

## JUSTIFICATION FOR AWARD WITHOUT COMPETITION

(To be completed and submitted by the Office of Procurement)

Based upon the following determination, the proposed procurement action described below is being procured pursuant to the authority of Section 11-35-1560 of the SC Procurement Code and 19-445.2105 of the Rules and Regulations, 1976 SC Code of Laws.

**Why does the governmental body need this item or service:** (description of the agency need that this procurement meets):

According to CofC analytics, our partnership with Niche yielded 2700 applicants and nearly 300 enrollments in 2023 (based upon first-source attribution). Niche has significant student traffic of well over 25 million visitors each year. One in two college-bound students are registered on Niche. Last year our Niche profile had over 250K visitors and Niche referred 10K+ users to cofc.edu web pages to learn more about the College of Charleston.

**As a sole source procurement for \$** 162,000 (2 yr estimate) **from** (name of sole source contractor): NICHECOM, INC.

**Description of market research Agency has performed to determine the availability of products or services that would meet the Agency's needs:**

We have explored and continue to review and evaluate other college search websites. Niche remains one of our most lucrative partnerships. This is due to a unique combination of the high volume of qualified traffic to their website and their effectiveness as a marketing partner. Further, Niche provides detailed dashboards and tracking that other partners do not. These tools will enable us to optimize performance, and track and assess ROI of this partnership. Due to Niche's scale and unique product offering, and market research through Procurement IQ, GovSpend and Google found these services can only be accessed directly from Niche.

**Description of supplies, construction, information technology, and/or services Vendor will provide under the contract:**

Enhanced profile page on which we can modify messaging/links on their partner interface, outbound emails, sponsored listing on competitor profiles, remarketing ads as well as unlimited qualified leads plus 25,000 cross-interest prospects annually.

**Detailed explanation why no other vendor's supplies, construction, information technology, and/or services will meet the needs of the Agency:**

Niche is a unique vendor because they are a go-to destination for prospective students/families researching college choices. Last year over 25 million people used Niche to research colleges. Because Niche has such a large audience, there is no way to reach Niche visitors with any other vendor. CofC's Niche profile page is viewed about 8,000 times per month. Niche is also a sophisticated marketing partner who works with our team to direct prospective students to our profile page. Due to Niche's scale and unique product offerings, these services can only be accessed directly from Niche.

In accordance with the South Carolina Consolidated Procurement section 11-35-1560 - Sole Source, the College of Charleston announced the intent to award without Competition. No protests were received.

Solicitation# 25-15-SDM-SS-T2

Contract Expiration Date: 09/13/2026

DocuSigned by:

Wendy Williams

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Wendy E. Williams, CPPO, C.P.M., Director of Procurement

8/13/2024

Date

DocuSigned by:

John F. Loonan

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John F. Loonan, Executive Vice President for Business Affairs

8/13/2024

Date

If this procurement is \$50,000 or greater, the Drug Free Workplace Act (§ 44-107-10, et Seq. Code of Laws of SC) applies, the acceptance of a Purchase Order signifies the Vendor certification that they are in compliance with the Drug Free Workplace Act.

6-Digit Index Number: 110085

6-Digit Account Code: 710815

NIGP 3-Digit Commodity Code: 915

Buyer's Initials SDM