Opportunity
The CaliforniaNanoSystems Institute, part of UCSB’sCenter for Scientific Computing, needed a computercluster, but knew it would have to go out to bid. Thedepartment engaged early with procurement, preparedwith specs and potential vendors, allowing for a smoothsolicitation process.

Approach
The computer cluster itself was relativelystraightforward, consisting primarily of the compute component, storage component, and racks. One addition to the RFQ was a requirement to comply with the UC’s packaging standards which had not officially gone into effect, requiring that packaging be recycled, recyclable, or taken back by the company. When the quotes came back, they were above budget, so we asked for a re-quote with one item removed. This resulted in a successful lowest cost bidder, several hundreds of thousands of dollars below the highest bidder.

Client Quote
“Thank you very much for the excellent news! My team and I are looking forward to the project.”

Results
• Cost – Substantial cost savings achieved through bid process, with a total of 5 responsive bidders
• UC Packaging Requirements – this was the first bid in which the packaging standards from the updated UC Sustainable Procurement Policy were incorporated into the mandatory specifications. Bidders who did not have an alternative to Styrofoam were required to take back their packaging. The awarded bidder agreed to take back the shipping carts and ended up offering an additional $1,600 discount for their recovery, which would otherwise be left to the campus to dispose of.

Total Benefit ($255,875.09)