



HIGH PLAINS REC #3 SOLE SOURCE REQUEST AND DETERMINATION FORM

A sole source *determination* is not effective until the *sole source request for determination* has been posted for thirty (30) calendar days without challenge, and subsequently approved in writing by the State Purchasing Agent or, for Professional Services Agreements, the Secretary of the Department of Finance and Administration. The foregoing requirement is regardless of whether the *sole source request for determination* has been signed by the Agency and/or the Contractor.

I. Name of Agency: **High Plains Regional Education Cooperative #3**

Agency Chief Procurement Officer: **Brandon Hightree**

Telephone Number: **(575) 445-7090**

Agency Contact for this request: **Brandon Hightree**

Telephone Number & Email Address: **(575) 445-7090; bhightree@hprec.com**

II. Name of prospective Contractor: **NS4ed, LLC**

Address of prospective Contractor:

200 E Broadway, Suite 215

Maryville, TN 37354

Contact Name, Telephone Number and Email Address:

Dr. Joseph Goins

865-414-0033

jgoins@ns4ed.com

Amount of prospective contract before tax: **\$406,000.00**

Term of prospective contract: **3 months**

Note: For terms longer than one year, Request for Policy Exemption from DFA MUST be included.

III. Agency is required to state purpose/need of purchase and thoroughly list the services (scope of work), construction or items of tangible personal property of the prospective contract (if this is an amendment request to an existing contract, include current contract number issued by SPD):

PURPOSE: To enhance and provide additional functionality to P2C Career Explorer to fulfill the purpose of The Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education's (FIPSE) mission of supporting employment success and reducing economic strain in New Mexico by improving the connection students have to good jobs in the region per US Department of Education Federal Grant Award for *Pathway 2 Careers: A*

Student/Employer Partnership (Award # P116C200014).**SCOPE OF WORK:**

1. **Return on Investment (ROI) Analyzer:** To help all students understand the investment in post-secondary education and the potential career earnings, the ROI analyzer will serve as a foundational guide in understanding Job Zone requirements for careers and the cost for education.
 2. **“Why I Work” Budgeting Tool:** Career guidance involves ensuring students have the information necessary to make informed career decisions. The “Why I Work” feature allows students to understand what their earnings might need to be to allow them to afford the type of living they want to obtain.
 3. **Upload of the latest Labor Market Data in New Mexico.** New data will be updated into Pathway2Careers allowing students to explore the latest high-value careers in New Mexico and will the career discover earnings of emerging careers such as security engineers, computer system architects, health informatics specialist, and data scientist.
 4. **Employability Skills Course for Educators:** Employability Skills are identified as one of the biggest challenges employers face when finding talent. The employability skills course offered to educators provides teachers with the opportunity to develop an in-depth understanding of the employability skills framework developed by the U.S. Department of Education. Teachers can then transfer that knowledge to students using the teacher materials and problem-based learning lessons available in Pathway2Careers to develop the employability skills of their students.
 5. **Expanded P2C Platform Access** to expand access of the P2C Career Tools, the platform will undergo improvements to ensure all students in New Mexico have access to the career exploration resources. Platform improvements include the ability to offer product access to filter by product as well as new user roles such as a parent role.
- IV. Provide a detailed explanation of the criteria developed and specified by the agency as necessary to perform and/or fulfill the contract and upon which the state agency reviewed available sources. (Do not use “technical jargon;” use plain English. Do not tailor the criteria simply to exclude other contractors if it is not rationally related to the purpose of the contract.)

The contractor for this work will need to be qualified as expertise of Pathway2Careers™ to perform the scope of work within the desired time frame and to perform the activities as detailed to the expected standard of NM PED. Expertise is identified as proficient using Pathway2Careers™ curriculum and platform; understanding the research used to design this curriculum and able to create lesson plans that correspond and enhance the lessons as intended to increase student engagement; competent to align various standards to the lessons; provide high quality professional development in June or July of 2023 to teachers for successful implementation of the curriculum into their classrooms for the 2023-24 school year.

- V. Provide a detailed, sufficient explanation of the reasons, qualifications, proprietary rights or unique capabilities of the prospective contractor that makes the prospective contractor ***the one source*** capable of providing the required professional service, service, construction or item(s) of tangible personal property. (Please do not state the source is the “best” source or the “least costly” source. Those factors do not justify a “sole source.”)

As the creator and owner of Pathway2Careers™, NS4ed holds all proprietary rights and access to update or make any changes.

- VI. Provide a detailed, sufficient explanation of how the professional service, service, construction or item(s) of tangible personal property is/are ***unique and how this uniqueness is substantially related to the intended purpose of the contract.***

All services and products defined in the scope of work are additions or enhancements to Pathway2Careers™, of which NS4ed, LLC holds from the United States Patent and Trademark Office Registered Number 5,599,864.

- VII. Explain why other similar professional services, services, construction or item(s) of tangible personal property ***cannot*** meet the intended purpose of the contract.

As the creator, patent holder, and sole distributor of Pathway2Careers™, no organization other than NS4ed, LLC has the knowledge and understanding of how P2C curriculum and platform were designed based on research, nor access and knowledge to make such changes.

- VIII. Provide a narrative description of the agency’s due diligence in determining the basis for the procurement, including procedures used by the agency to conduct a review of available sources such as researching trade publications, industry newsletters and the internet; contacting similar service providers; and reviewing the State Purchasing Divisions’ Statewide Price Agreements. Include a list of businesses contacted (***do not state that no other businesses were contacted***), date of contact, method of contact (telephone, mail, e-mail, other), and documentation demonstrating an explanation of why those businesses could not or would not, under any circumstances, perform the contract; or an explanation of why the agency has determined that no businesses other than the prospective contractor can perform the contract.

High Plains considered the criteria, scope of work, and the unique position of NS4ed, LLC as the creator and patent holder of Pathway2Careers™ to determine that no businesses other than the prospective contractor can perform the contract.

Certified by:

Brandon Highline
Agency Chief Procurement Officer

Date: 5/24/23

Agency Approval by:

R. Stephen Quinn
Agency or Entity Head or Designee

Date: 05/24/2023