

MASTER SERVICES AGREEMENT
BY AND BETWEEN
THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
AND BUCKEYE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS, LLC

This Master Services Agreement ("Agreement") is entered into as of September 1, 2023 (the "Effective Date"), by and between The Texas A&M University System (hereafter referred to as "A&M System"), an agency of the state of Texas, and Buckeye Technology Solutions, LLC, a limited liability company in the State of Texas (hereafter referred to as "PROVIDER"). A&M System and PROVIDER are sometimes hereafter referred to as "Party" individually or "Parties" collectively).

A&M System and PROVIDER hereby agree as follows:

1. SCOPE OF WORK

PROVIDER will work with the A&M System Office of Facilities Planning & Construction ("FP&C") to provide audio visual (AV) integrator services on an as needed basis. The services included (but not limited to) in the scope of this Agreement are to assist in the design of an AV system, and then procurement and installation of the AV system. Refer to Exhibit A, attached hereto for more detail on the full scope of services ("Services").

A&M System universities and agencies (collectively referred to as "Members") may also utilize the services within this Agreement as needed. Individual projects will be assigned as stated within Exhibit A. There is no guarantee of work as a result of this Agreement.

2. PROVIDER OBLIGATIONS

- A. PROVIDER will perform the Services in accordance with the standards of care, skill, and diligence expected of a qualified, competent and experienced professional in the provision of the type of services required under this Agreement.
- B. PROVIDER will obtain, maintain in effect, and pay the cost for all licenses, permits, or certifications that may be necessary for PROVIDER's performance of this Agreement.
- C. PROVIDER represents and warrants that there are no obligations, commitments, third party rights, or impediments of any kind that will limit or prevent PROVIDER's performance of the Services.

3. TERM OF THE AGREEMENT

The initial term of this Agreement shall begin September 1, 2023 and will extend through August 31, 2026. This Agreement can be extended for two (2) additional one-year terms upon written agreement of both parties. Any extensions shall be at the same terms and conditions plus any approved changes to be determined by A&M System and negotiated in writing with the PROVIDER.

4. PAYMENT TERMS

- A. A&M System shall not pay any costs or fees as a direct result of this Agreement. For the Services rendered under this Agreement, A&M System or Member shall pay PROVIDER for the scope, costs, rates and fees negotiated at the time a specific project is assigned. Negotiated pricing shall include an discounts as noted in Exhibit B, attached hereto.

- B. PROVIDER will submit invoices to A&M System or Member for the amounts due consistent with the payment schedule as negotiated per project. Each invoice must reference the applicable A&M System or Member project purchase order number and include a description of services provided to include but not limited to time, deliverables, and activities along with documentation that A&M System or Member may reasonably request to support the invoice amount. The A&M System or Member will make payment on a properly prepared and submitted invoice in accordance with Chapter 2251, Texas Government Code (the "Texas Prompt Payment Act"), which shall govern remittance of payment and remedies for late payment and non-payment.
- C. For reasonable business-related travel, lodging and/or meal expenses validly incurred directly and solely in support of the Services and approved by A&M System or Member in advance for a specific project, PROVIDER will be reimbursed by A&M System or Member according to the State of Texas rates, rules, and regulations (<https://fm.xcpa.texas.gov/fmx/travel/texttravel/rates/current.php>). When requesting such reimbursement, PROVIDER will submit to A&M System or Member receipts, invoices and other documentation as required by A&M System or Member. Under no circumstances will PROVIDER be reimbursed for alcohol purchases. State travel rates are subject to change without notice and will be adjusted accordingly. Mileage rates will be calculated from point-to-point (PROVIDER's place of business to job site) using the State of Texas mileage. Should the Agreement be renewed for an additional term, travel reimbursement amounts will be renegotiated at that time.
- D. All payments will be made by electronic direct deposit. PROVIDER is required to complete and submit to A&M System a Vendor Direct Deposit Authorization form prior to the first payment request. The form can be accessed at; <https://www.tam.us.edu/business/budgets-and-accounting/accounting/general/> .
- E. Invoices for FP&C projects are to be sent to e-Builder with the appropriate link provided in the purchase order for each specific project. The invoices must include a summary of services performed.

5. DEFAULT AND TERMINATION

- A. In the event of substantial failure by PROVIDER to perform in accordance with the terms hereof, A&M System may terminate this Agreement upon fifteen (15) days written notice of termination setting forth the nature of the failure (the termination shall not be effective if the failure is fully cured prior to the end of the fifteen-day period), provided that said failure is through no fault of A&M System.
- B. A&M System may terminate this Agreement at any time upon thirty (30) days prior notice to PROVIDER.
- C. Termination of this Agreement for either of the reasons stated above shall not terminate any Member specific agreement or purchase order. Refer to Section 10.N for survivability of terms beyond termination of this Agreement.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

- A. The Parties anticipate that under this Agreement it may be necessary for a Party (the "Disclosing Party") to transfer information of a confidential nature ("Confidential

Information”) to the other Party (the “Receiving Party”). The Disclosing Party shall clearly identify Confidential Information at the time of disclosure by (a) appropriate stamp or markings on the document exchanged, or (b) written notice, with attached listings of all material, copies of all documents, and complete summaries of all oral disclosures (under prior assertion of the confidential nature of the same) to which each notice relates, delivered within thirty (30) days of the disclosure to the other party. “Confidential Information” does not include information that: (a) is or becomes publicly known or available other than as a result of a breach of this Agreement by the Receiving Party; (b) was already in the possession of the Receiving Party as the result of disclosure by an individual or entity that was not then obligated to keep that information confidential; (c) the Disclosing Party had disclosed or discloses to an individual or entity without confidentiality restrictions; or (d) the Receiving Party had developed or develops independently before or after the Disclosing Party discloses equivalent information to the Receiving Party.

- B. The Receiving Party shall use the same reasonable efforts to protect the Disclosing Party’s Confidential Information as it uses to protect its own confidential information of a similar nature. The Receiving Party may only disclose Confidential Information to its personnel having a need to know the Confidential Information to fulfill the Receiving Party’s obligations under this Agreement. The Receiving Party may not reproduce, disclose, or use Confidential Information except in performing its obligations under this Agreement. If the Receiving Party is legally required to disclose Confidential Information, the Receiving Party shall, to the extent allowed by law, promptly give the Disclosing Party written notice of the requirement so as to provide the Disclosing Party a reasonable opportunity to pursue appropriate process to prevent or limit the disclosure. If the Receiving Party complies with the terms of this Section, disclosure of that portion of the Confidential Information, which the Receiving Party is legally required to disclose, will not constitute a breach of this Agreement.
- C. The Receiving Party shall, upon request of the Disclosing Party, promptly return or destroy all materials embodying Confidential Information other than materials in electronic backup systems or otherwise not reasonably capable of being readily located and segregated without undue burden or expense, except that the Receiving Party may securely retain one (1) copy in its files solely for record purposes. The Receiving Party’s obligations as to Confidential Information will survive the termination or expiration of this Agreement for a period of three (3) years.

7. INSURANCE

Insurance requirements as stated within Exhibit C, attached hereto.

8. PERFORMANCE AND PAYMENT BONDS

PROVIDER may be required to obtain payment and performance bonds in a penal sum equal to the sum of the original purchase order issued for a specific project. The performance bond shall guarantee the faithful performance of the work in accordance with the construction contract documents, and shall include as beneficiaries The Texas A&M University System and the applicable Member with each specific project. The payment bond shall be solely for the protection and use of payment bond beneficiaries who have a direct contractual relationship with the general contractor or a subcontractor. The bonds shall be executed by a corporate surety or

sureties authorized to do business in the state of Texas and in compliance with the relevant provisions of the Texas Insurance Code. Sureties shall be listed on the US Department of the Treasury's Listing of approved Sureties stating companies holding Certificates of Authority as acceptable sureties on Federal Bonds and acceptable reinsuring companies (Department Circular 570) and have a rating of A- or better with A.M. Best Company. Refer to Attachment B, Article 5 for additional information on bonding requirements.

9. INDEMNIFICATION

PROVIDER shall indemnify and hold harmless A&M System, and their regents, employees and agents (collectively, the "A&M System Indemnitees") from and against any third-party claims, damages, liabilities, expense or loss asserted against A&M System Indemnities arising out of any acts or omissions of PROVIDER or its employees or agents pertaining to the activities and obligations under this Agreement, except to the extent such liability, loss or damage arises from an A&M System Indemnitee's acts or omissions including (without limitation) negligence, gross negligence, or willful misconduct.

10. MISCELLANEOUS

- A. **Authority to Contract, Representations & Warranties.** If PROVIDER is a business entity, PROVIDER warrants, represents, covenants, and agrees that it is duly organized, validly existing and in good standing under the laws of the state of its incorporation or organization and is duly authorized and in good standing to conduct business in the State of Texas, that it has all necessary power and has received all necessary approvals to execute and deliver this Agreement, and the individual executing this Agreement on behalf of PROVIDER has been duly authorized to act for and bind PROVIDER.
- B. **Use of Name.** Each Party acknowledges that all rights in any trademarks, service marks, slogans, logos, designs, and other similar means of distinction associated with that Party (its "Marks"), including all goodwill pertaining to the Marks, are the sole property of that Party. Neither Party may use the Marks of the other without the advance written consent of that Party, except that each Party may use the name of the other Party in factual statements that, in context, are not misleading. The Parties will mutually agree in advance upon any public announcements, or communications to the media regarding this Agreement or the services to be provided pursuant to this Agreement.
- C. **Public Information.** PROVIDER acknowledges that A&M System is obligated to strictly comply with the Public Information Act, Chapter 552, Texas Government Code, in responding to any request for public information pertaining to this Agreement, as well as any other disclosure of information required by applicable Texas law. Upon A&M System's written request, PROVIDER will promptly provide specified contracting information exchanged or created under this Agreement for or on behalf of A&M System to A&M System in a non-proprietary format acceptable to A&M System that is accessible by the public. PROVIDER acknowledges that A&M System may be required to post a copy of the fully executed Agreement on its Internet website in compliance with Section 2261.253(a)(1), Texas Government Code. The requirements of Subchapter J, Chapter 552, Texas Government Code, may apply to this Agreement and PROVIDER agrees that this Agreement can be terminated if PROVIDER knowingly or intentionally fails to comply with a requirement of that subchapter.

- D. **Dispute Resolution.** To the extent that Chapter 2260, Texas Government Code is applicable to this Agreement, the dispute resolution process provided in Chapter 2260, and the related rules adopted by the Texas Attorney General pursuant to Chapter 2260, shall be used by A&M System and PROVIDER to attempt to resolve any claim for breach of contract made by PROVIDER that cannot be resolved in the ordinary course of business. PROVIDER shall submit written notice of a claim of breach of contract under this Chapter to the University Contracts Officer of A&M System, who shall examine PROVIDER's claim and any counterclaim and negotiate with PROVIDER in an effort to resolve the claim. This provision and nothing in this Agreement waives A&M System's sovereign immunity to suit or liability, and A&M System has not waived its right to seek redress in the courts.
- E. **Independent Contractor.** Notwithstanding any provision of this Agreement to the contrary, the Parties hereto are independent contractors. No employer-employee, partnership, agency, or joint venture relationship is created by this Agreement or by PROVIDER's service to A&M System. Except as specifically required under the terms of this Agreement, PROVIDER (and its representatives, agents, employees and subcontractors) will not represent themselves to be an agent or representative of A&M System or A&M System. As an independent contractor, PROVIDER is solely responsible for all taxes, withholdings, and other statutory or contractual obligations of any sort, including but not limited to workers' compensation insurance. PROVIDER and its employees shall observe and abide by all applicable A&M System policies, regulations, rules and procedures, including those applicable to conduct on its premises.
- F. **Delinquent Child Support Obligations.** A child support obligor who is more than 30 days delinquent in paying child support and a business entity in which the obligor is a sole proprietor, partner, shareholder, or owner with an ownership interest of at least 25 percent is not eligible to receive payments from state funds under an agreement to provide property, materials, or services until all arrearages have been paid or the obligor is in compliance with a written repayment agreement or court order as to any existing delinquency. Under Section 231.006, *Texas Family Code*, PROVIDER certifies that it is not ineligible to receive the payments under this Agreement and acknowledges that this Agreement may be terminated and payment may be withheld if this certification is inaccurate.
- G. **Payment of Debt or Delinquency to the State.** Pursuant to Sections 2107.008 and 2252.903, *Texas Government Code*, PROVIDER agrees that any payments owing to PROVIDER under this Agreement may be applied directly toward certain debts or delinquencies that PROVIDER owes the State of Texas or any agency of the State of Texas regardless of when they arise, until such debts or delinquencies are paid in full.
- H. **Prior Employment.** PROVIDER acknowledges that Section 2252.901, Texas Government Code, prohibits A&M System from using state appropriated funds to enter into an employment contract, a professional services contract under Chapter 2254, or a consulting services contract under Chapter 2254 with individual who has been previously employed by A&M System during the twelve (12) month period immediately prior to the effective date of the Agreement. If PROVIDER is an individual, by signing this Agreement, PROVIDER represents and warrants that it is not a former or retired employee of A&M System that was employed by A&M System during the twelve (12) month period immediately prior to the effective date of the Agreement.

- I. **Not Eligible for Rehire.** PROVIDER is responsible for ensuring that its employees involved in any work being performed for A&M System under this Agreement have not been designated as "Not Eligible for Rehire" as defined in System policy 32.02, *Discipline and Dismissal of Employees*, Section 4 ("NEFR Employee"). In the event A&M System becomes aware that PROVIDER has a NEFR Employee involved in any work being performed under this Agreement, A&M System will have the sole right to demand removal of such NEFR Employee from work being performed under this Agreement. Non-conformance to this requirement may be grounds for termination of this Agreement by A&M System.
- J. **Franchise Tax Certification.** If PROVIDER is a taxable entity subject to the Texas Franchise Tax (Chapter 171, *Texas Tax Code*), then PROVIDER certifies that it is not currently delinquent in the payment of any franchise (margin) taxes or that PROVIDER is exempt from the payment of franchise (margin) taxes.
- K. **State Auditor's Office.** PROVIDER understands that acceptance of funds under this Agreement constitutes acceptance of the authority of the Texas State Auditor's Office, or any successor agency (collectively, "Auditor"), to conduct an audit or investigation in connection with those funds pursuant to Section 51.9335(c), *Texas Education Code*. PROVIDER agrees to cooperate with the Auditor in the conduct of the audit or investigation, including without limitation, providing all records requested. PROVIDER will include this provision in all contracts with permitted subcontractors.
- L. **Entire Agreement.** This Agreement constitutes the entire and only agreement between the Parties hereto and supersedes any prior understanding, written or oral agreements between the Parties, or "side deals" which are not described in this Agreement. This Agreement may be amended only by a subsequent written agreement signed by authorized representatives of both parties.
- M. **Severability.** In case any one or more of the provisions contained in this Agreement shall, for any reason, be held to be invalid, illegal, or unenforceable in any respect, such invalidity, illegality, or unenforceability shall not affect any other provisions hereof, and this Agreement shall be construed as if such invalid, illegal, and unenforceable provision had never been contained herein. The Parties agree that any alterations, additions, or deletions to the provisions of the Agreement that are required by changes in federal or state law or regulations are automatically incorporated into the Agreement without written amendment hereto and shall become effective on the date designated by such law or by regulation.
- N. **Survival.** Any provision of this Agreement that may reasonably be interpreted as being intended by the Parties to survive the termination or expiration of this Agreement will survive the termination or expiration of this Agreement.

The PROVIDER's duties under this Agreement, Member specific agreement and/or purchase order, which impose an obligation after expiration or termination of this Agreement, will survive unless otherwise stated within the Member specific agreement and/or purchase order.
- O. **Headings.** Headings appear solely for convenience of reference. Such headings are not part of this Agreement and shall not be used to construe it.
- P. **Non-Assignment.** PROVIDER shall neither assign its rights nor delegate its duties under this Agreement without the prior written consent of A&M System.

- Q. **HUB Subcontracting Plan.** It is the policy of the state of Texas and A&M System to encourage the use of Historically Underutilized Businesses ("HUB") in our contracts, purchasing transactions and through subcontracting opportunities. The goal of the HUB program is to promote equal access and equal opportunity to HUB vendors in A&M System contracting and purchasing.
- If PROVIDER is awarded a project in connection with this Agreement, PROVIDER may be required to complete a separate, project-specific HSP form which identifies the subcontracting opportunities anticipated for the scope of work defined in that project and subcontractors anticipated to perform each subcontracting opportunity. If required, these will be due prior to beginning performance on the scope of work.
- For A&M System FP&C projects, refer to Attachment B, Article 4 for additional requirements.
- R. **Force Majeure.** Neither Party shall be held liable or responsible to the other Party nor be deemed to have defaulted under or breached this Agreement for failure or delay in fulfilling or performing any obligation under this Agreement if and to the extent such failure or delay is caused by or results from causes beyond the affected Party's reasonable control, including, but not limited to, acts of God, strikes, riots, flood, fire, epidemics, natural disaster, embargoes, war, insurrection, terrorist acts or any other circumstances of like character; provided, however, that the affected Party has not caused such force majeure event(s), shall use reasonable commercial efforts to avoid or remove such causes of nonperformance, and shall continue performance hereunder with reasonable dispatch whenever such causes are removed. Either Party shall provide the other Party with prompt written notice of any delay or failure to perform that occurs by reason of force majeure, including describing the force majeure event(s) and the actions taken to minimize the impact of such event(s).
- S. **Loss of Funding.** Performance by A&M System under this Agreement may be dependent upon the appropriation and allotment of funds by the Texas State Legislature (the "Legislature"). If the Legislature fails to appropriate or allot the necessary funds, A&M System will issue written notice to PROVIDER and A&M System may terminate this Agreement without further duty or obligation hereunder. PROVIDER acknowledges that appropriation of funds is beyond the control of A&M System. In the event of a termination or cancellation under this Section, A&M System will not be liable to PROVIDER for any damages that are caused or associated with such termination or cancellation.
- T. **Governing Law.** The validity of this Agreement and all matters pertaining to this Agreement, including but not limited to, matters of performance, non-performance, breach, remedies, procedures, rights, duties, and interpretation or construction, shall be governed and determined by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Texas.
- U. **Venue.** Pursuant to Section 85.18(b), *Texas Education Code*, mandatory venue for all legal proceedings against the A&M System is to be in the county in which the principal office of A&M System's governing officer is located. At the date of this RFQ, such county is Brazos County, Texas.
- V. **Non-Waiver.** A&M System is an agency of the state of Texas and under the Constitution and the laws of the state of Texas possesses certain rights and privileges, is subject to certain limitations and restrictions, and only has authority as is granted to it under the

Constitution and the laws of the state of Texas. PROVIDER expressly acknowledges that A&M System is an agency of the state of Texas and nothing in this Agreement will be construed as a waiver or relinquishment by A&M System of its right to claim such exemptions, remedies, privileges, and immunities as may be provided by law, including the sovereign immunity of A&M System.

- W. **Conflict of Interest.** PROVIDER certifies, to the best of their knowledge and belief, that no member of the A&M System Board of Regents, nor any employee of A&M System, has a direct or indirect financial interest in PROVIDER or in the transaction that is the subject of the Agreement.
- X. **Prohibition on Contracts with Companies Boycotting Israel.** To the extent that Chapter 2271, *Texas Government Code*, is applicable to this Agreement, PROVIDER certifies that (a) it does not currently boycott Israel, and (b) it will not boycott Israel during the Term of this Agreement. PROVIDER acknowledges this Agreement may be terminated and payment withheld if this certification is inaccurate.
- Y. **Certification Regarding Business with Certain Countries and Organizations.** PROVIDER represents and warrants that it is not engaged in business with Iran, Sudan, or a foreign terrorist organization, as prohibited by Section 2252.152, *Texas Government Code*. PROVIDER acknowledges this Agreement may be terminated immediately if this certification is inaccurate.
- Z. **Records Retention.** PROVIDER will preserve all contracting information, as defined under *Texas Government Code*, Section 552.003 (7), related to the Agreement for the duration of the Agreement and for seven years after the conclusion of the Agreement.
- AA. **Verification Regarding Discrimination Against Firearm Entities and Trade Associations.** To the extent that Chapter 2274, *Texas Government Code*, is applicable to this Agreement, PROVIDER verifies that (1) it does not have a practice, policy, guidance, or directive that discriminates against a firearm entity or firearm trade association, and (2) will not discriminate during the term of this Agreement against a firearm entity or firearm trade association.
- BB. **Verification Regarding Boycotting Energy Companies.** To the extent that Chapter 2274, *Texas Government Code*, is applicable to this Agreement, PROVIDER verifies that (1) it does not boycott energy companies, and (2) it will not boycott energy companies during the term of this Agreement. PROVIDER acknowledges this Agreement may be terminated and payment withheld if this verification is inaccurate.
- CC. **Compliance with Laws.** PROVIDER shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations applicable to the performance of its obligations under this Agreement.
- DD. **Notices.** Any notice required or permitted under this Agreement must be in writing, and shall be deemed given: (a) three (3) business days after it is deposited and post-marked with the United States Postal Service, postage prepaid, certified mail, return receipt requested, (b) the next business day after it is sent by overnight carrier, (c) on the date sent by email transmission with electronic confirmation of receipt by the party being notified, or (d) on the date of delivery if delivered personally. A&M System and PROVIDER can change their respective notice address by sending to the other Party a notice of the new address. Notices should be addressed as follows:

A&M System: The Texas A&M University System
301 Tarrow St., Suite 273
College Station, Texas 77840
Attention: Jeff Zimmermann
Phone: (979) 458-6410
E-mail: jzimmermann@tamus.edu

PROVIDER: Buckeye Technology Solutions, LLC
20212 Hempstead Rd, Bldg 1
Houston, TX 77065
Attention: Ben Pickrel
Phone: 979-595-2790
Email: bpickrel@ccsprojects.com

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have entered into this Agreement as of the Effective Date.

The Texas A&M University System

DocuSigned by:
By *Jeff Zimmermann*
E2BE2924E89547F...
Jeff Zimmermann
Executive Director, Procurement

9/22/2023
Date

Buckeye Technology Solutions, LLC

DocuSigned by:
By *Ben Pickrel*
14A730A08ED94C4...
Ben Pickrel
President

9/22/2023
Date