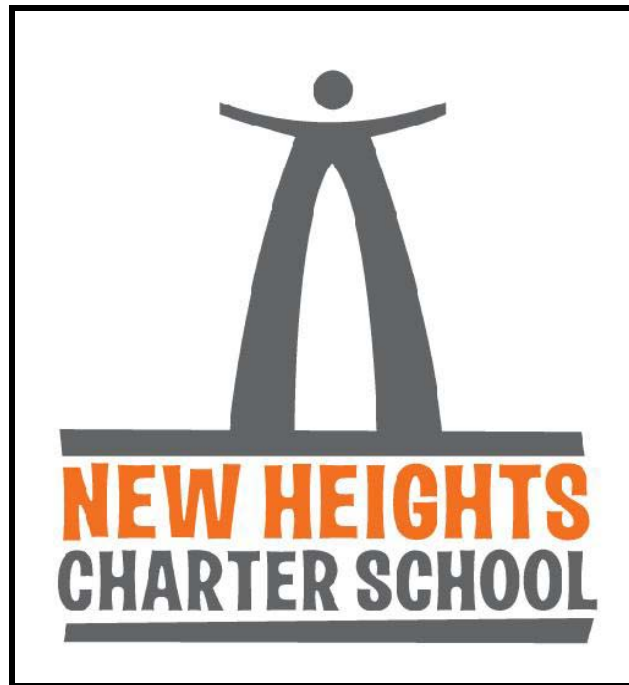


REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

**E-Rate Eligible Products and Services
Funding Year 7/1/2009 – 6/30/2010**



NEW HEIGHTS CHARTER SCHOOL

BEN 16040524

0. E-RATE BACKGROUND

The information in this Request For Proposals [RFP] is provided in conjunction with the Schools and Libraries Division [SLD] Forms 470 and 471, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the FCC Universal Service Fund (a.k.a., "E-Rate") discounts. These programs provide discounts for: certain telecommunications products and services, including (Priority 1) voice and data communications; Internet access; and (Priority 2) internal connections; and basic maintenance of internal connections. For more information about these Federal programs, and before responding to this RFP, please refer to the SLD web site, www.usac.org/sl/, or call the SLD Help Line at 888-203-8100. Please do not contact school personnel either with general questions about E-Rate, or to offer ineligible services or services not requested on this RFP. Vendors must have a valid Service Provider Identification Number [SPIN] and meet other criteria, as further described herein. Service providers must be prepared to discount invoices to the school and submit the balance to the E-Rate program via Service Provider Invoice [SPI] forms, as specified by the SLD. Invoicing information is further described below.

Answers to questions of general interest from qualified vendors may be posted on this web site, and should be considered to be formal addenda to this RFP. This may occur from time to time during the bidding period; please be sure to check back periodically while preparing your proposal. Telephone, facsimile, or snail mail inquiries are strongly discouraged, and are apt to be overlooked during proposal evaluation. The Applicant is a school, school consortium, or school district and does not have the personnel resources to respond to generalized inquiries or blanket advertising (such as for desktop computers or desktop filtering software) broadly targeting E-Rate applicants. Such materials shall be deemed "Unsolicited Commercial Email" [UCE] (better known as "spam") and are apt to cause *all* of your information to be discarded, your email address to become blacklisted by our email filtering system, and/or (at a minimum) to divert reviewer attention from any materials intended as legitimate responses to this RFP. Therefore, please clearly indicate to which of the following requirements your proposal is a valid response. Your proposal should refer to corresponding Form 470 Number and Billed Entity Number, and should clearly indicate your currently valid SPIN number and FCC Registration Number [FCC RN]. Descriptions of products and services should provide sufficient line item detail, and be submitted in a suitable format, for use as Form 471, Item 21 attachments, without the need for subsequent modification by the applicant.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

For funding year 2009-2010, New Heights Charter School (hereinafter, “Applicant”) seeks proposals for eligible products and services in the following categories of service:

- Telecommunications
- Internet Access
- Internal Connections
- Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections

Applicant intends to obtain appropriate, eligible products and services to improve telecommunications and/or Internet access services and/or technology infrastructure improvements so as to improve student achievement in its classrooms. Qualified persons interested in bidding on these products and services (hereinafter, “Vendor”) should submit bids including all costs associated with the delivery of the products and services (parts, labor, installation, testing, acceptance, configuration, turn-up, shipping, and so on). Any line items not eligible for E-Rate discounts according to SLD program rules should be clearly identified as such, and such items should be minimized. Vendors of ineligible products and services, however useful to school technology programs (such as, say end user computers) should *not* respond to this RFP. Applicant will seek whatever other products and services are required separately. Attempts to include excessive quantities of ineligible items or even the appearance of attempting to circumvent program rules will cause Vendor’s submission to be deemed nonresponsive and result in disqualification of your bid.

1.1 Evaluation Methodology

Each responsive proposal meeting the minimum qualifications will be evaluated using weighted criteria including cost of the eligible products and services, and other factors as determined by the Applicant. For any given category of service, the proposal that is deemed to be in the best interest of the Applicant, based on scoring these factors, shall be selected for award. *Decisions are not solely based on the lowest price.*¹ After elimination of nonresponsive bids or bids that are disqualified for specific reasons described herein, proposals will be evaluated based upon the requirements described below. The evaluation criteria to be used are:

Factor	Weight
Price	30%
Ability to provide turnkey solution	15%
Flexibility of approach to adapt to changing circumstances	15%
Timely proposal submission and responsiveness during bid evaluations and negotiations	10%
Prior track record with E-Rate	10%
Timely availability	10%
Industry credentials and certifications	5%
Compatibility with existing equipment such as handsets	5%
Total	100%

Within a given category of service, Applicant has a preference, but not a requirement, for turnkey

¹As is required for compliance with E-Rate regulations, price of the eligible products and services will be the *highest weighted factor* but *not the only factor* taken into consideration.

solutions, wherein a single contract with a single vendor completely addresses all requirements for that category. In the case of Priority 1 services – where applicable – there is a preference for inclusion of all necessary customer premise equipment [CPE] as part of an end-to-end solution.

2. REQUIRED TERMS AND CONDITIONS

2.0 Submission Deadline & Delivery Address

The deadline for submission of proposals is 9am, Pacific Time, on January 5, 2009.

Proposals should be submitted as follows (all three elements are required):

- Via email (single file, consecutive page numbered, MS Office or PDF format) to:
erate.nhcs@learningtech.org
- Signature page(s), executed by the Vendor, via facsimile, to:
[866-801-8667](tel:866-801-8667)
- Paper copy, with original signatures, with outside of envelope clearly identified as follows:
E-RATE TECHNOLOGY BID
New Heights Charter School
4126 S. Arlington Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90008
(323) 508-0155 only for express delivery

All three elements are required. It is sufficient for paper copy to be postmarked by the submission deadline, but in any event it must be received no later than 12:00 noon on the second working day after the electronic submission deadline, including the date signed and the binding original signature of the vendor's authorized representative. There should be a place for the Applicant to sign and date, if your bid is accepted. It is the sole responsibility of the respondents to ensure that their responses arrive in a timely manner. The Applicant has the right but not the obligation to reject all late or incomplete submissions, as the Applicant determines to be in its own best interest, or to contact vendors such as to seek ministerial corrections. The Applicant has the right but not the obligation to determine a short list for final negotiations and contract revisions after the submission deadline or to accept the winning proposal and execute it as is.

Oral and telephone bids will not be considered, nor will modifications of proposals by such communication be considered. The completed proposal form shall be without erasures or alterations. Delivery of the proposals will be considered authorization by the Vendor to make a contract, if awarded.

2.1 Costs Associated with Preparation of the Vendor's Response

The Applicant will not be liable for any cost incurred by the respondents in preparing responses to this RFP or negotiations associated with award of a contract.

2.2 Subcontractors

All subcontractors working on Applicant's projects must be insured and drug-free and must meet the same standards and qualifications applicable to regular employees. Applicant has a preference for limiting the use of subcontractors (reflected within one or more of the bid evaluation factors).

2.3 Interpretation and Additional Information and Addenda

Any interpretation, correction, clarification or change of the RFP will be made by ADDENDUM. Interpretations, corrections, or changes to the RFP made in any other manner will not be binding,

and the Vendors shall not rely upon such interpretations, corrections, or changes. The Applicant will issue any changes or corrections by posting them at <http://www.learningtech.org/erate/nhcs/>. It shall be the sole responsibility of the Vendor to check for all posted ADDENDA prior to submitting their bid. Questions or requests for clarification of this RFP should be sent to the bid submission email address shown above. Vendors should not attempt to contact Applicant personnel by telephone or in person during the bidding period, since such contacts can potentially taint the fair and level playing field. Answers to questions submitted by email will be posted on the web site and should be considered amendments or clarifications that are integral to this RFP.

2.4 Omissions

Omissions in the proposal of any provision herein described shall not be construed as to relieve the Vendor of any responsibility or obligation to the complete and satisfactory delivery, operation, and support of any and all equipment or services.

2.5 Financing

After notification of award and prior to the start of work, the Vendor will receive purchase order(s) for the products and services for which the Vendor will be responsible as a result of the RFP. Purchase order(s) will show the total cost of services and the amount that is the responsibility of the local school system as well as the E-Rate discount. **The final payment of this project will be rendered only after an extensive final walk-through or acceptance procedure at the completion of the installation. Applicant will strictly enforce the bid guidelines and the quality of the installation.** Final testing will take place in the presence of a designated technology staff member. Applicant technology staff or designated consultants will have total discretion to require any needed changes to meet current industry standards including those of the selected manufacturers in the case of eligible products and to fully comply with the specifications contained in the RFP and proposal.

This project is being requested for funding through E-Rate. If funded, all SLD payment schedules will take priority. If the project is not funded, then local funding policies will take place, in the event Applicant decides to proceed without E-Rate funding. In either case, the above paragraph regarding compliance with acceptance procedures prior to final payment will be strictly enforced.

If this project or any part thereof is not funded by E-Rate, Applicant reserves the right to change or cancel the entire project or any portion. Applicant will notify the winning Vendor if scope will require changes or of project cancellation is necessary due to non-funding by SLD.

2.6 Warranty

The Vendor shall fully warrant with the manufacturer's warranty all items provided under this RFP against defects in material and workmanship. Warranty information should be on a per item basis on the RFP and detailed in the Bid Proposal. The vendor may also be expected to provide on-site service in addition to the manufacturer's warranty, so please list this service in detail where applicable.² Should any defects in workmanship or material, excepting ordinary wear and tear, appear during the warranty period, the manufacturer and his representative shall repair or replace such items immediately upon receipt of a written notice from the Applicant.

² However, such services may fall under the category of Basic Maintenance, depending on the proposed services.

2.7 Price Quotations

Price quotations are to include the furnishing of all materials, equipment, maintenance, shipping cost, delivery, installation, taxes, surcharges, and the provision of all labor and services necessary or proper for the completion of the work, except as may be otherwise expressly provided in the Contract Documents. The Applicant will not be liable for any costs beyond those proposed herein and awarded. Time and materials quotations will be unacceptable. Please clearly identify costs associated with necessary but ineligible items and keep such items to a minimum; our intent is to seek *only* eligible services with this RFP, to the extent technically feasible.

2.8 Evaluation of Responses

The Applicant may at its discretion and at no fee to the Applicant, invite any Vendor to appear for questioning during response evaluation for the purpose of clarifying statements in the response.

2.9 Right to Reject

The Applicant reserves the right to accept or reject all proposals when the rejection is in the best interest of the Applicant, such as when no bid is deemed to be cost-effective or when conditions change significantly such as due to unexpectedly low enrollment. The Applicant also reserves the right to award without further discussion. Therefore, responses should be submitted initially with the most favorable pricing and terms that the Vendor is able to propose. Certain criteria such as lack of certifications have been indicated herein as potential causes for disqualification; awards will be to the highest ranked Vendor, with price as the highest weighted factor, after elimination of disqualified or nonresponsive bids. Applicant reserves the right to award for some, all, or none of the products and services sought herein; if your bid does not allow for selection of a subset of line items or minor variations in the quantities required, please clearly indicate these limitations.

2.10 Form of Contract

As indicated on the corresponding Form 470, Applicant will consider all allowable forms of contract including multi-year contracts and contracts with voluntary renewals. Winning vendor should not start work or incur expenses until explicitly notified to do so in writing by School Purchase Order or equivalent written instrument; notification of award is *not* in itself authorization to start work. Applicant has the right but not the obligation to begin work prior to Funding Commitment Decision Letter and approval of funding; Applicant has a right but not the obligation to cancel or reduce the scope of any project for which E-Rate funding is denied or reduced. For multi-year contracts or contracts with voluntary renewals, these rights apply to each successive funding year independently. Vendor commits to honor pricing and scope of work (some part substitutions might be required over time) for up to 18 months while awaiting FCDL. Bidder warrants that all work shall be performed according to best practices in the field of endeavor and in a manner that is fully compliant with all aspects of the E-Rate program, including invoicing for and requiring payment of the Applicant share. In no event should work commence prior to July 1, 2009. If applicable, Internal Connections contracts should be valid until at least September 30, 2010 and automatically extend in the event that the corresponding FRN is extended by SLD. Contracts for other services should begin and end on SLD funding year boundaries (July 1 – June 30). ***This RFP and all addenda issued pursuant this RFP shall be incorporated by reference into the final contract.***

This RFP and any resulting contract(s) are intended to be fully compliant with all applicable state and local laws and purchasing regulations, as well as with the rules of the E-Rate program.

Vendors are invited to bid on the entire project or on substantial, well-defined portions of the project. For example, one vendor might bid only on cabling infrastructure, with a separate vendor bidding only on active elements. However, Applicant has a preference for a single contract providing a turnkey solution, as implied by the bid evaluation criteria. All bidders must have valid SPIN numbers and up-to-date SPAC filings with the SLD.

2.11 Bidders Conference and/or Walk-Through

A Bidders Conference and/or Walk Through will be held Thursday, December 18, 2008 at 9:00am at:

New Heights Charter School
4126 S. Arlington Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90008
(323) 508-0155

Attendance is *not* required; answers to clarifying questions not adequately explained in the existing RFP materials will be posted as RFP ADDENDA on the web site for the benefit of those unable to attend. However, depending on the specific bid evaluation criteria, described elsewhere in this document, non-attendance could possibly affect scoring of proposals on one or more secondary factors.

3. PRODUCTS AND SERVICES SOUGHT

3.0 Categories and Specifications

3.1 Telecommunications Services

- Reliable voice and data communications between classrooms, buildings, campuses, families, and the outside world, including:
 - Local and long distance telephone service for each of up to 3 buildings
 - including alarm, fax, 911
- Must accommodate:
 - Up to 12 lines:
 - Up to 6 voice lines
 - Up to 6 lines dedicated to alarm (1 per building dedicated and 1 per building as a redundant backup able to be shared by other application, up to 3 buildings/complexes)
 - Full-featured voicemail system with up to 20 voicemail boxes
 - Intercom calling
 - Switching technology to enable service to each classroom
 - Paging
 - Conferencing services
- VoIP is not required, but will be considered as an option. Note that compatibility with existing equipment is one of the factors in the evaluation criteria.
- Centrex-like or Interconnected VoIP solutions will be considered, to the extent eligible. This approach will be compared to the acquisition of in-house equipment under Priority 2 funding.

3.2 Internet Access

- Access for up to 80 simultaneous users, we desire to have the capability to receive streaming video simultaneously in all classrooms so that we are able to include more multimedia applications in our curriculum.
- Fiber or DS3, or multiple T-1s bonded together, Cable or any other viable cost-effective technology will be considered.
- Service Level Agreement to 99.9% up time and full bandwidth.
- The ideal provider would be able to offer a multiyear contract with service starting at 10Mb/s and be able to ramp the speed up to 20 Mb/s the second year and then go to 45Mb/s the third year without changing the end date of the contract. This will give us flexibility to match our connection speed to number of students and the usage demand of the service.
- A block of at least 8 static public IP addresses (5 usable).
- Public DNS service including reverse lookups.

3.3 Internal Connections

Applicant will be retrofitting existing facilities; some information about construction is not yet available. Portions of this request are specified in terms of numbers of drops, with contracts written to allow adjustment of quantities on physical plant constraints.

3.3.1 LAN CABLING

- LAN Cabling – up to 9 drops in up to 14 classrooms/offices to allow a minimum of 1000 Mb/s bandwidth to 8 workstations per area plus 1 wall mounted jack close to ceiling to accommodate possible 802.11n WAP.
- Cabling drops to be configured with:
 - All copper cable should be CAT6aug or better
 - 1 Power over Ethernet [PoE] port at ceiling level to run a wireless access point
 - 4 ports in one location in the room for hard wire port for teacher computer, telephone or VoIP phone, network printer and a spare port
 - 4 ports in another location in the room to provide teachers flexibility in classroom arrangement
 - Location of drops to be selected in area where there are power plugs available for equipment
 - MDF to IDFs runs should use Fiber optic cable
 - Any fiber Optic cable that is run must, at a minimum, be 6 strand 50/125 μm multi mode fiber with LC type terminations on all strands
- 19 inch 4-post rack in a cabinet to be included for the MDF
- Please quote per drop pricing, preferably including all eligible parts, labor, taxes, and shipping costs.

3.3.1.1 All wiring must be in compliance with TIA/EIA 568B standards. (This is not to be confused with T568A and T568B termination punch order standards)

3.3.1.2 All wiring must be labeled on both ends, tested and wiring maps created. Copper and Fiber Optic test results and Wire Maps are to be supplied to the Applicant in electronic format.

3.3.1.3 All necessary racks, cabinets, patch panels, raceway, surface mount boxes, and similar items needed to have a complete and working system should be included in cabling bids; and racks should be large enough to accommodate other eligible equipment such as switches, routers, and servers that would need to be co-located with patch panels, whether or not provided by the same Vendor.

3.3.2 LAN EQUIPMENT (SWITCHES AND ROUTERS)

- Router, if needed for Internet uplink, if not provided as part of ISP end-to-end solution
- If needed, router should have a minimum of interconnections and bid should include all modules, plug or whatever is needed to bring system operational

- Up to two additional routers might be required depending on the backbone connectivity and ISP solutions. If required, it is preferable for all routers to be identical make and models.
- Firewall comparable to FORTIGATE 100A or better
- All switches used to connect to offices or class rooms must be PoE capable
- All equipment with connections to Fiber optic cable must be able to support 4 – 10Gb miniGBIC SFP modules with LC connections
- Stackable switches are preferred
- All switches must have layer 2, 3 and 4 capabilities and support QoS
- All equipment must be mountable on standard 19 inch racks
- We prefer switches to be identical models, with 24 usable RJ45 ports. (This would facilitate future support and maintenance.)
- All IDFs must include, at a minimum, a wall mounted securable enclosure to hold patch panels and other hardware and be fastened to the wall in a manner that the enclosure and the wall fastener system will be able to hold 175 Lbs.
- All IDFs to have UPS system of sufficient capacity to keep IDF up for a minimum of ½ hour
- 802.11n WAPs in sufficient quantity and placement to ensure full bandwidth throughout the school property
- Any cabinet containing multiple E-Rate eligible servers are to have a KVM switch, and all needed cables
- Rack mounted sliding tray keyboard and monitor
- A backup solution is required for all eligible servers. We are looking for a HIGH SPEED E-Rate eligible backup solution. The solution should include all necessary hardware and software.

3.3.3 SERVERS

3.3.3.1 Applicant requires a Windows 2008 server for DHCP and DNS.

Operating system should be Windows Server 2008. Although storage of user files is not an eligible function and hence not a requirement of this server, hard drives should be selected and configured in a manner to eliminate or minimize down time. An E-Rate acceptable Backup is solution is desired. Other specifications include:

- 19 inch Rack mountable
- no more than 2U
- Mirrored Hard drives 300GB SATA minimum
- 4GB RAM expandable to 16GB
- 2.6GHz Core 2 Xenon Processor or better
- DHCP
- Domain DNS
- CALs for 80 users (admin, teachers and student accounts)

3.3.4 UNINTERRUPTIBLE POWER SUPPLY (UPS)

A suitable rackmount UPS should be provided for each rack of eligible equipment containing routers, servers, or Power over Ethernet [PoE] switches, supporting smart shutdown and 30 minutes of uptime given the anticipated loads. Capacity to support all eligible LAN/WAN connection components (up to 3 routers and 1 server and at least six 24 port switches, etc.) and work with PoE. Of the ports on the switches it is estimated that no more than 30% of the ports would be connected to PoE devices at a time.

3.3.5 BACKBONE CONNECTIVITY

Connectivity components for interconnection of current network on existing property with up to 2 new buildings/complexes for voice and data interconnections. Components for inter-building network must be capable of a minimum of 1Mb/s, would prefer 10,000 Mb/s bandwidth.

- Will consider any viable technology that is cost effective, to include, but not limited to, overhead or underground trenched fiber optic cable, or wireless applications, or each location having an independent Internet access and using VPN routers to have a secured interconnect between the buildings/complexes.
- Any fiber Optic cable that is run must, at a minimum, be 6 strands 50/125 μm multi mode fiber with LC type terminations on all strands.
- VoIP also being considered for voice communications. Any solution submitted must be able to accommodate VoIP packets.
- All cabling must documented to include testing on the runs, to scale maps of all runs, labeling of each cable at both ends that includes location of the far end, charts of all patch panels. (see 3.3.1.1 and 3.3.1.2)

3.3.6 PBX

PBX with Centrex-like features or similar equipment (unless a hosted solution is selected in Priority 1 filing). Must accommodate:

- 12 lines:
 - 6 voice lines
 - Alarm Lines are NOT to be part of voice system
- 20 voicemail boxes
- Intercom calling
- Individual extension will be punched to a ANSI/TIA/EIA-568-B CAT6 RJ45 Patch panel
- Only E-Rate eligible components and solutions should be proposed
- VoIP may be selected over traditional PBX if cost-effective
- An Interconnected (hosted) VoIP solution will also be considered.

3.4 Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections

Applicant requests bids for Basic Maintenance services necessary to support the operation of the

eligible Internal Connections network in quantities and capacities sufficient to ensure reliable connections from the Internet to each classroom. All E-Rate eligible servers, switches, routers, cabling and hardware are maintained through E-Rate eligible maintenance agreements with multi-year options. In particular, Applicant seeks bids for:

- Annual contract for regularly scheduled preventive maintenance plus next business day repair or replacement is sought for all newly acquired eligible equipment, to the extent that this is not already included in other bids.
- The dates covered by the contract should be July 1 to June 30 and should cover both parts and labor.

4. VENDOR QUALIFICATIONS

Due to the complexity, potential liability, and to protect the Applicant's and the SLD's shared investment in infrastructure and services, Applicant requires the following industry certifications and other evidence of qualifications in order for submitted bids to be considered responsive.

- Vendor must have a valid SLD Service Provider Identification Number [SPIN] and never have been suspended or debarred from the E-Rate program.
- Vendor must have a valid FCC Registration Number.
- Vendors of telecommunications services must be eligible telecommunications providers ("common carriers") as defined by the SLD.
- Vendor must have up-to-date Service Provider Annual Certification [SPAC] filings as required by the SLD.
- Vendor must be a manufacturer authorized provider of the proposed equipment. (For example, if Cisco equipment is being recommended, provider might show evidence of being a Cisco network partner.)
- Vendor must provide evidence of successful performance in the installation of the recommended brands of switches, routers, Internet servers, and similar equipment, within the K-12 marketplace during the last 3 years.
- Vendor must have on staff a MCSE + Internet Engineer for any Windows Server projects.
- Vendor must have staff certified for RCDD / Low Voltage.
- Vendor must be a Certified Drug Free Workplace.
- Vendor must have all engineers and installers bonded and liability insured.
- Vendor must furnish documentation of all certifications listed herein.
- Vendor must provide a reference list of ten (10) existing K-12 E-Rate customers and the nature of the products and services delivered.
- Vendor must provide documentation of prior experience successfully implementing comparably sized, SLD-funded E-Rate projects.
- Suitably qualified engineers must be available to field supervise all installation work. (For example, Vendors of Cisco equipment must provide a Cisco CCNP/ CCIE. Cabling Vendors must provide an RCDD to field supervise the installation work on this project.)

Documentation of the above qualifications must be a part of RFP response.

4.1 Variations and Waivers of Qualifications

Any variations from any of the above qualifications or other specifications of this RFP should be clearly noted and explained in the bid proposal. Nontrivial variations from the qualifications listed above will be considered sufficient cause for bid disqualification. Applicant shall have the right but not the obligation to consider requests for minor waivers from these requirements, if Applicant in its sole discretion determines this to be in its own best interest, such as in a situation where no other fully compliant bids have been received by the submission deadline or where an otherwise qualified Vendor has applied for but is still awaiting assignment of a SPIN number by the SLD.