

September 15, 2020

**Technology Solicitations:** The Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) is committed to providing notice regarding upcoming technology solicitation opportunities. The schedule below includes anticipated upcoming solicitations. MHEC encourages institutions and providers to use it in conjunction with other resources on MHEC’s website (<http://www.mhec.org>). While MHEC is not required to do so, we hope that by giving the community a preview of upcoming contract opportunities, it will:

- Improve understanding of MHEC’s requirements;
- Enable vendors and institutions to offer feedback on the specifications;
- Enhance public access; and
- Encourage full and open competition.

Project Title	Anticipated Solicitation	Feedback Survey
Virtualization	Calendar Year 2019	<a href="#">Submit Survey</a>
Transcript Services	Calendar Year 2020	
Research and Advisory Services	Calendar Year 2020	<a href="#">Submit Survey</a>
Creative Software	Calendar Year 2020	
Data Security Services	Calendar Year 2020	
Web and Video Conferencing	Calendar Year 2021	<a href="#">Submit Survey</a>
Statistical Solutions	Calendar Year 2021	
Computing Hardware	Calendar Year 2022	
Networking Hardware	Calendar Year 2022	

**Disclaimer:** All planned sourcing activities are subject to revision or cancellation. This is not an exhaustive list of MHEC initiatives. The information provided is for planning purposes only, and it does not present a solicitation or constitute a request for proposal, nor is it a commitment by MHEC to make an award for the described products or services. There is no obligation to respond to or return any solicited or unsolicited proposals received.

**Public Notice:** Solicitation announcements are formally published in the [Illinois Procurement Bulletin for Public Institutions of Higher Education](#), the [Minnesota State Register](#) and MHEC’s website at <http://www.mhec.org/news>.



**More Information:**

Contact [Nathan Sorensen](#)  
Director of Government Contracts

**Disclaimer:** The following statement is a draft scope of services for a future solicitation and is subject to change without notice. This is not an advertisement.

**Initiative Title:** Digital Credentialing Solutions (e.g. e-Transcripts)

**Timeline:** September – January 2021

**Incumbent:** [Parchment \(MHEC-01272014\)](#)

**Purpose of Solicitation:**

The Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) is seeking innovative and cost-effective digital credentialing solutions to establish a contract or contracts to facilitate the transfer of student information between various institutions in the MHEC region. Such solutions include the same information as a traditional transcript but also include information about non-classroom learning experiences and credentials earned via industrial training, field work, military service, volunteer experiences, and more. This information is exchanged between high schools (public and private) and colleges and universities (public and private non-profit), between participating postsecondary institutions, state agencies, and, perhaps in the future, beyond the educational environment to include employers, professional associations, and more. Some schools and organizations already offer such comprehensive learner records (CLR), and the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers ([AACRAO](#)) recognizes CLRs as the future of student record keeping. As more states and schools adopt the use of such records, students whose schools do not engage in such practices will be increasingly at a disadvantage as they seek to use their postsecondary credentials to improve their opportunities in the economy.

MHEC has an expiring contract for an e-Transcript Initiative (ETI) with Parchment (MHEC-01272014). The ETI services contract offers a mechanism to facilitate the transfer of student information in a consistent format between MHEC member states' public and private high schools to MHEC member states' public and private non-profit colleges and universities. The ETI contract facilitates the transfer of student information among all participating MHEC postsecondary institutions. The ETI contract (MHEC-01272014) fulfills the public sector acquisition requirements of a competitive sourcing event following the model procurement code for state and local governments. As part of the contract lifecycle ending in January 2021, MHEC is issuing an RFP for digital credentialing solutions in an open market competitive solicitation.



**More Information:**

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The intent of this solicitation is to enter a master agreement with a framework to allow the contract holder(s) to (a) provide Digital Credentialing Solutions (e.g. e-Transcripts) to states, institutions, and students and (b) allow contract holder(s) to write orders which allow institutions to acquire products and services through a defined fulfillment channel, a negotiated enterprise license agreement, and a starting point for price.

**Timeline:** The anticipated solicitation public notice will be issued in October 2020. The proposals will be evaluated in the Fall of 2020. Upon, meeting all of the solicitation requirements the selection committee will make a recommendation for a MHEC award for digital transcript solutions.

**Term of Contract:** The initial term of this contract is three (3) years. In addition, this contract has options to renew for four (4) additional years.

**Method of Award:** Best Value

**Competitive Process:** All solicitations undertaken are open, fair and follow a competitive bid process. MHEC adheres to the Model Procurement Code for State and Local Government for conducting open and competitive solicitations in accordance to applicable rules and regulations of MHEC's member states.

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**Public Notice:** [Virtualization & Data Center Modernization RFP-03092020](#)

**Timeline:** March – September 2020

**Incumbent:** Arrow Electronics for VMware (MHEC-021213)

**Purpose of Solicitation:** The Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) is seeking innovative and cost-effective virtualization solutions to assist education institutions transition their infrastructures to the modern data center and network; where workloads may reside on-premise or across varied public and private cloud providers on a secure network. Currently MHEC manages a full catalog of VMware's products and services through a contract with Arrow Electronics (MHEC-021213). The contract fulfills the public sector acquisition requirements of a competitive sourcing event following the model procurement code for state and local governments. This includes a negotiated VMware end user license agreement and volume purchase pricing with tiered product and service discounts. The fulfillment is through Arrow Electronics network of authorized VMware resellers and available nationally to the entire state, local, and education marketplace. As part of the contract lifecycle ending in November 2020, MHEC will re-bid for virtualization software solutions in an open market competitive solicitation. The intent of the solicitation will be to enter a master agreement with a framework to allow providers to write orders and institutions to acquire products and services through a defined fulfillment channel, a negotiated enterprise license agreement, and a starting point for price.

**Business Drivers:** The traditional uses of virtualization applications, including hardware, networking, server, and storage, has seen a metamorphosis of the software solutions which now applies workloads across the whole enterprise, where information technology infrastructure is virtualized and delivered as a service. The software defined data center modernization is occurring not only at large public multi-campus state university systems with significant research programs and highly complex IT infrastructures, but also at small private and local community colleges. Data center modernization requires institutions to rethink operational and organizational priorities, resulting from changing economic trends and new technologies. Virtualization software solutions play a variety of roles in the data center modernization by seeking innovative and cost-effective solutions to assist institutions in their transition to an agile operation delivering anytime, anywhere, any device solutions through a secure data center and network. Data center modernization and consolidation projects offer the opportunity for achieving both operational efficiencies and savings in server, storage, and network infrastructures. MHEC is seeking a contract with one or more providers with interoperable capabilities



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of these combined application workloads using a mixed approach that allows various levels of products and services at defined price points.

**Proposed Solution:** This data center modernization transformation includes workloads residing on-premise or across varied public and private cloud providers. Solutions should include moving on-premise workloads from legacy hardware to hyper converged Infrastructure solutions. Respondents should describe how their proposed solution is able to leverage existing infrastructure components in a solution and how it may reduce management interfaces. Proposed solutions should describe their ability to move workloads between on-premise solutions and cloud providers as it relates to high availability and disaster recovery scenarios. Proposed solutions should describe options for self-service, on-demand provisioning, and de-provisioning of workloads; and address cost and chargeback reporting features related to server and application workloads. Proposals should describe how they incorporate multiple storage tiers, both on-premise and cloud based, into their solution as well as options for data encryption and backup. Proposal should describe networking capabilities for micro-segmentation within public and private cloud infrastructures. Proposals should also address support for virtual private channel capabilities between on-premise and hosted cloud infrastructures, as well as support for load balancing and firewall functions within the proposed solution. Workloads to be addressed in your proposal should include traditional server-based workloads, such as web servers, application servers and database services on currently supported Microsoft Windows Server Operating Systems and Linux OS distributions. Container based workloads, such as Docker and Kubernetes application containers, should also be addressed in this proposal. Additionally, proposed solutions should address Virtual Desktop Infrastructure workloads.

**Term of Contract:** The initial term of this contract is three (3) years. In addition, this contract has four (4) options to renew for up to one (1) year each.

**Method of Award:** Best Value

**Competitive Process:** All solicitations undertaken are open, fair and follow a competitive bid process. MHEC adheres to the Model Procurement Code for State and Local Government for conducting open and competitive solicitations in accordance to applicable rules and regulations of MHEC's member states.

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