

Summary:

This document outlines the key steps involved in making a purchase at Lamont and Columbia University.

Definitions

Department Authorization Form (DAF): The individual in who approves a requisition or an EZ-PO must have proper authorization to do so. Authorization is obtained via completion of a DAF request which is approved by the LDEO Assistant Director. The request, which is sent to CU, indicates the dollar level up to which the individual is authorized to approve transactions. All requisitions or EZ-POs require proper DAF authorization.

EDM: Electronic Document Management System

EZ-PO: An EZ-PO allows departments the authority to generate a Purchase Order for the acquisition of goods without having to go through the Columbia University Purchasing Office. EZ-POs are sent directly to the vendor by the department. EZ-POs are used when the vendor is a University Preferred Supplier (purchases would be up to the dollar threshold established for the preferred supplier). EZ-POs carry the University's standard terms and conditions to protect the University in the event of a problem with the purchase.

P-Card: A University Purchasing Card (P-Card) is a credit card issued by a bank that the University has contracted with for the purpose of allowing University approved individuals the ability to secure small institutional purchases for goods directly from vendors. Note: P-Cards are restricted by dollar value and MCC (Merchant Category Code). Prior to use, the cardholder must attend training and be familiar with the P-Card Policy

Purchase Order: A Purchase Order (PO) can only be issued by the University Purchasing Office. It is used to place orders with vendors for materials, parts, supplies, equipment, repairs, services, construction and construction-related items and consultant services and represents a legal contract between the University and the vendor. POs carry standard University terms and conditions designed to protect the University in the event of a problem with the product or service.

Procedure

1. The department or end-user identifies the need for goods or services, confirms funding availability, and submits request to LDEO Purchasing via e-mail or formal requisition.
2. LDEO Purchasing Staff determines best source of supply using University-wide Purchasing Agreement, (UwPA), competitive bidding process or sole-source procurement in accordance with Columbia University Purchasing Policy as described below:
 - *Policy for Competitive Bids*
 - \$1-\$2,500: Minimum of one oral or written bid, quote, or proposal
 - \$2,500-\$10,000: Two written bids, quotes, or proposals
 - \$10,000-higher: Three written bids, quotes, or proposals
 - *Sole Source Procurement Description and Process*
 - It is always preferable to purchase goods and/or services through the competitive process. A Sole Source Procurement is a purchase of goods or services without competitive bids/proposals, where no University-wide Purchasing Agreement is available, and for which all alternative sources are not feasible, practical, and/or cost-effective.
 - The department or end-user should complete a Sole Source Justification form at <http://procurement.columbia.edu/purchasing/pdf/soleSource.pdf> and forward to LDEO Purchasing with other supporting documents.
3. LDEO Purchasing Staff determines appropriate purchasing mechanism, e.g. p-card, EZ-PO or Central Purchase Order following University purchasing guidelines as displayed in the table below. EZ-PO, P-card or requisition must be approved in accordance with the DAF. Approval confirms that the purchase complies with University policies, meets a legitimate University need and all supporting documentation is accurate and complete.

Types of Purchase	Role	Threshold	Risk	Goods or Services
P-Card	User School	\$2,500 or \$10,000* for UwPA *specified cardholders	Minimal	Goods and policy specific services
PO	CU Purchasing Department	Unlimited	More Significant	Either
EZ-PO	LDEO	UwPA vendors ONLY Threshold set by CU Purchasing, refer to www.columbia.edu/purchasing	Minimal	Either

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities		
Department, PI or other end-user	Initiate request		
LDEO Purchasing	Evaluate request	Determine source of supply	Determine mechanism (based on University Procurement policy)
LDEO Purchasing	Initiate req in FFE	Obtain signatures	Release order and load documents to EDM system if required
CU Purchasing	Review documents in EDM system	Initiate PO	

Relevant Links

http://procurement.columbia.edu/purchasing/ffe_training.html

<http://procurement.columbia.edu/purchasing/policies.html>

<http://procurement.columbia.edu/purchasing/howto.html#mechan>

<http://procurement.columbia.edu/purchasing/edm.html>