a selection of products/services, defined as a Hot List, 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 available to all AEPA Member Agencies equally. The price reduction is for a specific time period, no less than thirty (30) days. May be used to discount and liquidate close-out and discontinued products/services as long as those items are clearly labeled as such. The original price for products/services may not be exceeded after the time limit. The AEPA Category Committee and all AEPA Member Agencies 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 prices being proposed or offered to AEPA Member Agencies and Participating Entities. Pricing for all Hot List items must be updated on the Vendor

Partner's online catalog and submitted to all AEPA Member Agencies in an electronic format that can be posted to websites, emailed and shared with Participating Entities/Buyers.

- c. **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), e.g.-. local city, county, school district(s), etc. and/or for large one- t i m e 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.

#### **11. Part F - Pricing Workbook**

- a. Pricing shall be completed on the provided pricing sheets (Microsoft Excel Workbook) with the individual tables to be completed as follows:
  - i. F.1 – Manufacturer List (Required)
  - ii. F.2 - Pricing Schedule (Required) For EACH manufacturer and/or CATALOG you're proposing, provide information as requested. A current price list must be submitted as a PDF or link to an online source.
  - iii. F.3 – Services Price Schedule (Optional)
  - iv. F.4 – Volume Discounts (Optional)
- c. Bid pricing will be evaluated on a combination of items from the Pricing Schedule and Market Baskets for Evaluation. Market Basket information will be entered into Bonfire via the browser. This information is Required. See Submission Instructions for Suppliers for more details.
- d. Pricing evaluation may include considerations, other than product cost, including the total cost of the acquisition and whether the Proposer's offering represents the best value. See Evaluation, Approval and Award in Part B – AEPA General Terms and Conditions for additional information.
- e. Bidders are instructed to include warranty information and incidental charges and fees on Table F.3 of the Part F Pricing Workbook or on additional sheets in the Excel pricing document. Bidders may not charge incidental charges or fees unless such incidental charges and fees are included in the bid. Responses such as “negotiable” or “to be determined” are not acceptable and will be treated as if Bidder did not include such incidental charges or fees in their bid.

#### **8. 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.

As a part of the process of determining responsible respondents, the category committee may request reports that describe the financial soundness of your organization. You may be asked to include a third-party report or reports that demonstrate your firm's strength. Accepted financial reports may include balance sheets and Profit & Loss statements for the past three years, a Letter of Credit or Line of Credit from a bank or lending institution indicating the line of credit limit and the average outstanding balance, Dun & Bradstreet reports, a complete Annual Financial Report (for publicly traded companies).

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 will vote as a whole to accept or not accept the committee's recommendation. Once accepted, each recommended bid response will go to the individual states for contract approval. Please note, pricing evaluation may include other considerations, including the total cost of the acquisition and whether the Proposer's offering represents the best value. The evaluation committee may consider such factors as life-cycle costs, total cost of ownership, quality, and the suitability of an offering in meeting AEPA members' needs.

Below is a summary taken from the Evaluation section in Part A, F. Bid Evaluation, Approval and Award:

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>
Cost Evaluation
Complete Response to Bid
Conformance to Bid Terms and Conditions
Pricing Equal to or Better Than That Offered to Individual Entities or Cooperatives with Equal or Lesser Volume
Quality and Suitability of Products Offered
Marketing Plan
Financial Viability
Demonstrated Track Record of Performance in the Public Marketplace
Value Added Attributes

END OF AEPA IFB #026-A PART A INSTRUCTIONS & SPECIFICATIONS