

CPRM helps advance the University's mission through responsible stewardship, strategic partnerships, and customer-focused service. Through this newsletter, we share important information, helpful reminders, and updates to keep the campus community informed and engaged. We encourage you to forward this message to colleagues who may find it useful. Collaboration and partnership are more important than ever, and together we can make a positive difference as we navigate current budget challenges.

Why Public Solicitations (RFPs) Matter

Public solicitations are a critical component of the University's procurement process because they promote competition, transparency, and responsible stewardship of public funds. The University solicits offers from multiple vendors to foster fair and open competition, maximize value, and ensure adherence to University and Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) procurement policies and requirements.

Benefits to NAU

- **Promotes Fair and Open Competition**

Public solicitations provide qualified vendors with an equal opportunity to compete for University business, creating a fair and transparent procurement environment.

- **Achieves Best Value**

Competition encourages vendors to submit their most competitive pricing, innovative solutions, and favorable contract terms, helping the University maximize the value of its resources.

- **Ensures Transparency and Accountability**

Publicly advertised solicitations demonstrate that procurement decisions are based on objective evaluation criteria rather than personal preference, helping maintain public trust.

- **Reduces Risk**

A structured solicitation process allows the University to evaluate vendor qualifications, experience, financial stability, and proposed solutions before making an award.

- **Encourages Innovation**

Soliciting proposals from a broad range of suppliers can introduce new ideas, technologies, and approaches that improve University operations and services.

- **Supports Compliance**

Following established solicitation procedures helps the University comply with applicable laws, regulations, and ABOR policies governing the expenditure of public funds.

- **Strengthens Supplier Relationships**

A transparent competitive process fosters a diverse supplier base and encourages vendors to continue investing in their relationship with the University.

Public solicitations help ensure the University obtains the best value, maintains public trust, and demonstrates responsible stewardship of taxpayer, tuition, and grant funds. Through fair competition and transparent decision-making, the University can confidently select solutions that best support its mission and strategic goals.

Missed Opportunities

When Procurement is engaged late in the process, the focus often shifts from maximizing value to simply meeting deadlines. This can result in missed opportunities to negotiate more favorable pricing, terms and conditions, performance standards, risk protections, and other contractual provisions that benefit the University. Allowing Procurement adequate time to participate early in vendor discussions increases the likelihood of achieving the best overall value, mitigating risk, and ensuring compliant and well-structured agreements.

Need a Non-Travel Reimbursement? Read This First

University policy requires employees to use approved purchasing methods. Purchases made with personal funds may be considered an unauthorized commitment of University funds and may not be eligible for reimbursement.

Before submitting a Non-Travel Reimbursement Request, review the requirements below to help avoid processing delays or denial of reimbursement.

1. Use Approved Purchasing Methods

- Employees should use a University PCard for eligible small-dollar purchases whenever possible.
- Purchasing goods with personal credit cards, cash, or other personal funds should be avoided.

2. Reimbursements Are Limited

- If no other viable procurement option is available, an employee may request reimbursement for an eligible business purchase up to \$500.
- Reimbursement requests are subject to review and approval for:
 - Funding source availability
 - University business purpose
 - Compliance with procurement requirements

- If the transaction is not approved, the employee will not be reimbursed.

3. Do Not Request Reimbursement for PCard Purchases

- Expenses paid with a University PCard should not be submitted as a reimbursement request.

4. Policy Violations

- Purchases made without an approved Purchase Request or University PCard may be considered an unauthorized commitment of University funds.
- Employees who violate University procurement policy may receive a Purchasing Notice of Violation.

5. Before You Submit

If a University PCard or Purchase Request was not used for a business expense, ensure all required supporting documentation is included with your Non-Travel Reimbursement Request before submission. Providing complete and accurate documentation will help prevent processing delays. At a minimum, submit an itemized receipt and proof of payment, along with all required University approvals. Examples include a Food Purchase Approval Form for food-related expenses, any applicable departmental or University approvals, and approved Policy Compliance Exceptions, when required.

If all the documentation has not been submitted after 10 business days the non-travel ticket may be closed and a new ticket will need to be submitted once all the required documentation has been obtained.

For additional information, refer to [Title 20 Specific Procurement Requirements, Section IV: Employee Reimbursements](#).

Avoid frightening delays by submitting all required documentation, approvals, and receipts with your reimbursement request.



Personal Purchases

Remember that the University Purchasing Card (PCard) is intended solely for authorized University business expenses. Even accidental or temporary personal use of a University PCard is not permitted. Two personal purchases charged to a University PCard within a two-year period will result in the revocation of PCard privileges.

Before completing a transaction, take a moment to verify:

- The purchase is for a University business purpose.
- The University PCard is selected as the payment method only when appropriate.
- Personal items are not included in the transaction.
- Online retailers have not defaulted to a previously saved University PCard.

Common situations to watch for include:

- Online shopping sites where both personal and University cards are saved.

- Mobile payment apps or digital wallets linked to multiple cards.
- Personal purchases made while working remotely or from a University device.
- Subscription renewals that automatically charge a stored payment method.

If a personal purchase is accidentally charged to a University PCard, notify your PCard Administrator immediately at PCard@nau.edu.

Before They Go: Close the PCard

When an employee separates from the University, remember to notify PCard@nau.edu as soon as possible so their University PCard can be closed promptly. Timely notification helps protect the University from unauthorized transactions and ensures proper account management.

Is Your Purchase Order (PO) Still Open?

If all goods/services under a Purchase Order (PO) have been completed and there are remaining funds encumbered on the PO, include a note in the Purchase Request asking CPRM to close the PO. Closing the PO promptly ensures that any unused encumbrances are released.

Why it matters:

- Releases unused encumbered funds
- Improves budget accuracy
- Reduces unnecessary open purchase orders
- Supports timely fiscal management

We welcome your feedback and look forward to sharing more helpful information next month. For questions or suggestions, please email CPRM-Feedback@nau.edu.

CPRM Team