



The Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) is one of four statutorily-created interstate compacts founded in 1991 and serves Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

MHEC contributes to the vitality of the Midwest by enhancing member states' ability to maximize higher education opportunity and performance through collaboration and resource sharing.

We deliver this promise through three core functions of student access, cost savings and policy research that

- promote improved student access, affordability and completion;
- reduce operational costs;
- analyze public policy and facilitate information exchange;
- enhance regional higher education cooperation and dialogue; and
- encourage quality programs and services.

Each member state appoints five individuals to a 60-member governing body of legislators, higher education leaders, and governors' representatives. Member state obligations, program fees, and foundation grants finance MHEC activities and support initiatives to increase regional collaboration and achieve outcomes that could not be realized by institutions and systems acting independently.

Visit <http://www.mhectech.org>

MHEC's electronic commerce site offers information on eligibility to purchase from MHEC's vendor partners.

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**Doing more together  
to deliver cost savings  
and the best solutions**



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**Data & Voice Networking:**  
Alcatel-Lucent, Enterasys, Juniper, Mitel

*MHEC vendor listing current as of 1/1/2010*

## Q. Why purchase collaboratively?

**A.** Education and government entities are continually being forced to find ways to contain or reduce their costs at the same time they push to maintain or increase their productivity. The Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) was established in part to achieve these objectives.

One of the goals of MHEC is to help institutions enhance productivity through reductions in operational costs. MHEC is able to further this goal through the creation of group aggregation programs that reduce costs and bring value-added benefits to the institution in MHEC member states.

## Q. Who is eligible to purchase?

**A.** MHEC has been able to extend technology costs savings to higher education and in some instances this includes K-12 districts and schools, state and local governments, and not-for-profit entities. Vendors have been able to offer pricing discounts for institutions and depending on the vendor – their faculty, staff, and students. MHEC member states saved \$21.4 million on technology in FY 2009.

## Q. How do I confirm eligibility to purchase from MHEC contracts?

**A.** On MHEC's e-commerce website – <http://www.mhectech.org> – a matrix is available for each vendor, offering a link to eligible parties. A link to the contract page also has pdfs available for download of each legal agreement.

As an instrumentality of state government, MHEC is required to follow extensive competitive procurement processes similar to its member states. Through its committees, MHEC undertakes the time and expense of the RFP process, thereby freeing up education and government entities of this burden. The participating entities can purchase the good or service through the MHEC program knowing that the due diligence in selecting the vendor has already been done.

## Q. What makes MHEC contracts unique?

**A.** All programs are developed, implemented and overseen by volunteer committees. The committees are made up of representative groups of individuals from all sectors of higher education, and also include representatives who work for the state or like-minded organizations. The individuals are nominated to serve on the committees by their peers and are considered experts in the particular field the program is addressing.

Working together, the committee members identify the criteria and standards they want included in any program that is being considered. These criteria and standards are purposefully tailored to match the requirements needed by Midwestern higher education.

While the focus is to get the best cost savings deal, MHEC looks beyond savings benefits to bring additional service commitments from the vendor back to the institution or organization, such as:

1. Delineating features, standards, and capabilities sought by higher education;
2. Providing independent evaluation and documentation of products and services;
3. Increasing the number and range of options from which institutions can choose;
4. Increasing the quality and quantity of service offerings;
5. Reducing the duplication of efforts; and
6. Improving educational efficiency and/or effectiveness.

## Q. Is this just for MHEC member states?

**A.** No, MHEC has proven its success in cost savings and thusly been able to extend some contracts beyond the MHEC region.

MHEC's ability to extend the contracts beyond its 12-state region helps increase volume for the vendors and therefore increases the savings benefits for MHEC states and beyond.

Please check the eligibility matrix on vendor pages at <http://www.mhectech.org>.