

RFP 2026069  
Scholarship Award Management System  
Questions and Answers

**RFP Submission date has been extended to Friday May 22, 2026 at 2:00  
p.m.**

Q1. Can we submit our proposals electronically?

A1. Yes. If you did not receive an invitation to reply in Bully Buy, contact the person on page one and request an invite.

Technical Proposal: Proposal must be submitted in PDF format and state “Technical Proposal” in the title of the document. This document must be separate from the cost proposal or the response may be considered non-responsive.

Cost Proposal: Cost proposal must be submitted in PDF format and state “Cost Proposal” in the title of the document. This document must be separate from the technical proposal or the response may be considered non-responsive.

Q2. Can MSU elaborate on the integration with Banner SIS? What data will need to come into the vendor's system? What data from the vendors system would need to be pushed to Banner SIS?

A2. The information needed to move to Banner would be the student’s MSU ID, Name, Fund Code, Award Amount, and Award Period. Ideally, the vendor would have integration options that include Ellucian’s Ethos integration platform.

Q3. Regarding individual offices must be able to conduct these processes as separate units - can MSU elaborate on this? Does the data from separate offices need to be segregated? If so, does MSU have a system-wide admin that can support the software?

A3. Each academic college and most academic departments have an administrator responsible for making scholarship offers in the system. Our current system has different “roles” that system administrators can assign depending on the users’ needed access. Scholarships can be “tagged” with different scopes that can be used to limit a user’s access to only the scholarships in their academic college/department.

Q3. What is the current system MSU is using? What is the reason for going out to bid now? Are there any pain points with the current system? If so, what are they?

A4. We are currently using Blackbaud Award Management. The contract is about to expire, so we have to request new bids. Some issues we are having include the student user experience and system communications to the students.

Q5. Is MSU anticipating needing helpdesk for applicants? If so, what is the average amount of tickets received?

A5. We do not anticipate needing a helpdesk for applicants. If students have questions or issues when using the system, they contact the scholarships office for assistance. If the scholarship office staff cannot answer the question or resolve the issue, the staff member will contact the support team of the scholarship system provider.

Q6. Would MSU extending the deadline by 2-3 weeks after responses to questions are released to allow vendors enough time to incorporate responses into their submission and have time to print and ship their submissions?

A76. No

Q7. Would electronic signatures for forms be permissible?

A7. Yes

Q8. Regarding PCI Compliance, if a vendor selects Option 1, what data would be synced to the vendors system? Would the system need the ability to take payments or would the NelNet Business Solutions - Commerce Manager take payments?

A8. Payments are not accepted through the scholarship system.

Q9. Does Mississippi State University (MSU) have any interest in connecting the scholarship system with a CRM (for example, Blackbaud's Raiser's Edge or Blackbaud CRM) to track scholarship recipients, donor relationships, fund activity etc.?

A9. We are not interested in this at this time.

Q10. Are there any areas in the current scholarship management process where MSU would like to see improvements or enhancements as part of this RFP? Are there any specific issues or limitations in your current system that you would like the new solution to improve?

A10. The feedback we have received from campus partners is that the student side could use improvement as well as the offer emails sent from Award Management. On the student facing side, the deadline for the scholarship application appears on the card when a scholarship offer is made. The student thinks the deadline listed is the deadline to accept the scholarship which is not the case. We continue to have references that have trouble

logging into Award Management to upload verification documents. I don't know if that is something that can be resolved easily.

Q11. Blackbaud does not allow for any company materials to be placed on a flash drive for security purposes. Is it possible for a digital copy of our RFP to be sent via password-protected file transfer?

A11. Yes