

Notice of Intent to Certify Sole Source

To: Interested Parties
From: Craig P. Orgeron, CPM, Ph.D.
CC: ITS Project Number 49516
Date: June 2, 2026
Re: Sole Source Certification Number 4754 to provide a cloud-based academic and clinical program management platform for the University of Southern Mississippi (USM)
Contact Name: Denetta Durr
Contact Phone Number: 601-432-8022
Contact E-mail Address: Denetta.Durr@its.ms.gov

Sole Source Certification Award Details

Regarding Information Technology Services (ITS) Sole Source Certification Number 4754 for the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) please be advised that ITS intends to award Akcia Inc. as the sole source provider of a cloud-based academic and clinical program management platform for three years upon contract execution, in an amount not to exceed \$378,875.00. Please be advised that ITS will determine if additional products or services are within scope during the certification period and may increase the spending authority accordingly. Should Akcia Inc. change their name during this certification period, then ITS will determine if a recertification is necessary. For an explanation regarding Mississippi state law, policy and procedures for sole source procurements, refer to Attachment B: Sole Source Procurement Overview.

Sole Source Criteria

1. The product or services being purchased must perform a function for which no other product or source of services exists:

ProjectConcert is a single repository that is program-specific, course driven, and supports competency-based education. It enables institutions to collect, manage, and report analyzed data directly related to the process of educating students. While there are other products on the market that may facilitate some of these tasks, none provide the same capabilities as ProjectConcert. ProjectConcert is the only identified solution that provides a single, unified, cloud-based system that is able to manage the entire academic, clinical, evaluation, reporting, and accreditation lifecycle for nursing and health professions within one integrated platform.

2. The purchaser must be able to show specific business objectives that can be met only through the unique product or services:

The University of Southern Mississippi will utilize this system to serve as its centralized, enterprise solution for managing the full student lifecycle. This includes academic tracking, clinical education, evaluations, reporting, and accreditation support across nursing and health professions programs.

3. The product or services must be available only from the manufacturer and not through resellers who could submit competitive pricing for the product or services:

This product is exclusively provided by Akcia Inc., and there are no other authorized resellers or distributors for this product within the United States. Akcia Inc. maintains all proprietary rights, and no other entity is capable of providing the necessary licensing, maintenance, or technical support required for this specific solution. The Vendor's sole source certification letter is included as Attachment A.

Schedule

Task	Date
First Advertisement Date	6/2/26
Second Advertisement Date	6/9/26
Response Deadline From Objectors	6/16/26 at 3:00 P.M. Central Time
Notice of Award/No Award Posted	Not before 6/17/26

Project Details

The University of Southern Mississippi (USM) seeks to procure a cloud-based solution to support comprehensive academic and clinical program management for its College of Nursing and Health Professions.

Submission Instructions and Format of Response from Objecting Parties

Interested parties who have reason to believe that the cloud-based academic and clinical program management platform should not be certified as a sole source should provide information in the following format for the state to use in determining whether or not to proceed with awarding the Sole Source contract to Akcia Inc.

1.1 Interested Party Information

1.1.1 Contact Name, Phone Number and email address

1.1.2 Company Website URL, if applicable

1.2 Objection to Sole Source Certification

1.2.1 Interested parties must present specific objections to the Sole Source certification using the criteria listed above.

1.2.2 A statement regarding the Interested Party's capabilities as related to this Sole Source Certification Request.

1.3 Comments will be accepted at any time prior to Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 3:00 p.m. (Central Time) to Denetta Durr at Denetta.Durr@its.ms.gov or at the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services, 3771 Eastwood Drive, Jackson, Mississippi 39211. Responses may be delivered by hand, via regular mail, overnight delivery, e-mail

or by fax. Fax number is (601) 713-6380. ITS WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR DELAYS IN THE DELIVERY OF RESPONSES. It is solely the responsibility of the Interested Parties that responses reach ITS on time. Interested Parties may contact Denetta Durr to verify the receipt of their Responses. Responses received after the deadline will be rejected.

1.4 Interested Party responses should include the following information:

<p style="text-align: center;">SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO Sole Source Certification No.49516-4754 Accepted until June 16, 2026 @ 3:00 p.m., ATTENTION: Denetta Durr</p>

If you have any questions concerning the information above or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Denetta Durr at 601-432-8022 or via email at Denetta.Durr@its.ms.gov.

Attachment A: Vendor Correspondence

Attachment B: Sole Source Procurement Overview



Akcia Inc.
1101 Walnut Street,
Suite 101 Kansas City, MO 64106

April 7, 2026

To:
The University of Southern Mississippi
College of Nursing & Health Professions
118 College Drive Hattiesburg,
MS 39406

To the College of Nursing & Health Professions:

ProjectConcert is a single repository that is program-specific, course driven, and supports competency-based education. This enables institutions to: collect, manage, and report analyzed data related to the process of educating students. While there are other products on the market that may facilitate some of these tasks, none provide the ability to do all of the functions outlined below. Additionally, many features in ProjectConcert are not available in any other product.

We certify that this product is **exclusively provided by Akcia, Inc.**, and there are **no other authorized resellers or distributors** for this product within the United States. Akcia, Inc. maintains all proprietary rights, and no other entity is capable of providing the necessary licensing, maintenance, or technical support required for this specific solution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Debbie Akbari" followed by the date "4/7/2026".

Debbie Akbari
Chief Product Officer
Akcia Inc.
816-452-0564 (109)
Debbie.akbari@projectconcert.com

Attachment B

The acquisition of information technology for all state agencies and institutions of higher learning (IHLs) is within the scope of the ITS law, found in Mississippi Code Section 25-53-1, et seq., and the policies and procedures established in accordance with this statute, found in the ITS Procurement Handbook posted on the ITS website (www.its.ms.gov).

ITS enabling legislation requires that information technology hardware, software and services be acquired in a manner that insures the maximum of competition among all manufacturers and suppliers of such equipment and services. Accordingly, ITS promotes full and open competition through the issuance of open specifications and the objective evaluation of Interested Party proposals to determine the lowest and best offering to meet an agency's or public university's business requirements. True competition protects the integrity and credibility of purchasing in the public sector and is essential in providing best value and adequate contractual protection for the purchasing entity. In certain limited situations, information technology acquisitions may be sole-sourced.

ITS utilizes the provisions of Public Purchasing Law for Sole Source and Emergency procurements of information technology. Mississippi Public Purchasing Law (Mississippi Code Section 31-7-13) specifies that noncompetitive items available from one source only be exempted from bid requirements (sole-sourced). ITS statute, in Section 25-53-5 (p), permits ITS to utilize provisions in Public Purchasing Law or regulations, when applicable.

Per Public Purchasing law, acquisitions must meet the following criteria to be authorized as sole source:

1. The product or services being purchased must perform a function for which no other product or source of services exists,
2. The purchaser must be able to show specific business objectives that can be met only through the unique product or services, AND
3. The product or services must be available only from the manufacturer and NOT through resellers who could submit competitive pricing for the product or services. The vendor's correspondence regarding this criterion for this project is included as Attachment A.

By policy as documented in the ITS Procurement Handbook, acquisitions of IT services must include the following information to be authorized as sole source:

1. An explanation about why the amount to be expended is reasonable, and
2. An explanation regarding the efforts by the purchaser to obtain the best possible price.

For state agencies, approval of all technology purchases with a lifecycle cost of \$5,000 or less, including sole source purchases, has been delegated to the agency. The ITS Procurement Limits Policies for Agencies (a section in the ITS Procurement Handbook) require a minimum of two competitive written bids or proposals for technology purchases with a lifecycle cost over \$5,000 but not over \$75,000 (not over \$25,000 for projects funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act). Since, for single source items, the procuring agency will be unable to obtain two written bids, ITS must certify all sole source acquisitions of information technology with a lifecycle cost greater than \$5,000.

Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) or public universities have been delegated the authority to certify sole source procurements up to \$250,000 lifecycle cost under the ITS Procurement Limits Policies for IHLs (a section in the ITS Procurement Handbook). For the certification of sole source procurements delegated to the CIOs at public universities, the public university must follow ITS' Sole Source Procedure, including advertisement of the intent to award as sole source. Institutions certifying a sole source purchase must ensure the criteria listed above are met and documented in writing by the institution and the Interested Party prior to certifying a product or service as sole source. Sole source documentation must be reviewed and approved by the IHL's CIO for any sole-source certification above \$5,000. All sole source documentation should be retained in the public university's procurement file. Sole source requests above \$250,000 lifecycle cost require ITS approval.

Other than the delegations outlined above, all sole source technology procurements must be certified by ITS.

ITS thoroughly reviews Sole Source Certification Requests, determining if competing products and/or services exist. If so, ITS conducts a competitive procurement. If ITS' review confirms the sole source, then a Sole Source advertisement is issued, giving other Interested Parties an opportunity to identify competing products and/or services. Based upon the results of the Sole Source advertisement, ITS will either certify the request as a sole source or conduct a competitive procurement.