The following FAQs refer to procedures described in GAPs 200.370, 200.372, and 200.101, along with the Sole Source Justification/Price Quotation Form.

**Sole Source Justifications: Buy@Duke Marketplace, justification selection**

What does “vendor appears in Buy@Duke marketplace” from the Sole Source GAP mean, and why are those purchases allowed without attaching multiple quotes?

When adding items to a shopping cart in Buy@Duke, if the “Duke Marketplace” path is selected, items subsequently added to the cart are from Duke’s preferred vendor program and reflect pricing already negotiated by Procurement Services. Detailed guidance for adding Duke Marketplace items is available in the Buy@Duke step-by-step guide on the Financial Services SAP training page. Since this pricing negotiation process ensures competitive pricing for all items in these catalogues (either Hosted or Punch-Out), this procurement method by definition meets the requirements set in the Federal Uniform Guidance (per the strategic sourcing exemption defined by the Office of Management & Budget in July 2017).

A project is entering year three of a five-year project. The project makes annual purchases of chlorine supplies in the amount of $12,000. Since switching vendors would introduce variability into the results, how would we document the decision to continue purchasing these supplies without obtaining multiple quotes?

When completing the Sole Source Justification/Price Quote Selection form, select the justification “This vendor/item is currently used for ongoing research and, to maintain continuity and study protocols, we cannot introduce another variable by using a different product.” The narrative justification must support the scientific need to maintain study and protocol consistency.

Our project requires the use of a high-definition microscope. The project has obtained four price quotations, and the Principal Investigator wants to purchase the second most expensive option because he or she prefers this manufacturer. Is this an acceptable justification for selecting a price quotation other than the lowest cost vendor?

No, simple “preference” is not adequate. Justification for selecting an option other than the lowest cost vendor must be based on scientific or programmatic needs. Convenience or personal preference is not sufficient justification.

If a specific piece of equipment costing $34,000 is described in a budget justification submitted to the sponsor, does that qualify as Sole Source Justification?

If only the equipment was described, that is not adequate justification. To sufficiently represent “authorization by the sponsor”, the specific vendor would need to have been described in the budget justification, including the scientific/programmatic need to use that vendor. If the procurement action was described in that level of detail in the project proposal, the “authorized by the sponsor” can be selected on the Sole Source Justification/Price Quote Selection form and attached to the Buy@Duke cart with the excerpted page(s) from the proposal.

If payment for an item will be covered by multiple codes, is a sole source justification required?

If the amount of an item being purchased on a split fund code allocation (multiple fund codes) exceeds $10K on a restricted WBSE, the purchase requires at least 3 quotes or a completed Sole Source Justification/Price Quote Selection form to justify either the lack of a competitive purchasing process or the selection of a higher cost vendor.

However, if the amount on the restricted WBSE does not exceed $10,000, neither a Sole Source Justification form nor 3 price quotes are not required.

**Note:** This guidance is administrative in nature and is not a cost reimbursement policy. For specific questions regarding allowability, contact your OSP liaison.
Procurement Method Selection: *total cost, cost inclusion*

**When determining the total aggregate cost of an item (for items not in a Buy@Duke catalog) or a service, what time frame should the project consider?**

The minimum time frame a project should consider to determine the total aggregate cost of an item or service is a budget year. However, some projects are not required to separate budgets into budget years. In those instances, the full project budget may be the appropriate location to identify the total aggregate cost of an item or service.

**What do I do if a purchasing threshold changes between when the project budget was developed and the actual procurement transaction is completed?**

Procurement transactions are subject to the policies and thresholds in effect at the time of the procurement action. Duke will always provide as much advance notice as possible when Federal changes to the micro, small or large purchase thresholds are changed, and will update and communicate any applicable guidance (e.g., GAP 200.372).

**Does the total aggregate cost include shipping costs?**

No. Shipping, other forms of transportation costs, or additional ancillary costs are not considered to be part of the total aggregate cost of an item.

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**Price Quotation Selection: *price quotations, requirements***

**My project requires purchases of test kits on a bi-monthly basis. Each test kit costs $4,000; the project will purchase $24,000 over the course of the budget period, but none of the individual purchases will cross the micro-purchase threshold. Are price or rate quotations required for this item?**

If you have knowledge of the total anticipated cost and as the total aggregate cost of the item crosses the micro-purchase threshold (currently set at $10,000 per the FY2017 NDAA), the project should use Small Purchase procurement method for purchasing these kits if the items are not in a Buy@Duke catalog. Either a minimum of three (3) price or rate quotations or a Sole Source Justification/Price Quote Selection Form must appear in the Notes and Attachments section of the Buy@Duke carts.

As these purchases may be spread throughout the year, the GM should contact Procurement Services to proactively prepare the necessary documentation.

**My PI needs to purchase 20 of the same items that are $600 each; do I need to obtain at least 3 quotes to support which vendor we use?**

If the items are not in a Buy@Duke catalog, three quotes must be obtained since the total purchase of that item (“total aggregate cost”) is $12,000, it is considered a small purchase and therefore requires at least 3 quotes or a completed Sole Source Justification/Price Quote Selection form to justify either the lack of a competitive purchasing process or the selection of a higher cost vendor.

**Does a screen shot from a vendor’s online catalogue count as a price quote?**

Yes, a screen shot from a vendor’s online catalogue is an acceptable form of price quote. Other acceptable versions include a draft invoice from a vendor, a formal bid document, a scanned page from a vendor catalogue, a screen shot of the results of an online search, or other similar documentation.