Exhibit 4
Page 1 of 8

BROWARD COUNTY FLORIDA

Finance and Administrative Services Department
PURCHASING DIVISION
115 S. Andrews Avenue, Room 212 • Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33301 • 954-357-6066 • FAX 954-357-8535

Via Email Transmittal

March 18, 2025

Scotty Gage, VP of Sales – North America
Invengo American, Corp. dba FE Technologies
536 Silicon Drive, Suite 100
Southlake, TX 76092

Re: Objection to Proposed Ranking – Request for Proposals (RFP) No. TEC2125499P1, Libraries
         Automated Materials Handling and RFID Tagging System

The Broward County Purchasing Division ("Purchasing") is in receipt of your firm's timely objection received on December 11, 2024, regarding the Proposed Recommendation of Ranking for Request for Proposals (RFP) No. TEC2125499P1, Libraries Automated Materials Handling and RFID Tagging System ("Solicitation"). The Proposed Recommendation of Ranking was posted on December 13, 2024, through December 18, 2024; Invengo American, Corp. dba FE Technologies was the number two ranked vendor. This response letter includes the three objection assertions specified and the County's corresponding responses as follows:

Objection Assertion No. 1 - Tags for media/AV items and the Overall Tagging Project:
 "Tags for media/AV items and the Overall Tagging Project. Vendor 1, (MK Solutions) – No pricing provided for 216,000 media tags the required BCL pricing table. Note that it was mentioned in the MK response on page 24 but not reflected in the required pricing tables. The Vendor response and First Offer (Line 06) contain only 1,916,000 Book Tags 50mm x 50mm."

County's Response:
As per the Solicitation's Scope of Services, Section 3, Functionality Requirements, a vendor's solution should "apply and activate RFID tags on physical materials at all library branches, which is to be about 1.9 million items…" Further, in same section, it states that vendors should "link RFID tags on related material, for example a DVD that has related tags for both the media and its corresponding case/container(s). An estimated 216,000 DVDs exist within the collection."   As such, the Scope of Services indicated that there are approximately 1.9 million physical materials (items) dispersed between all library branches, which includes a collection of 216,000 DVDs. Furthermore, in the solicitation's Question-and-Answer section, Question 41, the County provided a count for other related materials, in addition to DVDs, that are included in the approximate 1.9 million items: Video Games: 4,300, Audio CD: 64,000, Audio Book: 42,000, Launchpad: 5,000, and Playaway: 4,000.

North America, Invengo American, Corp. dba FE Technologies (FE Technologies) objects that mk Solutions, Inc.'s (mk Solutions) did not provide pricing for 216,000 media tags for DVDs.

In response to the Solicitation, mk Solutions indicated on page 24 of its submittal that their "proposed tagging services cover BCL's approximately 1,916,000 items, including 216,000 DVDs…" In addition, in the price proposal document on page 85 of its submittal, mk Solutions provided pricing for 1,916,000 book tags, which is the approximate number of items at all library branches, inclusive of other related materials (i.e., DVDs, video games, etc.). Regarding the description of "Book Tag White" referenced in mk Solutions' price proposal (shown below), the Solicitation did not require a specific type of RFID tag to be used for the different types of materials.

Exhibit 4
Page 2 of 8

Scotty Gage, VP of Sales – North America, Invengo American, Corp. dba FE Technologies
Objection to Proposed Ranking – RFP No. TEC2125499P1, Libraries Automated Materials Handling and RFID
    Tagging System
March 18, 2025
Page 2 of 3

Item	Description	Qty.	Price Each	U/M	Amount
TAG22-X2-ID-PER-T...	Book Tag White 50 x 50 mm / 2.1" x 2.1" SLI-X2 chip, ISO 15693, ISO 18000 Price per tag, comes rolls w/ 2,000 each	1,916,000	0.108	ea	206,928.00

Therefore, as per the requirements of the Scope of Services and the corresponding pricing requirements outlined on Line-Item No. 6, mk Solutions provided pricing for the 216,000 RFID tags for DVDs, which is included in the 1,916,000 items.

Objection Assertion No. 2 - AMH Sorting Speed:
"AMH Sorting Speed - Page 21 of the Bid Packet lists the following requirement:

6.	AMH sorting capacity	Verify that AMH sorts at least 2000 items per hour.

And again on page 46:

7.	System sorts at least 2000 items per hour

Vendor 1 response does state that the sorter proposed will achieve this speed. However, the speed of the overall sorter is determined by the speed of the induction… mk Solutions response page 30 states that the staff induction process "up to 1,500 items per hour."

County's Response:
Per the Solicitation requirements, no minimum requirements were outlined for the speed of induction. However, in mk Solution's proposal, it indicated that its AMHS [Automated Materials Handling System]/sorter processes up to 1,500 items and can sort up to 2,000 items. During the solicitation process, in mk Solution's Demonstration Meeting, to which the vendors were required to demonstrate the nature of their solution, mk Solutions clarified the above information submitted in their proposal by confirming that its AMH sorter can sort up to 2,500 items per hour.

Objection Assertion No. 3: Support and Overall, 5-10 Year Cost:
"Support and overall, 5 – 10 year cost - Vendor 1 (MK Solutions) pricing "First offer" for support lists their Bronze SLA which does not meet the specifications of the RFP. Further it cannot clearly be used to calculate the overall cost of the proposal unless the system has zero down time requiring onsite support. Bronze level support as shown in the response provides the library only Annual Maintenance, Email Support and Phone Support (Hotline).

	BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
Annual Maintenance[2]	●	●	●
Email Support	●	●	●
Phone Support (Hotline)	●	●	●
On-site Support (incl. travel expenses)		●	●
Hardware replacement parts		● (50%)	●
Spare parts automatic refill[3]		● (50%)	●

Because Online Support (incl Travel Expenses) and Hardware Parts costs would be charged per occurrence, there is no way to know the actual 5 – or 10-year cost of ownership"

Exhibit 4
Page 3 of 8

Scotty Gage, VP of Sales – North America, Invengo American, Corp. dba FE Technologies
Objection to Proposed Ranking – RFP No. TEC2125499P1, Libraries Automated Materials Handling and RFID
    Tagging System
March 18, 2025
Page 3 of 3

<u>County's Response:</u>
In mk Solutions response, it provided pricing for bronze, silver, and gold support and maintenance levels. The Gold level met the RFP's specifications. Accordingly, mk Solutions alternate pricing offer for gold level support and maintenance should have been used to calculate pricing points. Therefore, this objection point is being upheld.

Additionally, based on further review of pricing, all Lines (01 – 22) were used to calculate the pricing points. Per the Solicitation's Evaluation Criteria, Section 6, Pricing, only "Lines 01 thru Line 12" were to be used for evaluating price. As such, vendors' pricing for Optional Renewal Years 6 – 10, for support and maintenance for software/licenses and equipment/hardware (Lines 13 - 22), should not have been used when calculating points for price.

To correct these matters, the Evaluation Committee will be reconvened. The points for pricing will be re-calculated based on above corrections and rankings will be announced.

<u>Summary:</u>
After review of the procurement records and proceedings of the Evaluation Committee, and in consultation with the Office of the County Attorney, we are unable to find sufficient merit in Assertions No. 1 and No. 2 and they are hereby denied.

Regarding Assertion No. 3, it is partially upheld. The Evaluation Committee will be re-convened and pricing points will be re-calculated; recommended rankings will be announced based on re-calculated points totals.

Thank you for your participation in this procurement and we would look forward to the opportunity to do business with your firm in the future.

Respectfully,

Robert
Gleason

Digitally signed by
Robert Gleason
Date: 2025.03.20
14:53:45 -04'00'

Robert E. Gleason, Director
Purchasing Division

REG/dce/lcf/sl

Attachment

c: Allison Grubbs, Director, Libraries Division
      Adrian Ramotar, Information Systems Supervisor (Project Manager), Libraries Division
      Constance Mangan, Assistant Director, Purchasing Division
      Danea Cohen-Ebanks, Purchasing Manager, Purchasing Division
      Latoya Clark-Forbes, Purchasing Assistant Manager, Purchasing Division
      Fernando Amuchastegui, Senior Assistant County Attorney, Office of the County Attorney
      Sara Cohen, Assistant County Attorney, Office of the County Attorney

Exhibit 4
Page 4 of 8

![FE Technologies logo - RFID your way]

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Broward County Purchasing Division
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Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33301

RFP no. TEC2125499P1, Libraries Automated Materials Handling and RFID Tagging System
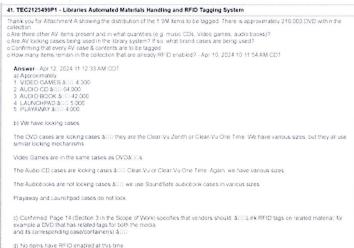
Dear Robert Gleason and Committee,

We would once again like to thank the Committee, County Commissioners, Purchasing and Library staff for all their hard work on this RFP and evaluation. At this time, Invengo American Corp dba FE Technologies would like to file a protest of the results based upon discrepancies that resulted in an evaluation of unequal responses. It is our belief that the response of the firm ranked number one by the committee does not meet several of the requirements listed in the RFP and Confirmed during the Question-and-Answer period. As a result, the pricing of the vendor has several advantages not afforded the other vendors in the scoring process.

1. **Tags for media/AV items and the Overall Tagging Project.** Vendor 1, (MK Solutions)– No pricing provided for 216,000 media tags the required BCL pricing table. Note that it was mentioned in the MK response on page 24 but not reflected in the required pricing tables. The Vendor response and First Offer (Line 06) contain only 1,916,000 Book Tags 50mm x 50mm.

   The RFP States on p.15

   - Detect where linked material may have one or more missing. For example, DVDs where a case may have a missing disc or a disc that is not in the correct case.
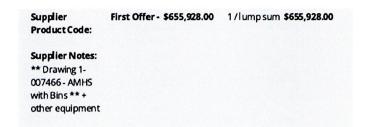
   From the Q&A

   > **41. TEC2125499P1 - Libraries Automated Materials Handling and RFID Tagging System**
   >
   > Thank you for Attachment A showing the distribution of the 1.9M items to be tagged. There is approximately 216,000 DVD within the collection.
   > o Are there other AV items present and in what quantities (e.g. music CDs, Video games, audio books)?
   > o Are AV locking cases being used in the library system? If so, what brand cases are being used?
   > o Confirming that every AV case & contents are to be tagged.
   > o How many items remain in the collection that are already RFID enabled? - Apr 10, 2024 10:11:54 AM CDT
   >
   > **Answer** - Apr 12, 2024 11:12:33 AM CDT
   > a) Approximately:
   > 1. VIDEO GAMES – 4,300
   > 2. AUDIO CD – 64,000
   > 3. AUDIO BOOK – 42,000
   > 4. LAUNCHPAD – 5,000
   > 5. PLAYAWAY – 4,000
   >
   > b) We have locking cases.
   >
   > The DVD cases are locking cases – they are the Clear-Vu Zenith or Clear-Vu One Time. We have various sizes, but they all use similar locking mechanisms.
   >
   > Video Games are in the same cases as DVD's.
   >
   > The Audio CD cases are locking cases – Clear-Vu or Clear-Vu One Time. Again, we have various sizes.
   >
   > The Audiobooks are not locking cases – we use SoundSafe audiobook cases in various sizes.
   >
   > Playaway and Launchpad cases do not lock.
   >
   > c) Confirmed. Page 14 (Section 3 in the Scope of Work) specifies that vendors should, "Link RFID tags on related material, for example a DVD that has related tags for both the media and its corresponding case/container(s)."
   >
   > d) No items have RFID enabled at this time.

Exhibit 4
Page 5 of 8

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Pricing from Vendor 1

Item	Description	Qty.	Price Each	U/M	Amount
TS-MOBILE	mk Mobile Tagging Station Shielded RFID antenna with reader/writer, barcode scanner, manual tag dispenser, power supplies, mk StaffStation software, mobile ergonomic cart, and laptop/tablet	6	1,900.00	ea	11,400.00
HH-INVENTORY-BL...	mk RFID Inventory Blade with BLE (Bluetooth Low Energy) 5.0 and WiFi capabilities, includes battery and power supply with US cord. Connects to library's WiFi and communicates with mk LibSearch App (sep. item) via Bluetooth. mk App installed on library's smartphone/tablet/laptop (mk can offer tablet add $500)	1	2,900.00	ea	2,900.00
TAG22-X2-ID-PER-T...	Book Tag White 50 x 50 mm / 2.1" x 2.1" SLI-X2 chip, ISO 15693, ISO 18000 Price per tag, comes rolls w/ 2,000 each	1,916,000	0.108	ea	206,928.00
SHIPPING	Packaging and Shipping (for the above items)		15,000.00		15,000.00
010-MATERIAL	** Drawing 1-007466 - AMHS with Bins ** (1) Discovery Phase / Consultation (1) RFID Staff Induction height adjustable (1) Hold Slip Applicator* enclosure including alignment conveyor, stopper, and label printer with applicator (1) 40-way sorting system with RFID readers to detect RFID equipped bins (40) Book bins (each equipped with RFID card for manifest) (1) Manifest feature, allowing receiving branches to check in the bin content via a single scan of the bin	1	419,700.00	ea	419,700.00

$655,928

Submitted pricing:

Supplier Product Code:	First Offer - $655,928.00	1 / lump sum $655,928.00

Supplier Notes:
** Drawing 1-
007466 - AMHS
with Bins ** +
other equipment

Omitting pricing for tags for media items means that there is no way for the system to identify incorrect or missing discs within the cases. This results in an artificial lower cost because these tags are essential to the project. It also allows for the responding company to quote a lower cost for tagging the collection because the tagging of media is the most difficult part of the project and carries a higher cost. **FE Technologies and all of the other qualified vendors would benefit from offering lower pricing by quoting the project and omitting the tagging of the media as well, but this was not the requirement.**

Exhibit 4
Page 6 of 8

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From Section 10 Final Acceptance Criteria:

8.	Cases with discs	Cases without discs and cases with the wrong discs are identified.

Without Media Tags this is not possible.

From Page 46 Vendor Requirements:

4. RFID tag allows inventory control functionality (required minimum functionality)			

Without media tags this is not possible and therefore should be considered nonresponsive. (Required Minimum Functionality)

From Page 46 Vendor Requirements (Sorter)

8. System identifies CDs or DVDs that are in the wrong case or are missing from a case (required minimum functionality)			

Without media tags it is not possible for the sorter to identify CDs or DVDs that are in the wrong case or missing from a case. (Required Minimum Functionality)

2. **AMH Sorting Speed – Page 21 of the Bid Packet lists the following requirement:**

6.	AMH sorting capacity	Verify that AMH sorts at least 2000 items per hour.

And again on page 46:

7. System sorts at least 2000 items per hour			

Vendor 1 response does state that the sorter proposed will achieve this speed. **However, the speed of the overall sorter is determined by the speed of the induction.** First there is the speed of the sorter minus the induction. Most vendors sorters (the backend) can operate at well over 2000 items per hour. Second and more important, is the speed of the induction (the front end). It is the speed of the induction that determines the overall speed of the sorter. (Example if a sorter can reach 5000 items per hour, but the induction only allows for **500** items per hour to be

RFID that works.

Exhibit 4
Page 7 of 8

4 │ [Type text]

put on the sorter per hour, then the speed of the sorter would be **500** items per hour, not 5000.)

mk Solutions response page 30 states that the staff induction process "up to 1,500 items per hour."

Example of Pop-Up/Open AMH

The **staff return unit/induction station** is connected to the AMHS/sorter. This unit, which processes up to 1,500 items per hour, can convert new items when tags get applied, back date returns, and/or handle hold items and slips differently. The staff control panel visually monitors the system, displays status changes, alerts, and notifications, and features self-diagnostic software.

Again, on page 36 they state that the "mk Return stations accept up to 1,500 items per hour.

v. Show AMH system features and set up in the designated space: Features of the AMH system include:
- **Modular/Expandable:** The mk sorting system is modular, which allows for easy expansion to accommodate growth.
- **Safe:** mk sorting systems are UL listed, CE certified, and built with our ISO 9001 registration in mind.
- **Quiet:** Approx. 40 dBA in standby and approx. 56 dBA during operation.
- **Fast:** Can sort up to 2,000 items/hour. mk return stations accept up to 1,500 items/hour.
- **Efficient:** Reduce material handling by staff with full access to circulation workflows and ILS on workstation. The system also has a back-date feature directly in the software.
- **Informative:** Staff control visualization software displays system and item status, error messages and full analysis during system fault or stop conditions. Operational performance centrally managed by LibManager software.

The response does give the option of an additional induction at 1,500 items per hour, however, given the design of the sorter drawn, introducing an additional induction at the point of "collision" would have little if any effect on the speed, and would require an additional cost.

3. Support and overall, 5 – 10 year cost – Vendor 1 (MK Solutions) pricing "First offer" for support lists their Bronze SLA which does not meet the specifications of the RFP. Further it cannot clearly be used to calculate the overall cost of the proposal unless the system has zero down time requiring onsite support. Bronze level support as shown in the response provides the library only Annual Maintenance, Email Support and Phone Support (Hotline).

4

Exhibit 4
Page 8 of 8

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	BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
Annual Maintenance[2]	●	●	●
Email Support	●	●	●
Phone Support (Hotline)	●	●	●
On-site Support (incl. travel expenses)		●	●
Hardware replacement parts		● (50%)	●
Spare parts automatic refill[3]		● (50%)	●

Because Online Support (incl. Travel Expenses) and Hardware Parts costs would be charged per occurrence, there is no way to know the actual 5- or 10-year cost of ownership.

Thank you again for the time spent by all on this RFP and most important project. With all the time spent by the library, purchasing staff and others, it is imperative that the library receive a system that meets all the specifications without any hidden costs. We are filing this protest because we believe that based upon the points shared within this document, one vendor inadvertently obtained an unfair advantage. We would like to thank the Committee for considering this protest and ask for clarification on whether the requirements listed, some or which are Required Minimum Qualifications matter. If so, we would further ask that the RFP responses be reevaluated and if not, that all qualified vendors be allowed to requote accordingly.

Best Regards,
Scotty Gage
VP of Sales – North America
FE Technologies

RFID that works.