

## School of Materials Science and Engineering Information Technology Purchasing Policy

**Type of Policy:** IT departmental

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**Policy Owner:** Materials Science and Engineering IT

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### **Reason for Policy:**

The MSE Purchasing Policy provides the guiding principles for the procurement of Information Technology (IT) related assets at the Department and Office level. The intent of this policy is to rationalize acquisition of IT assets and minimize technology diversity with the goal to provide more reliable and consistent IT support to faculty, researchers and students.

### **Policy Statement:**

***Purchasing of all Information Technology related equipment shall be coordinated and executed through the MSE IT group***, or the person designated by the unit.

***Software purchases should be coordinated and executed through the same personnel.*** Any software purchases should be recorded and tracked, and Unit IT personnel should work to ensure that any license requirements are appropriately followed. End users may start the process of requesting and negotiating quotes for such software prior to asking the IT team to proceed with the purchase, in order to facilitate the proper selection of licenses and product versions. IT personnel should be involved in the negotiation at an appropriate time to assist with that selection and ensure the end user receives the product choice which can be properly supported and will provide the level of functionality required by the end user. When applicable, software license review should be coordinated with the Office of Purchasing by Unit IT personnel.

***All purchasing of hardware and software shall be done using state approved vendors.*** However, it is understood that if such vendors do not carry the required items, other vendors may be utilized given the purchase is in accordance with GT, USG and State regulations.

Purchases or donations of hardware or software requiring GT signature authority shall be submitted to Purchasing or GTRC by the MSE IT personnel.

### **Scope:**

This policy applies to all MSE IT items used to conduct research, instruction or business. In scope are all items - unless specifically excluded in appendix A - that will be connected to the Institute's network, attached (internally and externally) to an item that connects to the Institute's network, or connected to personal or institute-owned computing devices to conduct Institute research/business

See Appendix A for excluded items.

This policy extends and supports Institute IT policy as well as University System of Georgia IT policy. Any College of Engineering system which cannot comply with this policy, Institute IT policy, or USG policy must have an approved Institute policy exception on file with GT Cyber Security.

Institute IT Policy: <http://policylibrary.gatech.edu/information-technology>

USG IT Handbook:

[https://www.usg.edu/assets/information\\_technology\\_services/documents/IT\\_Handbook.pdf](https://www.usg.edu/assets/information_technology_services/documents/IT_Handbook.pdf)

## **Replacement Cycle**

A three to five-year computer/systems replacement cycle, where budget considerations allow, is recommended. It is recommended that servers or specialized IT related devices, including data collection equipment, should be on a five to ten-year replacement cycle. However, relying on any electronic device over 10 years of age is considered very high risk and should be avoided where possible.

## **Procedure**

Purchasing requests shall be placed, logged and tracked, according to MSE procedures. Proper authorization from the fund's owner or their designee must be recorded. It is recommended to use ticketing systems, Buzzmart, or equivalent where possible.

## **Equipment sourcing and assembly**

***Priority should always be given to purchasing desktops, laptops, workstations, and servers from State and GT approved vendors (such as Apple, Dell, HP, Lenovo, Penguin Computing, Ace Computers, ....) through GT Buzzmart system.***

This policy recognizes the critical role of instrument connected systems and systems with built in computers in research labs. Nevertheless, all efforts should be made to ensure that these systems can comply as much as possible with Institute IT policies. It is critical that MSE IT personnel be consulted prior to the acquisition of these systems.

***Shall the need arise where a pre-assembled computer from an authorized State vendor cannot satisfy a specific research need, and upon confirmation by the MSE IT team that there are no other ways to satisfy said need within the State vendor system, the requestor shall work with MSE IT personnel to procure and assemble such systems.*** The procurement of parts should follow all applicable GT policies, including but not limited to DFARS 252.246-7007GT policy on counterfeit components <https://www.policylibrary.gatech.edu/counterfeit-electronic-part-detection-and-avoidance>

***Assembly of computer or IT related equipment from parts procured directly by end users, PI, lab members, etc., without approval from MSE IT personnel is prohibited.*** All computer systems in office environments shall be purchased from enterprise vendors.

***The purchase of equipment from secondary market vendors (eBay, other used equipment resellers) or vendor outlets (Dell, Lenovo, HP....) is highly discouraged unless a specific and reasonable need exists.***

Such purchases cannot be placed without written prior approval from MSE IT personnel and must follow all GT policies (including tax exemption).

Any assembled system with a total value of \$3,000 or greater must be properly inventoried and a Fabricated Property Report completed, per the policy on Fabrication of Property.

<http://policylibrary.gatech.edu/business-finance/fabrication-property>

### **Warranties**

***Purchase of a three-year on-site warranty for computers and laptops is a standard GT business practice. As such, all systems purchased for use at the College or Unit level shall meet or exceed this standard.*** For workstations, servers and any equipment with a total value of \$3,000 or greater, it is highly recommended to extend the warranty to 5 years. Assembled systems are also subject to this practice where possible.

For laptops, especially tablet devices, the purchase of an accidental protection warranty is recommended, provided funds are available. Any other warranties which enhance or extend coverage above the 3-year period from the vendor are permitted.

### **Donated equipment or software**

***MSE IT personnel must be consulted prior to accepting any hardware and or software donations.*** Personnel should ensure that such donations are recognized properly by working with their assigned Development Officer. Donations of software are subject to the same review of license as purchases. This should be handled through the Purchasing Office per normal procedure.

## **Appendix A**

### **Excluded Items: items which can be purchased directly by PI or admin professionals.**

Storage Devices: Removable media such as USB keychains, disc media, etc., as long as it is not an SSD, HDD, Hybrid or similar device.

Cables, Adapters, Power Strips: Any cables including network, USB, video, power, etc., as long as these are not for highly specialized applications (i.e. fiber optic, Myrinet, Infiniband).

Phones: Landline or cordless based phones.

Privacy Screens: Any add on screens to reduce visibility by third party may be purchased directly by end users. End users must ensure that the screen is properly designed to fit their device.