Mississippi State University
Request for Proposals (RFP) 25-53
ARRT - Assessment Rostering & Reporting Tool

ISSUE DATE: May 16, 2025

ISSUING AGENCY: Office of Procurement and Contracts

Mississippi State University
610 McArthur Hall
245 Barr Avenue
Mississippi State, MS 39762

Sealed Proposals, subject to the conditions made a part hereof, will be received **June 10, 2025 at 2:00 PM in the MSU Office of Procurement and Contracts, same address above**, for furnishing services and potentially, optional services as described herein.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Indicate firm name, and RFP number on the front of each sealed proposal envelope or package.

All inquiries concerning this RFP should be directed to:

Jay Rester
Office of Procurement and Contracts, (Same address above)
jrester@procurement.msstate.edu
662-325-2550

Any addendum associated with this RFP will be posted at http://www.procurement.msstate.edu/procurement/bids/index.php located under RFP 25-53. It is the respondent's responsibility to assure that all addenda have been reviewed and if applicable, signed and returned.

1. UNIVERSITY OVERVIEW

Mississippi State University (MSU) is a comprehensive land grant university of 21,500+ students and approximately 5,000 faculty and staff. The main campus is located adjacent to the community of Starkville in northeast Mississippi, with a remote campus located in Meridian with an enrollment of around 700 students. Additionally, the university operates several remote agricultural experiment stations and has an Extension office located in each of the eighty-two Mississippi counties.

Additional information about MSU can be found at our website www.msstate.edu.

2. INVITATION TO SUBMIT PROPOSAL ON RFP

The **Mississippi State University Research and Curriculum Unit (RCU)** is seeking a web-based system to facilitate the **upload, organization, and reporting of student testing data** across multiple school districts. This system must support **unlimited users** at different access levels, including **administrators** and **general users**, while ensuring data security and role-based permissions.

The system should allow **school districts to upload class rosters** that can be **organized and filtered** by multiple identifiers, including but not limited to:

- Course Code
- Test Code
- Teacher
- Testing Center
- School District
- School District Code

Additionally, the system must support **reporting test scores** based on these organizational levels, allowing for both **individualized and aggregated** data analysis.

Once implemented, the system will serve as the primary platform for **managing student testing records, tracking certification reporting, and generating reports** for program evaluation. The solution should be scalable, customizable, and designed for seamless access by authorized users.

SCOPE OF SERVICES REQUIRED

a) Technical Requirements

The proposed system must:

- Be a **cloud-based application** hosted on a secure cloud infrastructure, managed in compliance with Mississippi State University requirements.

- Support **role-based access control** for administrators and users

- **Authentication, Single Sign-On (SSO), and Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) Support –** The system must integrate with MSU's authentication system, supporting CAS or Shibboleth for secure and seamless access. It must also support Single Sign-On (SSO) functionality and be fully compatible with MSU's Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) requirements to enhance security and streamline user access.Be accessible via **PCs and Mac devices**

- **Accessibility Standards –** Vendors should provide a completed Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) that covers all software user interfaces and meets the WCAG 2.1 AA requirements.Include an **SMTP server for email notifications**

- Be built on a **modern framework** supporting API-based interactions for data exchange

b) User Management

- The system must **support unlimited users** with role-based permissions

- User access should be **tiered**, allowing administrators to manage permissions for uploading, editing, and viewing data

- **Multiple user roles** should be supported, enabling collaboration while ensuring **data security and controlled access**

c) Roster Management & Data Upload

- School districts must be able to **upload class rosters** in **multiple formats**, including **Excel (.xlsx, .xls), CSV, and API integration**

- Uploaded data should be automatically **organized and indexed** by:
    - Course Code
    - Test Code
    - Teacher
    - Testing Center
    - School District
    - School District Code

- The system should allow **data validation and error reporting** during uploads

d) Reporting & Analytics

- The system must provide **dynamic, customizable reports** that can be viewed online or exported in multiple formats, including:

  - **Excel (.xlsx, .xls)**

  - **PDF**

  - **CSV**

  - **Word (.doc, .rtf)**

  - **API-based exports to integrate with third-party systems**

- The system must **support the input, storage, and mapping** of certification scores from multiple certification providers to individual students. This includes:

  - **Automated or manual data imports** of certification scores from external testing providers.

  - **Data mapping functionality** to link scores with student records based on unique identifiers (e.g., student ID, name, birth date).

  - **Real-time updates** when new certification data is added or modified.

- Users must be able to **generate reports based on specific filters**, such as:

  - Test scores by school district, course code, or teacher

  - Certification results by student, school, district, and certification type

  - Certification completion rates

  - Comparative analysis across schools or testing centers

  - Trend analysis of certification pass rates over time

- Reports should include **interactive data visualization tools** (e.g., charts, graphs, and dashboards) to support data-driven decision-making.

- Users must be able to **schedule automated report generation and distribution** via email or system notifications.

- Administrators should have the ability to:

  - Create **custom data fields** for additional tracking and reporting needs

  - Save and share frequently used report templates with other authorized users.

- o Drill down into reports for more granular insights and explore subsets of data based on query parameters.

e) Document and File Management

- The system must support **document uploads** in formats including:

  - o Excel (.xlsx, .xls)

  - o CSV

- Authorized users should be able to **review uploaded documents**

f) System Functionality & Collaboration

- The system must enable **real-time tracking** of requests and submissions

- Users should be able to **submit and review documents**, as well as the ability to finalize documents.

- **Audit logs** should be maintained to track all system activities for compliance and accountability

g) System Maintenance and Support

- The vendor must provide **installation, setup, and configuration support**

- A **train-the-trainer approach** should be offered, allowing RCU staff to train school district personnel

- The initial contract will cover **12 months**, with options for **annual renewal**

- Vendors should provide details on:

  - o **Licensing requirements**

  - o **Ongoing maintenance and support costs**

  - o **System updates and security patches**

3. INQUIRIES ABOUT RFP

Prospective respondents may make written inquiries concerning this request for proposal to obtain clarification of requirements. **Questions should be submitted either via a Word document or plainly typed in the email itself.** Responses to these inquiries may be made by addendum to the Request for Proposal (RFP). Please send your inquiries to Jay Rester via electronic mail at jrester@procurement.msstate.edu.

All inquiries should be marked "URGENT INQUIRY. MSU RFP 25-53"

4. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

a) Issuing Office

This RFP is issued by the following office:

Office of Procurement and Contracts
Mississippi State University
245 Barr Avenue, 610 McArthur Hall
Mississippi State, MS 39762

b) Schedule of Critical Dates

The following dates are for planning purposes only unless otherwise stated in this RFP progress towards their completion is at the sole discretion of the university.

RFP Posted	**May 16, 2025**
Questions from Vendors Due	**May 27, 2025**
MSU Q&A Response Due	**June 3, 2025**
Proposal Submission Deadline – 2:00 p.m.	**June 10, 2025**
Award Date (Estimated)	**July 1, 2025**
Contract Effective Date (Estimated)	**July 1, 2025**

5. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

This is a two-step RFP process. The technical proposals and the cost proposals are to be submitted in separate sealed envelopes. Indicate firm name, RFP# and word "Technical Proposal" on the front of the sealed technical proposal envelope or package. Indicate the firm name, RFP# and the word "Cost Proposal" on the front of the sealed proposal envelope or package.

At a minimum, the following items should be included in the contents of the Technical Proposal:

- Cover letter, indicating the scope of the proposal. The letter should include an overview of the services being offered. The letter should include a statement of exceptions to any of the terms and conditions outlined in this RFP. (Cover letter should be no more than 3 pages in length.)

- Corporate Structure and Credentials

- o Number of years of experience
- o Staffing levels and support proposed
- o Examples of similar previous work.

- Operations and Ability To Perform
  - o Provide operation plan. This should include, but not be limited to, acknowledgement and agreement with all requirements as well as explanations, where applicable, of the intended plan to achieve the requirements.
  - o Describe how services will be provided to MSU.

At a minimum, the following items should be included in the contents of the Cost Proposal:

- Fees for initial purchase of software/items/service (including all preparation, installation, rollout, training and first year maintenance and support)
- Annual Maintenance Costs after initial purchase.

6. DISCUSSIONS/EVALUATION CRITERIA/AWARD PROCESS

MSU reserves the right to conduct discussions with any or all respondents, or to make an award of a contract without such discussions based only on evaluation of the written proposals. MSU reserves the right to contact and interview anyone connected with any past or present projects with which the respondent has been associated. MSU likewise reserves the right to designate a review committee to evaluate the proposals according to the criteria set forth under this section. MSU may make a written determination showing the basis upon which the award was made and such determination shall be included in the procurement file.

MSU reserves the right to award this contract in whole or in part depending on what is in the best interest of MSU with MSU being the sole judge thereof.

The evaluation factors set forth in this section are described as follows:

- The Vendor's ability to deliver an application meeting the overall objective and functions described in the RFP
- Competitive fees
- Availability and access technical support
- Vendor's experience with similar systems
- Compliance with applicable State and Federal laws and regulations
- The committee may invite finalists for interviews and/or presentations

Failure to attend a requested interview presentation before the committee may result in a proposal not being considered.

Upon award of contract(s), successful respondent(s) will be asked to provide a transition plan and timeline and obtain MSU's input and concurrence before moving forward.

Proposals will be scored based on the following weights (100 points total):

- Corporate Structure/Years of Experience/References – 20 pts
- Operation Plan/Ease of Use/Services Offered – 50 pts
- Fees – 30 pts.

7. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposals shall be submitted in two packages (envelopes or boxes) as set forth in Section 7. Please make sure that the RFP number is clearly visible on the outside of the package.

Technical Proposal – One (1) original and one (1) electronic copy (of the complete technical proposal in one pdf file on a flash drive) of parts 7(b)(i) (Cover Letter), 7(b)(ii) (Corporate Structure and Credentials), and 7(b)(iii) (Operations and Ability to Perform) should be sealed in a package with "Technical Proposal" in the lower left hand corner. Each submitted package should be a complete copy. The original shall be marked on the first page "Original".

Cost Proposal – One (1) original and one (1) electronic copy (of the complete cost proposal in one pdf file on a flash drive). Should be sealed in a package with "Cost Proposal" in the lower left-hand corner. Each submitted package should be a complete copy. The original shall be marked on the first page "Original".

The proposal package must be received on or before **2:00 p.m. on June 10, 2025**. It is the responsibility of the respondent to ensure that the proposal package arrives in the Procurement and Contracts office on-time. The proposal package should be delivered or sent by mail to:

> **Office of Procurement and Contracts**
> **Mississippi State University**
> **610 McArthur Hall**
> **245 Barr Avenue**
> **Mississippi State, MS 39762**

Your response must include the signature page included in this RFP (See Appendix A) and contain the signature of an authorized representative of the respondent's organization. The signature on the "Original" signature page should be in blue ink.

MSU reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive informalities and minor irregularities in proposals received and to accept any portion of a proposal or all items bid if deemed in the best interest of the University to do so.

Proposals received after the stated due date and time will be returned unopened. Submission via facsimile or other electronic means will not be accepted.

8. PCI COMPLIANCE ISSUES (IF APPLICABLE)

The vendor must provide a PCI compliant processing environment using one of the approved options below. If the vendor is unable to fully adhere to one of these options, the proposal will be removed from consideration.

- **Option 1** – Integrate with MSU's existing third-party solution (NelNet Business Solutions – Commerce Manager), because all hardware, software and back end processing have been vetted and credit/debit card payments are automatically posted to Banner.

- **Option 2** – Use alternative third-party solution. Use a different MSU Merchant ID but same bank account.
  - Work with members of MSU's PCI Council and third-party PCI Compliance consultant to review business needs and proposed solution.
  - Ensure card transactions processed by university personnel are performed using a PCI-validated point to point encrypted (P2PE) solution. The solution must be listed on the PCI council's website (https://www.pcisecuritystandards.org), must not be expired, and devices to be used with the solution must have a PIN transaction security (PTS) expiration date at least 3 years past the date of installation.
  - Obtain the following solution information
  - Attestation of compliance (AoC) from all parties involved in handling or that affect the security of cardholder data.
  - Verify that all devices have a current PTS certification and have an expiration date at least 3 years past the installation date of the solution.
  - Obtain a data flow diagram showing where payment card data will be introduced to the proposed solution and all steps/hops it will take until payment information is delivered to the merchant processing bank. This will determine all of the service providers that must provide an AoC.
  - Require specific reporting requirements and interfaces to support Banner integration and automatic posting of credit/debit card payments to the ERP. The exact file layout will be provided upon request.

- **Option 3** – Use alternative third-party solution. Use vendor's Merchant ID.
  - Work with members of MSU's PCI Council and third-party PCI Compliance consultant to review the solution.

- o Ensure card transactions processed by university personnel are performed using a PCI-validated point to point encrypted (P2PE) solution. The solution must be listed on the PCI council's website (https://www.pcisecuritystandards.org), must not be expired, and devices to be used with the solution must have a PIN transaction security (PTS) expiration date at least 3 years past the date of installation.
- o Obtain the following solution information
- o Attestation of compliance (AoC) from all parties involved in handling or that affect the security of cardholder data.
- o Verify that all devices have a current PTS certification and have an expiration date at least 3 years past the installation date of the solution.
- o Obtain a data flow diagram showing where payment card data will be introduced to the proposed solution and all steps/hops it will take until payment information is delivered to the merchant processing bank. This will determine all of the service providers that must provide an AoC.
- o Payments due MSU will be remitted on a predetermined basis, net of all applicable fees and merchant discounts. Banner integration not required.

9. TWO-PHASE, BEST AND FINAL OFFER

If the initial proposals do not provide MSU with a clear and convincing solution, or if MSU feels it is appropriate to offer the potential providers an opportunity to submit revised proposals, MSU reserves the right to use a two-phase approach and/or invite Best and Final Offers (BAFO). Based on the information obtained through the proposal submittals (Phase-One), MSU may choose a specific business model, and potential providers may be asked to submit revised proposals based upon that specific model.

The evaluation committee may develop, for distribution to the top-ranked firms, refined written terms with specific information on what is being requested as a result of information obtained through initial RFP submittal process. Proposers may be asked to reduce cost or provide additional clarification to specific sections of the RFP. Selected proposers are not required to submit a BAFO and may submit a written response notifying the solicitation evaluation committee that their response remains as originally submitted.

10. TERM OF CONTRACT

It is MSU's intention to enter into a three (3) year contract, estimated to begin July 1, 2025.

MSU reserves the right to terminate this agreement with thirty (30) days-notice, by the Director of Procurement and Contracts via certified mail to the address listed on the signature page of this RFP (See Appendix A) if any of the terms of the proposal and/or contract are violated.

In the event the contractor fails to carry out and comply with any of the conditions and agreements to be performed under the specifications, MSU will notify the contractor, in writing, of such failure or default. In the event the necessary corrective action has not been completed within a ten (10) day period, the contractor must submit, in writing, why such corrective action has not been performed. The University reserves the right to determine whether or not such noncompliance may be construed as a failure of performance of the contractor.

Termination of contract by contractor without cause can only occur with at least one-hundred and twenty (120) days-notice prior to the proposed termination of the contract.

In the event MSU employs attorneys or incurs other expenses it considers necessary to protect or enforce its rights under this contract, the contractor agrees to pay the attorney's fees and expenses so incurred by MSU.

11. ACCEPTANCE TIME

Proposal shall be valid for one-hundred and eighty (180) days following the proposal due date.

12. RFP CANCELLATION

This RFP in no manner obligates MSU to the eventual purchase of any services described, implied or which may be proposed until confirmed by a written contract. Progress towards this end is solely at the discretion of MSU and may be terminated without penalty or obligations at any time prior to the signing of a contract. MSU reserves the right to cancel this RFP at any time, for any reason, and to reject any or all proposals or any parts thereof.

13. INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR CLAUSE

The contractor shall acknowledge that an independent contractor relationship is established and that the employees of the contractor are not, nor shall they be deemed employees of MSU and that employees of MSU are not, nor shall they be deemed employees of the contractor.

14. DISCLOSURE OF PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Proposals will be kept confidential until evaluations and award are completed by MSU. At that time, all proposals and documents pertaining to the proposals will be open to the public, except for material that is clearly marked proprietary or confidential.

IMPORTANT! The offeror/proposer should mark any and all pages of the proposal considered to be proprietary information which may remain confidential in accordance with Mississippi Code Annotated 25-61-9 and 79-23 1 (1972, as amended). Each page of the proposal that the proposer considers trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information should be

on a different color paper than non-confidential pages and be marked in the upper right hand corner with the word "CONFIDENTIAL."

Failure to clearly identify trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information will result in that information being released subject to a public records request.

15. OTHER CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

Award Terms: This contract shall be awarded at the discretion of the University based on the capabilities and overall reputation of the Supplier, as well as the cost. Acceptance shall be confirmed by the issuance of a contract from the University.

Standard Contract: The awarded contractor(s) will be expected to enter into a contract that is in substantial compliance with MSU's standard contract http://www.procurement.msstate.edu/pdf/standard_rfp_contract.pdf. Proposal should include any desired changes to the standard contract. It should be noted that there are many clauses which the MSU cannot change (see Standard Addendum http://www.procurement.msstate.edu/contracts/standardaddendum.pdf) Significant changes to the standard contract may be cause for rejection of a proposal.

The Procurement Process: The following is a general description of the process by which a firm will be selected to fulfill this Request for Proposal.

- Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued to prospective suppliers.
- A deadline for written questions is set.
- Proposals will be received as set forth in Section 8.
- Unsigned proposals will not be considered.
- All proposals must be received by MSU no later than the date and time specified on the cover sheet of this RFP.
- At that date and time, the package containing the proposals from each responding firm will be opened publicly and the name of each respondent will be announced.
- Proposal evaluation: The University will review each proposal.
- At their option, the evaluators may request oral presentations or discussions for the purpose of clarification or to amplify the materials presented in the proposal
- Respondents are cautioned that this is a request for proposals, not a request to contract, and the MSU reserves the unqualified right to reject any and all proposals when such rejection is deemed to be in the best interest of the University.
- The proposals will be evaluated according to the criteria set forth in Section 7.

APPENDIX A: SIGNATURE PAGE

Provide information requested, affix signature and return this page with your proposal:

Name of Firm: _____

Complete Address: _____

_____

Telephone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Authorized Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____