

## **INTENT TO SINGLE SOURCE PURCHASE**

The newly created Sustained Knowledge of Integrated Lifelong Learning (SKILLS) Center, located on Truman State University's campus in Kirksville, Missouri, is a resource available to University students and community members within the City of Kirksville and surrounding areas. Training programs and associated technological facilities will be designed to promote both ongoing education and workforce development.

Truman intends to award a single feasible source consulting engagement to the Center on Rural Innovation (CORI), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that partners with leaders across the country to build technologically based economies to support training and employment in rural communities. The proposal and sole source justification are outlined on the following pages.

If you are aggrieved in connection with the solicitation or the award of this purchase order, you may be entitled to protest. To protest this solicitation, you must submit your protest within fifteen (15) days of the date this notice is posted. The protest must be submitted in writing to the Purchasing Buyer noted below.

This notice of intent is not a request for competitive proposals. Any responsible sources who wish to identify their interest and capability to provide the items outlined in this notification, must notify the Purchasing Buyer as part of their protest. Truman State University, at its sole discretion, will determine whether to conduct a competitive procurement or proceed with single source purchase order.

### **SINGLE FEASIBLE SOURCE PURCHASE**

Truman State University

Number: SS25-002

Posted Date: April 28, 2025

By: Laura Thrasher, Purchasing Buyer  
100 East Normal Avenue, McClain Hall 106  
Kirksville, MO 63501  
[lthrasher@truman.edu](mailto:lthrasher@truman.edu)  
(660) 785-4326



## **Catalyzing the SKILLS Center at Truman State University for tech-based economic growth and community impact in Kirksville, MO**

**April 11, 2025**

Truman State University and the broader Kirksville community envision the SKILLS Center as a hub for lifelong learning, workforce readiness, and student experiential learning. With this proposal, the Center on Rural Innovation (CORI) seeks to support the SKILLS Center's activation by identifying how its services can be most impactful, sustainable, and aligned with both community needs and Truman's strategic goals.

In particular, this engagement will test and evaluate the demand for various services outlined in the SKILLS Center concept, assess alignment with workforce trends and employer needs, and help identify early adopters and potential Center users. CORI's work will provide actionable insights and a clear implementation plan that supports the Center's mission and ensures coordination with community stakeholders and local economic development priorities.

This effort will complement CORI's existing scope of work with Missouri Rural Enterprise & Innovation Center under the MOBEC grant by incorporating a deeper focus on workforce development and educational service delivery in a way that benefits both Truman students and the wider Kirksville community and Northeast Missouri region.

To support the SKILLS Center in its successful activation and delivering on its full potential, this project will provide a process and roadmap to align stakeholders and plan for the Center's success. The deliverable will be an implementation plan informed by employer demand, local data and student engagement strategies.

### **Proposed Scope of Work**

The Center on Rural Innovation (CORI) proposes to support Truman State University in the planning and early activation of its SKILLS Center initiative. This support will focus on identifying the programming, partnership, and engagement infrastructure best positioned to make the SKILLS Center a one-stop, high-impact resource for learners, workers and community members across Northeast Missouri.

This work will build upon current MOBEC-funded efforts and be designed to align with Truman's long-term vision, potential outcomes include identifying optimized ways to:

- Bridge campus and community learning supports;



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- Enable Truman students to gain meaningful experiential learning opportunities through mentoring, tutoring, and facilitation;
- Provide adult learners and community members with access to tailored skill-building, tutoring, and workforce guidance;
- Leverage local and regional partnerships to connect learning with real-time workforce needs.

## **Proposed Activities**

### **Phase 1: Workforce Development Visioning and Stakeholder Alignment**

**Objective:** Establish a clear vision for the SKILLS Center that is responsive to regional needs and grounded in Truman's institutional strengths.

**Key Activities:**

- Facilitate virtual kickoff and discovery meetings with Truman State University staff, Kirksville community leaders and partners, and local employers to identify workforce development objectives and outcomes the SKILLS Center can best support.
  - Explore how Truman students can contribute through experiential learning (e.g., tutoring, mentoring, facilitation)
- Align on target audiences, core services, and early priorities for both campus and community engagement.

### **Phase 2: Workforce Demand and Student Engagement Assessment**

**Objective:** Map and strengthen relationships with key partners and stakeholders to ensure the SKILLS Center is embedded in the broader regional workforce ecosystem.

**Key Activities:**

- Identify and prioritize regional stakeholders, including local employers, workforce agencies, economic development entities, school districts, and service providers.
- Plan and conduct a 1-2 day on-site visit to Kirksville to facilitate:
  - In-person stakeholder conversations, partner listening sessions and focus groups
  - A design workshop with key stakeholders like Truman faculty, staff, students, community partners, resource and service providers and local leaders to validate use cases and identify shared opportunities.
- Assess alignment with existing support systems and explore wraparound services.

### **Phase 3: Programming Recommendations and Presentation of Plan**

**Objective:** Develop a clear roadmap for activating the SKILLS Center, including potential



programming, partnership actions, and resource needs.

**Key Activities:**

- Deliver a comprehensive Workforce Development Assessment and Implementation Plan
  - Within the Plan, provide detailed recommendations for training programs, internships, student engagement frameworks, and entrepreneurship-related support.
- Develop and deliver a virtual presentation and Q&A session with Kirksville stakeholders and Truman State University leadership, summarizing findings and recommendations.

**Deliverables**

1. **In-Person Workshop, Visioning and Stakeholder Alignment**
  - Summarized outcomes from stakeholder workshops and engagements, including clearly defined workforce development objectives and success metrics for the SKILLS Center.
2. **Workforce Development Assessment and Implementation Plan**
  - Analysis of local workforce demands and training needs.
  - Recommended programming, internships, and partnership structures tailored to community needs and demand
  - Operational recommendations to sustainably integrate and develop relevant workforce initiatives within Truman's SKILLS Center.
3. **Stakeholder Presentation**
  - Virtual presentation to core stakeholders highlighting actionable recommendations, immediate next steps, and the roadmap to guide the SKILLS Center's sustainable and effective impact.

**High-Level Timeline**

This process will take between 4 to 5 months, the timeline can be adapted or accelerated to best fit Kirksville and Truman State University's needs and availability. The process can begin as soon as the core team and group of University stakeholders are ready.

**Month 1:** Kickoff meetings and planning sessions with Kirksville and Truman State University stakeholders, emphasizing participation with those closest to the SKILLS Center development

**Month 2-3:** On-site (one session facilitated by CORI staff in-person) and virtual workshops, focus groups, and SKILLS Center assessment, planning, and plan development activities



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**Month 4-5:** Analysis and creation of final recommendations, presentation of findings and delivery of implementation plan

### **Budget**

To conduct this assessment of the SKILLS Center the total cost is **\$15,000**.

This cost will cover the expanded data gathering, additional workshop facilitation, stakeholder meetings, and production of an implementation plan to support data-driven, effective utilization of Truman State University's SKILLS Center for the benefit of Northeast Missouri and a prosperous economic future in the region.

Thank you for your consideration, we welcome the opportunity to further discuss or adjust this proposal to best support Truman State University's needs.



### Non-Competitive Purchase Request Form

This form should be used for all sole source purchases over \$10,000 to satisfy state and federal requirements for sole source purchases.

Provide a detailed explanation for each item listed below. Attach additional information as needed.

1. Description of the item or service and why it is needed.

Consulting services for the newly created Sustained Knowledge of Integrated Lifelong Learning (SKILLS) Center including:

- Identifying campus and community learning resources;
- Defining experiential learning opportunities for area students with a focus towards mentoring, tutoring, and facilitation through technology;
- Outlining a plan to provide adult learners and community members with access to skill-building, tutoring, and workforce development tools;
- Creating and leveraging local and regional partnerships to align learning outcomes with workforce needs.

2. Demonstration that only one source exists. Note: The requester should always check to see if there are multiple suppliers that sell the product they wish to purchase. If there are multiple suppliers, then a competitive process must be completed.

While there are likely other consultants able to provide the aforementioned scope of services, the Center on Rural Innovation (CORI) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that partners with leaders across the country to build technologically based economies to support training and employment in rural communities. Moreover, CORI has already been engaged by the City of Kirksville. Since Truman State University is participating with the City on this initiative, it would represent a hardship for the University and the City to coordinate with more than one consultant.

3. A statement showing the price is reasonable either on a fair market value or on a cost basis.

The proposed cost of the consulting engagement is \$15,000. The University conducted informal price comparisons for other non-profit strategic planning consultants, and it determined the fee range to be between \$15,000 and \$50,000 depending on the scope of services and the complexity of the resulting plan. By working in cooperation with the City of Kirksville to engage a single consultant for this joint project, the University is able to cost-share consultant travel and lodging costs with the City thereby keeping the engagement cost-effective and at the lower end of the identified price range.

4. Justification on why the procurement cannot be bid and why the competitive negotiation (request for proposal) process cannot be used, and why the noncompetitive negotiation (sole source) is being recommended.

The project represents a joint initiative between Truman State University and the City of Kirksville. To ensure project success, a consistent scope of services provided by a single consulting firm is both reasonable and necessary. To that end, the University's contracted consulting services are required to be consistent with the scope of services already contracted by the City of Kirksville in order to facilitate effective collaboration.

5. A statement indicating the procurement is in the best interests of the state.

The SKILLS Center represents a valuable resource to both University students and community members located within the City of Kirksville and surrounding areas. Training programs and associated technological facilities will be designed to promote both ongoing education and workforce development. It is imperative that the implementation plan be both consistent and cost-effective in order for both Truman State University and the City of Kirksville to deliver value to all participants.

The undersigned certifies the above facts and data set forth are complete and accurate.

Preparer's Name and Title: Donna Liss, Chief Information Officer

Signature of Preparer: *Donna Liss* Date: *4-24-2025*

Supervisor's Name and Title: Susan L. Thomas, President

Signature of Supervisor: *Susan L. Thomas* Date: *4/25/25*