OPERATING PROCEDURES

1. **General Guidelines** - RSMo Chapter 34 requires the University to solicit competitive bids for each procurement requirement exceeding $3,000, regardless of the source of funds. However, the responsibility for the proper expenditure of public funds and good business practices dictate that the University should solicit competitive bids for all required equipment, supplies, and services, regardless of dollar amount.

   A. Departments are not authorized to solicit bids for purchases exceeding $3,000. For such purchases, the Purchasing Department will conduct all bid solicitations. If existing conditions warrant, the Purchasing Department may delegate such authority back to the department. If such authority is delegated, the Purchasing Department reserves the right to check additional sources in an attempt to locate a less expensive source.

   B. The phrase "solicit competitive bids" means that the University must provide legitimate opportunity for prospective vendors to compete. A minimum of three (3) competitive bids for each commodity or service shall be solicited.

   C. The Purchasing Department will work with the department to determine the best approach to use for any particular procurement. The Purchasing Department has the sole authority to determine whether a purchase is subject to the competitive bid process. The type of solicitation used in any given situation is determined solely by the Purchasing Department, and is predicated on several factors, including specification complexity, dollar amount involved, market situation, economic forecast, etc.

   D. Departments are advised to pre-plan and anticipate enough lead-time for the bid process and product delivery. Anticipate no less than 60 days to complete the bid process and award the purchase order or contract. Complex procurements, or those involving multiple University departments, may take additional time.

2. **Dollar Amounts** -

   A. Purchases Under $500 - Departments may procure many items under $500 by the Direct Pay method, and pay invoices directly through Accounts Payable. Exceptions to this policy are included in the Direct Pay guidelines, which are available from Accounts Payable. All Direct Pay guidelines must be followed.
B. Purchases Between $500 and $3,000: Departments must procure these items by purchase requisition through the Purchasing Department, except as allowed by Direct Pay guidelines.

C. Purchases Exceeding $3,000: Departments must initiate the competitive procurement process by sending a purchase requisition to the Purchasing Department.

D. Bids for purchases estimated to exceed $25,000: Must be solicited by mailing solicitation documents to vendors. In addition, the bid must be posted in the Purchasing Department, and advertised in at least two daily newspapers of general circulation in such places as are most likely to reach prospective bidders at least five (5) days before the bid is to be opened. Other means of advertising may also be utilized when deemed appropriate.

3. Exceptions to the Bid Process – The only exceptions to the bidding requirements are:

   A. Items procured from state contracts
   B. Items procured from Missouri Vocational Enterprises
   C. Items procured from University contracts
   D. Items procured from governmental entities


   A. The University must comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and executive orders affecting equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in the selection of contractors.

   B. Affirmative action must be taken by the University to assure that minority businesses are provided an equitable and fair opportunity to submit bids and proposals and to receive an award of contract. Executive Order 98-21 establishes a goal of awarding at least 10% of contracts to minority-owned businesses (MBE) and 5% of contracts to women-owned businesses (WBE).

   C. A minority business must be at least fifty-one percent (51%) owned and controlled by one or more persons who are United States citizens and members of one of the following racial minority groups: African American, Native American, Hispanic American, Asian American, or other similar racial minority group.

   D. Qualified MBE/WBE’s must be utilized for a portion of non-bid business whenever economically feasible.
E. All University personnel participating in the purchasing process are responsible for exercising procurement responsibility to increase MBE/WBE participation.

5. Missouri Procurement – Pursuant to RSMo Chapter 34, preference shall be given to all commodities produced, manufactured, made or grown in the State of Missouri; and to all firms, corporations or individuals doing business as Missouri firms, corporations or individuals, or which maintain Missouri offices or places of business, when the quality is equal or better and the quoted price is the same.

6. Buy American – All procurements exceeding $25,000 for the purchase or lease of manufactured goods or commodities shall include the Buy American Certification form #MO300-1102 (or any revised form issued by DPMM). A bidder must certify that the goods or commodities are manufactured or produced in the United States, in order to receive a preference for such products.

7. Americans with Disabilities Act – All University procurements require compliance with all applicable requirements and provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

8. Bid Specifications –

   A. Specifications shall, to the extent practicable, emphasize functional or performance criteria while limiting design or other detailed physical descriptions to those necessary to meet the needs of the University.

   B. Specifications, delivery dates, vendor location, etc., shall not be manipulated to restrict competition. The Purchasing Department reserves the right to make the final determination as to whether the specifications restrict competition.

   C. Specifications may be based upon brand name descriptions if generic or functional specifications are not possible provided that the phrase “or functional equivalent” is added as an inherent part of the description. If possible, two or more brands equal to the specifications must be identified.