

## **BUSINESS OFFICE**

**Attn: Stacey Duke**

**1500 Peachtree Street**

**BOX 172**

**Jackson, MS 39202**

 **REQUEST FOR BIDS**

A. **Introduction / Objectives**

Belhaven University seeks a fiber upgrade project which meets the following functionalities and requirements:

* Fiber network installation, including all labor, parts, materials, and supplies including installation of drop and splicing. Installation of splitters, including wiring with termination at the customer patch panel is required.
* Complete underground placement of fiber, drops, and backbone cables. Must be capable of direct plow of up to 18” deep, missile, and directional boring.
* Provide warranty of work as directed for defects or incomplete services
* Must provide a single point of contact for installation, routine cable maintenance, and cable restoration services.
* Installation services must meet all federal and state building codes and standards.
* Single-mode fiber in a ring architecture
* Every building on campus to have a dual path to Core in Data Center
* All fiber to be installed in underground conduit with trace-wire
* Contractor will coordinate with Campus Security and Campus Operations to ensure work will not cause un-necessary interruptions to campus

 **Major objectives:**

* To improve the bandwidth available to the University’s campus in order to provide more services for students in the classroom and staff and faculty offices
* To improve reliability of services by replacing star topology with ring topology

**B. Instructions to Vendors**

The Request for Bids coversheet must be included in all sealed proposals for this bid.

Vendors must submit all questions regarding this proposal no later than 5:00 pm C.D.T. on two (2) calendar days prior to bid opening, to sduke@belhaven.edu . The University will respond no later than 5 pm C.D.T. one (1) calendar days prior to bid opening. Extensions to the proposal due date will only occur if deemed necessary by the University to allow Vendors sufficient time to review the responses.

Bids or proposals shall not be modified, corrected, altered, or amended after the specified closing time and the opening of such bids, unless otherwise noted in the request for bids or proposals.

The University reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive any informality in bids, and unless otherwise specified by the bidders, to accept any items on the bid. If the bidder fails to state the time within which bids must be accepted, it is understood and agreed that The University shall have 90 days to accept. The University reserves the right to make an award to this bid on an all or none basis, or on a line-by-line basis, whichever serves the best interest of The University.

Contracts and purchases will be made or entered into with the lowest, responsible bidder meeting specifications.

Respondents are required to comply with all applicable local, State and Federal laws, codes, ordinances, and regulations in the provision of the materials required.

Respondents must comply with Personally Identifiable Information (PII) data protection regarding State, Federal, and University regulations and policies.

No addendum will be issued within a period of two (2) working days prior to the time and date set for the bid opening. Should it become necessary to issue an addendum within the two-day period prior to the bid opening, the bid date will be reset giving bidders ample time to answer the addendum.

Alternate bids, unless specifically requested or allowed, will not be considered.

The bidder understands that The University is an equal opportunity employer and, therefore, maintains a policy which prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, physical handicap, disability, or any other such discrimination; and the bidder, by signing this bid, agrees during the term of agreement that the bidder will strictly adhere to this policy in its employment practices and provision of products or services.

Bidders must upon request of The University furnish satisfactory evidence of their ability to furnish products or services in accordance with the terms and conditions of these specifications. The University reserves the right to make the final determination as to the bidder’s ability.

All items must equal or exceed the specifications listed. The absence of detail specifications or the omission of detail description shall be recognized as meaning that only the best commercial practices are to prevail, and that only first quality materials and workmanship are to be used.

It shall be incumbent upon the bidders to understand the specifications. Any requests for clarifications shall be in writing and shall be submitted to our Procurement Services office at least seven (7) business days prior to the time and date set for the bid opening, unless otherwise noted in the bid or proposal specifications.

The University reserves the right to solicit Best and Final Offers (BAFOs) from Vendors, principally in situations in which proposal costs eclipse available funding, or the University believes none of the competing proposals presents a Best Value (lowest and best proposal) opportunity. Because of the time and expense incurred by both the Vendor community and the University, BAFOs are not routinely conducted. Vendors should offer their best pricing with the initial solicitation. Situations warranting solicitation of a BAFO will be considered an exceptional practice for any procurement. Vendors that remain in a competitive range within an evaluation may be requested to tender Best and Final Offers, at the sole discretion of the University. All such Vendors will be provided an equal opportunity to respond with a Best and Final Offer under a procedure to be defined by the University that encompasses the specific, refined needs of a project, as part of the BAFO solicitation. The University may re-evaluate and amend the original project specifications should it be deemed necessary in order to improve the opportunity for attaining Best Value scenarios from among the remaining competing Vendors. All BAFO proceedings will be uniformly conducted, in writing, and be subject to solicitation by the University and receipt from the Vendors under a precise schedule.

Please follow the instructions below using the following website: <https://www.ms.gov/dfa/contract_bid_search/Home/Sell>. On this site you will find helpful links to procurement opportunities, as well as a link to supplier registration. If not already registered in this system, potential bidders will first need to click on ‘Supplier Registration’ and follow the steps outlined (a one-time process). Once registered, they can return to the original website and click on ‘Procurement Opportunities’ where they can either search by keyword for the bid they desire to respond to or leave the search box blank and click ‘Search’ for a listing of all current bids and proposals for the various State of Mississippi offices.

**C. Payment**

The currency used for payment of costs will be in United States dollars.

The University requests to be invoiced annually for software maintenance. During implementation the University cannot be invoiced in advance of services not rendered. Therefore, the university prefers to be billed in installments based upon mutually agreed upon project implementation milestones completed.

State law requires that the University receive an original invoice from the Vendor and that payment of the invoice is processed within 45 days of receipt (Miss Code 31-7-305). The invoice should be on the Vendor’s letterhead and/or include an original Vendor representative signature.

**D. Length of Agreement**

The University is seeking to install fiber that will be capable of providing quality network traffic for over 10 years. Please include pricing in bid response. The fiber will need to be purchased and installed by December 2023.

**E. Legibility and Organization**: Proposals MUST be written in English, legible, and appropriately structured. Each page needs to be numbered sequentially.

**F. Criteria for Award**

The Vendor selected for an award will be the Vendor whose proposal, as presented in the response to this RFP, is the most advantageous. The university is not bound to accept the lowest priced proposal if that proposal is not in the best interest of the university as determined by the Evaluation Committee and Information Technology Department based on the table below: Description Possible Points Cost 40 Requirements 50 Implementation Schedule 10 Total Points 100 Consideration may also be given to any additional information and comments if they should increase the benefits to the university. Upon completion of the initial review and evaluation of the proposals submitted, selected Vendors may be invited to participate in oral presentations. Travel expenses must not be billed separately. The proposal must consider the cost of any travel expenses.

**G. Bid Specifications**

The Vendor response must respond to each requirement in the specifications.

Responses must be submitted in the same order and should include the requirement identifier listed so responses can be easily compared. Belhaven University has no obligation to locate or acknowledge any information in the proposal that is not presented according to these instructions.

**H. Additional Requirements**

The University acknowledges that the specifications within this RFP may not be exhaustive. Rather, they reflect the known requirements that the proposed system must meet. Vendors must specify what additional components may be needed and are proposed to complete each configuration.

If applicable, in the event there is an incumbent vendor, the cost of converting the existing system to a new system will be required in the analysis of final costs.