



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina A&T State University

Request for Proposal #: 59-P2407

Digital Marketing Services Ag MBA

Date of Issue: 3/3/2026

Proposal Opening Date: 3/20/2026

At 3:00 PM ET

Direct all inquiries concerning this RFP to:

Roselyn Pinnix

Purchasing Specialist

Email: rp003826@ncat.edu

Phone: 336.285.4970



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

Request for Proposal #

59-P2407

For internal State agency processing, including tabulation of proposals, provide your company's eVP (Electronic Vendor Portal) Number. Pursuant to G.S. 132-1.10(b) this identification number shall not be released to the public. **This page will be removed and shredded, or otherwise kept confidential**, before the procurement file is made available for public inspection.

**This page shall be filled out and returned with your proposal.
Failure to do so may subject your proposal to rejection.**

Vendor Name

Vendor eVP#

Note: For a contract to be awarded to you, your company (you) must be a North Carolina registered Vendor in good standing. You must enter the Vendor number assigned through eVP (Electronic Vendor Portal). If you do not have a Vendor number, register at <https://evp.nc.gov/SignIn>

Electronic responses ONLY will be accepted for this solicitation.

<p>STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA North Carolina A&T State University</p>	
<p>Refer <i>ALL</i> Inquiries regarding this RFP to: <i>Roselyn Pinnix, Purchasing Specialist</i> <u><i>rp003826@ncat.edu</i></u> <i>336.285.4970</i></p>	<p>Request for Proposal #: 59-P2407</p> <hr/> <p>Proposals will be publicly opened: 3/20/2026</p>

EXECUTION

In compliance with this Request for Proposals (RFP), and subject to all the conditions herein, the undersigned Vendor offers and agrees to furnish and deliver any or all items upon which prices are bid, at the prices set opposite each item within the time specified herein.

By executing this proposal, the undersigned Vendor understands that false certification is a Class I felony and certifies that:

- this proposal is submitted competitively and without collusion (G.S. 143-54),
- none of its officers, directors, or owners of an unincorporated business entity has been convicted of any violations of Chapter 78A of the General Statutes, the Securities Act of 1933, or the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (G.S. 143-59.2), and
- it is not an ineligible Vendor as set forth in G.S. 143-59.1.

Furthermore, by executing this proposal, the undersigned certifies to the best of Vendor’s knowledge and belief, that:

- it and its principals are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal or State department or agency.

As required by G.S. 143-48.5, the undersigned Vendor certifies that it, and each of its sub-Contractors for any Contract awarded as a result of this RFP, complies with the requirements of Article 2 of Chapter 64 of the NC General Statutes, including the requirement for each employer with more than 25 employees in North Carolina to verify the work authorization of its employees through the federal E-Verify system.

As required by Executive Order 24 (2017), the undersigned vendor certifies will comply with all Federal and State requirements concerning fair employment and that it does not and will not discriminate, harass, or retaliate against any employee in connection with performance of any Contract arising from this solicitation.

G.S. 133-32 and Executive Order 24 (2009) prohibit the offer to, or acceptance by, any State Employee associated with the preparing plans, specifications, estimates for public contracts; or awarding or administering public contracts; or inspecting or supervising delivery of the public contract of any gift from anyone with a contract with the State, or from any person seeking to do business with the State. By execution of this response to the RFP, the undersigned certifies, for Vendor’s entire organization and its employees or agents, that Vendor is not aware that any such gift has been offered, accepted, or promised by any employees of your organization.

By executing this proposal, Vendor certifies that it has read and agreed to the **INSTRUCTION TO VENDORS** and the **NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS incorporated herein**. These documents can be accessed from the ATTACHMENTS page within this document.

Failure to execute/sign proposal prior to submittal may render proposal invalid and it MAY BE REJECTED. Late proposals shall not be accepted.

COMPLETE/FORMAL NAME OF VENDOR:		
STREET ADDRESS:	P.O. BOX:	ZIP:
CITY & STATE & ZIP:	TELEPHONE NUMBER:	TOLL FREE TEL. NO:
PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS ADDRESS IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE (SEE INSTRUCTIONS TO VENDORS ITEM #21):		
PRINT NAME & TITLE OF PERSON SIGNING ON BEHALF OF VENDOR:		
VENDOR'S AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE*:	DATE:	EMAIL:

VALIDITY PERIOD

Offer shall be valid for at least sixty 60 days from date of bid opening, unless otherwise stated here: _____ days, or if extended by mutual agreement of the parties in writing. Any withdrawal of this offer shall be made in writing, effective upon receipt by the agency issuing this RFP.

ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSAL

If your proposal is accepted, all provisions of this RFP, along with the written results of any negotiations, shall constitute the written agreement between the parties ("Contract"). The NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS are incorporated herein and shall apply. Depending upon the Goods or Services being offered, other terms and conditions may apply, as mutually agreed.

<p>FOR STATE USE ONLY: Offer accepted and Contract awarded this _____ day of _____, 20____, as indicated on</p> <p>The attached certification, by _____.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Authorized Representative of North Carolina A&T State University)</p>
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1.0 PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University is seeking proposals from qualified vendors to provide Artificial Intelligence (AI)-assisted, data-driven enrollment digital marketing services in support of the University's Double Masters Ag MBA Program, jointly administered by the College of Agriculture & Environmental Sciences (CAES) and the Willie A. Deese College of Business & Economics (COBE).

The selected vendor will support recruitment, inquiry management, engagement, and enrollment growth for upcoming admission cycles, with an emphasis on continuity, data integrity, and sustained market presence.

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University introduced a double master's degree pathway for Spring 2026 that allows students to receive dual degrees in business administration and agricultural and environmental systems - all within two years. The CAES master's degree features a concentration in agribusiness and food industry management.

This innovative, is based on a 45-credit hour course of study jointly developed by the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences (CAES) and the Willie A. Deese College of Business and Economics and marks a historic milestone as the first double master's degree pathway at N.C. A&T.

The intent of this solicitation is to award an **Agency Specific Contract**

1.1 CONTRACT TERM

The Contract shall have an initial term of **two (2)** years, beginning on the date of final Contract execution the "Effective Date").

At the end of the Contract's initial term, the State shall have the option, in its sole discretion, to renew the Contract on the same terms and conditions for up to (1) additional one-year term. The State will give the Vendor written notice of its intent to exercise each option no later than **thirty (30)** days before the end of the Contract's then-current term. In addition to any optional renewal terms, and with the Vendor's concurrence, the State reserves the right to extend the Contract after the last active term.

Proposals shall be submitted in accordance with the terms and conditions of this RFP and any addenda issued hereto.

2.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL DOCUMENT

This RFP is comprised of the base RFP document, any attachments, and any addenda released before Contract award, which are incorporated herein by reference.

2.2 E-PROCUREMENT FEE

ATTENTION: The E-Procurement fee may apply to this solicitation. See the paragraph entitled ELECTRONIC PROCUREMENT of the North Carolina General Terms and Conditions.

General information on the E-Procurement Services can be found at: <http://eprocurement.nc.gov/>.

This is not an e-Procurement solicitation

2.3 NOTICE TO VENDORS REGARDING RFP TERMS AND CONDITIONS

If shall be the Vendor’s responsibility to read the Instructions to Vendors, the North Carolina General Terms and Conditions, all relevant exhibits and attachments, and any other components made a part of this RFP and comply with all requirements and specifications herein. Vendors are also responsible for obtaining and complying with all Addenda and other changes that may be issued in connection with this RFP.

If Vendors have questions or issues regarding any component of this RFP, those must be submitted as questions in accordance with the instructions in the PROPOSAL QUESTIONS Section. If the State determines that any changes will be made as a result of the questions asked, then such decisions will be communicated in the form of an RFP addendum. The State may also elect to leave open the possibility for later negotiation of specific provisions of the Contract that have been addressed during the question-and-answer period, prior to contract award.

Other than through the process of negotiation under 01 NCAC 05B.0503, the State rejects and will not be required to evaluate or consider any additional or modified terms and conditions submitted with Vendor’s proposal or otherwise. This applies to any language appearing in or attached to the document as part of the Vendor’s proposal that purports to vary any terms and conditions or Vendors’ instructions herein or to render the proposal non-binding or subject to further negotiation. Vendor’s proposal shall constitute a firm offer that shall be held open for the period required herein (“Validity Period” above).

The State may exercise its discretion to consider Vendor proposed modifications. By execution and delivery of this RFP Response, the Vendor agrees that any additional or modified terms and conditions, whether submitted purposely or inadvertently, shall have no force or effect, and will be disregarded unless expressly agreed upon through negotiation and incorporated by way of a Best and Final Offer (BAFO). Noncompliance with, or any attempt to alter or delete, this paragraph shall constitute sufficient grounds to reject Vendor’s proposal as nonresponsive.

2.4 RFP SCHEDULE

The table below shows the *intended* schedule for this RFP. The State will make every effort to adhere to this schedule.

Event	Responsibility	Date and Time
Issue RFP	State	3/3/2026
Submit Written Questions	Vendor	3/6/2026
Provide Response to Questions	State	3/10/2026
Submit Proposals	Vendor	3/20/2026
Contract Award	State	3/26/2026

2.5 PROPOSAL QUESTIONS

Upon review of the RFP documents, Vendors may have questions to clarify or interpret the RFP in order to submit the best proposal possible. To accommodate the Proposal Questions process, Vendors shall submit any such questions by the “Submit Written Questions” date and time provided in the RFP SCHEDULE Section above, unless modified by Addendum.

Written questions shall be submitted through Bonfire/Euna by the date and time specified above. Vendors should enter “RFP # **59-P2407: Questions**” as the subject for the email. Question submittals should include a reference to the applicable RFP section and be submitted in the format shown below:

Reference	Vendor Question
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RFP Section, Page Number	Vendor question ...?
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Questions received prior to the submission deadline date, the State’s response, and any additional terms deemed necessary by the State will be posted in the form of an addendum to *the electronic Vendor Portal (eVP)*, <https://evp.nc.gov>, and shall become an Addendum to this RFP. No information, instruction or advice provided orally or informally by any State personnel, whether made in response to a question or otherwise in connection with this RFP, shall be considered authoritative or binding. Vendors shall rely *only* on written material contained in the RFP and an addendum to this RFP.

2.6 PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL

IMPORTANT NOTE: This is an absolute requirement. Late bids, regardless of cause, will not be opened or considered, and will be automatically disqualified from further consideration. Vendor shall bear the sole risk of late submission due to unintended or unanticipated delay. It is the Vendor’s sole responsibility to ensure its proposal has been received as described in this RFP by the specified time and date of opening. The time and date of receipt will be marked on each proposal when received. Any proposal or portion thereof received after the proposal deadline will be rejected.

Instructions: Quotes, subject to the conditions made a part hereof and the receipt requirements described below, shall be received at the address indicated in the table below, for furnishing and delivering those items as described herein.

Electronic responses ONLY will be accepted for this solicitation through the Bonfire Portal:

Electronic address for delivery of Bid Proposal
https://ncat.bonfirehub.com/portal/?tab=openOpportunities

BID SUBMITTAL – NO PAPER SUBMISSIONS

Bonfire/Euna Support Team can also be contracted by calling 1-800-354-8010 Ext. 2. Support by phone and email is provided Monday - Friday from 8 AM – 8 PM EST.

If confidential and proprietary information is included in the proposal, also submit one (1) signed, REDACTED copy of the proposal. Such information may include trade secrets defined by N.C. Gen. Stat. § 66-152 and other information exempted from the Public Records Act pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §132- 1.2. Vendor may designate information, Products, Services or appropriate portions of its response as confidential, consistent with and to the extent permitted under the statutes and rules set forth above. By so redacting any page, or portion of a page, the Vendor warrants that it has formed a good faith opinion, having received such necessary or proper review by counsel and other knowledgeable advisors, that the portions determined to be confidential and proprietary and redacted as such, meet the requirements of the Rules and Statutes set forth above. However, under no circumstances shall price information be designated as confidential.

If the Vendor does not provide a redacted version of the proposal with its proposal submission, the Department may release an unredacted version if a record request is received.

Failure to submit a proposal in strict accordance with these instructions shall constitute sufficient cause to reject a Vendor’s proposal(s). Vendors are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to upload proposals.

Critical updated information may be included in Addenda to this RFP. It is important that all Vendors responding to this RFP periodically check the State's eVP website for any Addenda that may be issued prior to the bid opening date. All Vendors shall be deemed to have read and understood all information in this RFP and all Addenda thereto.

2.7 PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Vendors shall populate all attachments of this RFP that require the Vendor to provide information and include an authorized signature where requested. Failure to provide all required items, or Vendor's submission of incomplete items, may result in the State rejecting Vendor's proposal, in the State's sole discretion.

Vendor RFP responses shall include the following items and attachments, which shall be arranged in the following order:

- a) **Cover Letter**, which must contain the following: (i) a statement that confirms that the proposer has read the RFP in its entirety, including all links, and all Addenda released in conjunction with the RFP, (ii) a statement that the Vendor agrees to perform in accordance with the scope of work, requirements, and specifications contained herein; and (iii) Vendor's agreement to comply with all instructions, terms and conditions, and attachments.
- b) **Title Page**: Include the company name, address, phone number and authorized representative along with the Proposal Number.
- c) Completed and signed version of all **EXECUTION PAGES**, along with the body of the RFP.
- d) Signed receipt pages of any **addenda** released in conjunction with this RFP, if required to be returned.
- e) Vendor's Proposal addressing all Specifications of this RFP. *[Indicate relative section references as a guide to responding to sections requiring additional responses outside of the solicitation document. If not required, delete.]*
- f) Completed version of ATTACHMENT A: PROPOSAL – Required sections broken up in Bonfire
- g) Completed version of ATTACHMENT D: HUB SUPPLEMENTAL VENDOR INFORMATION
- h) Completed version of ATTACHMENT F: LOCATION OF WORKERS UTILIZED BY VENDOR
- i) Completed and signed version of ATTACHMENT G: CERTIFICATION OF FINANCIAL CONDITION
- j) Completed and signed version of CERTIFICATION FOR CONTRACTS, GRANTS, LOANS, AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS and OMB STANDARD FORM LLL

2.8 ALTERNATE PROPOSALS

Unless provided otherwise in this RFP, Vendor may submit alternate proposals for comparable Goods, various methods or levels of Service(s), or that propose different options. Alternate proposals must specifically identify the RFP requirements and advantage(s) addressed by the alternate proposal. Any alternate proposal, in addition to the marking described above, must be clearly marked with the legend: "Alternate Proposal #___ *[for 'name of Vendor']*". Each proposal must be for a specific set of Goods and Services and must include specific pricing. If a Vendor chooses to respond with various offerings, each must be offered with a separate price and be contained in a separate proposal document. Each proposal must be complete and independent of other proposals offered.

3.0 METHOD OF AWARD AND PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCESS

3.1 METHOD OF AWARD

North Carolina G.S. 143-52 provides a general list of criteria the State shall use to award contracts, as supplemented by the additional criteria herein. The Goods or Services being procured shall dictate the application and order of

criteria; however, all award decisions shall be in the State’s best interest. All qualified proposals will be evaluated, and awards will be made to the Vendor(s) meeting the specific RFP Specifications and achieving the highest and best final evaluation, based on the criteria described below.

While the intent of this RFP is to award a Contract(s) to a **single Vendor**, the State reserves the right to make separate awards to different Vendors for one or more line items, to not award one or more line items or to cancel this RFP in its entirety without awarding a Contract, if it is considered to be most advantageous to the State to do so.

The State reserves the right to waive any minor informality or technicality in proposals received.

3.2 CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROHIBITED COMMUNICATIONS DURING EVALUATION

While this RFP is under evaluation, the responding Vendor, including any subcontractors and suppliers, is prohibited from engaging in conversations intended to influence the outcome of the evaluation. See Paragraph 29 of the Instructions to Vendors entitled COMMUNICATIONS BY VENDORS.

Each Vendor submitting a proposal to this RFP, including its employees, agents, subcontractors, suppliers, subsidiaries and affiliates, is prohibited from having any communications with any person inside or outside the using agency; issuing agency; other government agency office or body (including the procurement lead named above, any department secretary, agency head, members of the General Assembly and Governor’s office); or private entity, if the communication refers to the content of Vendor’s proposal or qualifications, the content of another Vendor’s proposal, another Vendor’s qualifications or ability to perform a resulting contract, and/or the transmittal of any other communication of information that could be reasonably considered to have the effect of directly or indirectly influencing the evaluation of proposals, the award of a contract, or both.

Any Vendor not in compliance with this provision shall be disqualified from evaluation and award. A Vendor’s proposal may be disqualified if its subcontractor and/or supplier engage in any of the foregoing communications during the time that the procurement is active (*i.e.*, the issuance date of the procurement until the date of contract award or cancellation of the procurement). Only those discussions, communications or transmittals of information authorized or initiated by the issuing agency for this RFP or inquiries directed to the procurement lead named in this RFP regarding requirements of the RFP (prior to proposal submission) or the status of the award (after submission) are excepted from this provision.

3.3 PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCESS

Only responsive submissions will be evaluated.

The State will conduct a One-Step evaluation of Proposals:

Proposals will be received according to the method stated in the Proposal Submittal Section above.

All proposals must be received by the issuing agency not later than the date and time specified in the RFP SCHEDULE Section above, unless modified by Addendum. Vendors are cautioned that this is a request for offers, not an offer or request to contract, and the State reserves the unqualified right to reject any and all offers at any time if such rejection is deemed to be in the best interest of the State.

At the date and time provided in the RFP SCHEDULE Section above, unless modified by Addendum, the proposal from each responding Vendor will be opened publicly and all offers (except those that have been previously withdrawn, or voided bids) will be tabulated. The tabulation shall be made public at the time it is created. When negotiations after receipt of bids are authorized pursuant to G.S. 143-49 and 01 NCAC 05B.0503, only the names of offerors and the Goods and Services offered shall be tabulated at the time of opening. If negotiation is anticipated, cost and price shall become available for public inspection at the time of the award. Interested parties are cautioned that these costs and

their components are subject to further evaluation for completeness and correctness and therefore may not be an exact indicator of a Vendor’s pricing position.

At their option, the evaluators may request oral presentations or discussions with any or all Vendors for clarification or to amplify the materials presented in any part of the proposal. Vendors are cautioned, however, that the evaluators are not required to request presentations or other clarification—and often do not. Therefore, all proposals should be complete and reflect the most favorable terms available from the Vendor.

Upon completion of the evaluation process, the State will make award(s) based on the evaluation and post the award(s) to the State’s EVP website under the RFP number for this solicitation. Award of a Contract to one Vendor does not mean that the other proposals lacked merit, but that, all factors considered, the selected proposal was deemed most advantageous and represented the best value to the State.

The State reserves the right to negotiate with one or more vendors, or to reject all original offers and negotiate with one or more sources of supply that may be capable of satisfying the requirement, and in either case to require Vendor to submit a Best and Final Offer (BAFO) based on discussions and negotiations with the State.

3.4 EVALUATION CRITERIA

In addition to the general criteria in G.S. 143-52 which may or may not be relevant to this RFP, all qualified proposals will be evaluated, and award made based on considering the following criteria, to result in an award most advantageous to the State:

Total Overall Points for both Technical and Pricing: 300

Technical Evaluation Criteria Descriptions (200 Maximum Points)

1. Technical Approach and Methodology (40 Points)

Evaluation will include:

- Understanding of project objectives and program enrollment goals
- Clarity, completeness, and feasibility of the proposed implementation plan
- Description of project phases, timelines, and deliverables
- Use of artificial intelligence, automation, and data-driven decision-making
- Description of project management structure, communication protocols, and procedures
- Ability to ensure transparency, accountability, and measurable performance outcomes
- Description of quality assurance and continuous improvement processes

2. Vendor Qualifications and Experience (30 Points)

Evaluation will include:

- Company background, stability, and organizational structure

- Relevant experience providing enrollment marketing services for universities, graduate programs, or similar organizations
- Demonstrated success in increasing inquiries, applications, and enrollments
- Qualifications and experience of proposed staff assigned to this project
- Experience using AI, automation, and analytics tools in enrollment marketing
- Demonstrated ability to successfully deliver services of similar scope and complexity

3. Enrollment Marketing Strategy and Innovation (30 Points)

Evaluation will include:

- Quality, creativity, and effectiveness of the proposed enrollment marketing strategy
- Use of artificial intelligence, predictive analytics, and automation to identify and target prospective students
- Proposed audience segmentation methodology
- Approach to personalized outreach and engagement
- Proposed digital marketing channels and campaign strategy
- Approach to campaign optimization and performance improvement
- Ability to adapt strategy based on performance data and market trends
- Demonstrated innovative approaches that improve recruitment outcomes

4. Inquiry Management and Engagement Capabilities (30 Points)

Evaluation will include:

- Description of inquiry management platform and capabilities
- Ability to capture, track, and manage prospective student inquiries
- Use of AI-assisted chat, automation, and engagement tools
- Response workflows and escalation procedures
- Ability to provide timely and accurate responses to inquiries
- Ability to track engagement activities and conversion outcomes
- System usability, reliability, and scalability

5. Reporting, Analytics, and Performance Measurement (20 Points)

Evaluation will include:

- Quality and clarity of proposed reporting structure and methodology
- Ability to track and report key performance metrics, including inquiries, applications, enrollments, and conversion rates
- Description of analytics tools and reporting platforms
- Ability to provide dashboards and real-time performance visibility
- Ability to provide enrollment forecasting and trend analysis
- Ability to use data insights to optimize marketing performance

Summary Table

Evaluation Area	Criteria Description	Max Points
Technical Approach and Methodology	Evaluation of overall approach and methodology as it relates to comprehensive understanding of program goals, strategic alignment with 2-year enrollment targets, and alignment with requirements. Ability to execute and vendor’s approach to managing expectations from the initial consultation to final delivery and mitigating risks.	50
Vendor Qualifications and Experience	Evaluation will assess organizational qualifications, experience, and demonstrated success in providing digital enrollment marketing services, particularly with land grant Universities or HBCU’s within higher education.	40
Enrollment Marketing Strategy and Innovation	Evaluation will assess proposed enrollment marketing strategy, including the use of innovative tools, technologies, and data-driven approaches to effectively recruit and engage prospective students.	35
Inquiry Management and Engagement Capabilities	Evaluation will assess ability to provide effective, responsive, and scalable inquiry management and engagement services.	30
Reporting, Analytics, and Performance Measurement	Evaluation will assess ability to provide comprehensive reporting, analytics, and performance measurement to support data-driven decision-making and continuous improvement.	30
Timeframe	Ability to meet timeframe	15
Sub-Total		200

Pricing: (100 Maximum Points)

Pricing must be all inclusive.

The proposal with the lowest cost will receive a score of XX. All other competing proposals will be assigned a portion of the maximum score using the formula example below.

$$XX \times \frac{\text{the cost of the lowest cost proposal}}{\text{the cost of the cost proposal being evaluated}}$$

3.5 PERFORMANCE OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES

Vendor shall complete ATTACHMENT F: LOCATION OF WORKERS UTILIZED BY VENDOR. In addition to any other evaluation criteria identified in this RFP, the State may also consider, for purposes of evaluating proposed or actual contract performance outside of the United States, how that performance may affect the following factors to ensure that any award will be in the best interest of the State:

- a) Total cost to the State
- b) Level of quality provided by the Vendor
- c) Process and performance capability across multiple jurisdictions
- d) Protection of the State’s information and intellectual property
- e) Availability of pertinent skills
- f) Ability to understand the State’s business requirements and internal operational culture
- g) Particular risk factors such as the security of the State’s information technology
- h) Relations with citizens and employees
- i) Contract enforcement jurisdictional issues

3.6 INTERPRETATION OF TERMS AND PHRASES

This RFP serves two functions: (1) to advise potential Vendors of the parameters of the solution being sought by the State; and (2) to provide (together with other specified documents) the terms of the Contract resulting from this procurement. The use of phrases such as “shall,” “must,” and “requirements” are intended to create enforceable contract conditions. In determining whether proposals should be evaluated or rejected, the State will take into consideration the degree to which Vendors have proposed or failed to propose solutions that will satisfy the State’s needs as described in the RFP. Except as specifically stated in the RFP, no one requirement shall automatically disqualify a Vendor from consideration. However, failure to comply with any single requirement may result in the State exercising its discretion to reject a proposal in its entirety.

4.0 REQUIREMENTS

This Section lists the requirements related to this RFP. By submitting a proposal, the Vendor agrees to meet all stated requirements in this Section as well as any other specifications, requirements, and terms and conditions stated in this RFP. If a Vendor is unclear about a requirement or specification, or believes a change to a requirement would allow for the State to receive a better proposal, the Vendor is urged to submit these items in the form of a question during the question-and-answer period in accordance with the Proposal Questions Section above.

4.1 PRICING

Proposal price shall constitute the total cost to the State for complete performance in accordance with the requirements and specifications herein, including all applicable charges for handling, transportation, administrative

and other similar fees. Complete ATTACHMENT A: Vendor’s proposal. The pricing provided in ATTACHMENT A, or resulting from any negotiations, is incorporated herein and shall become part of any resulting Contract.

4.2 FINANCIAL STABILITY

As a condition of contract award, the Vendor must certify that it has the financial capacity to perform and to continue to perform its obligations under the Contract; that Vendor has no constructive or actual knowledge of an actual or potential legal proceeding being brought against Vendor that could materially adversely affect performance of this Contract; and that entering into this Contract is not prohibited by any contract, or order by any court of competent jurisdiction.

Each Vendor shall certify it is financially stable by completing ATTACHMENT G: CERTIFICATION OF FINANCIAL CONDITION. The State is requiring this certification to minimize potential issues from contracting with a Vendor that is financially unstable. From the date of the Certification to the expiration of the Contract, the Vendor shall notify the State within thirty (30) days of any occurrence or condition that materially alters the truth of any statement made in this Certification. The Contract Manager may require annual recertification of the Vendor’s financial stability

4.3 HUB PARTICIPATION

Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute G.S. 143-48, it is State policy to encourage and promote the use of small, minority, physically handicapped, and women contractors in purchasing Goods and Services. As such, this RFP will serve to identify those Vendors that are minority owned or have a strategic plan to support the State’s Historically Underutilized Business program by meeting or exceeding the goal of 10% utilization of diverse firms as 1st or 2nd tier subcontractors. Vendor shall complete ATTACHMENT D: HUB SUPPLEMENTAL VENDOR INFORMATION.

4.4 VENDOR EXPERIENCE

In its Proposal, Vendor shall demonstrate experience with public and/or private sector clients with similar or greater size and complexity to the State. Vendor shall provide information as to the qualifications and experience of all executive, managerial, legal, and professional personnel to be assigned to this project, citing experience with similar projects and the responsibilities to be assigned to each person.

4.5 BACKGROUND CHECKS

Any personnel or agent of Vendor performing Services under any Contract arising from this RFP may be required to undergo a background check at the expense of the Vendor, if so requested by the State.

4.6 PERSONNEL

Vendor warrants that qualified personnel shall provide Services under this Contract in a professional manner. “Professional manner” means that the personnel performing the Services will possess the skill and competence consistent with the prevailing business standards in the industry. Vendor will serve as the prime contractor under this Contract and shall be responsible for the performance and payment of all subcontractor(s) that may be approved by the State. Names of any third-party Vendors or subcontractors of Vendor may appear for purposes of convenience in Contract documents; and shall not limit Vendor’s obligations hereunder. Vendor will retain executive representation for functional and technical expertise as needed in order to incorporate any work by third party subcontractor(s).

Should the Vendor’s proposal result in an award, the Vendor shall be required to agree that it will not substitute key personnel assigned to the performance of the Contract without prior written approval by the Contract Lead. Vendor shall further agree that it will notify the Contract Lead of any desired substitution, including the name(s) and references

of Vendor’s recommended substitute personnel. The State will approve or disapprove the requested substitution in a timely manner. The State may, in its sole discretion, terminate the Services of any person providing Services under this Contract. Upon such termination, the State may request acceptable substitute personnel or terminate the contract Services provided by such personnel.

4.7 VENDOR’S REPRESENTATIONS

If Vendor’s Proposal results in an award, Vendor agrees that it will not enter any agreement with a third party that may abridge any rights of the State under the Contract. If any Services, deliverables, functions, or responsibilities not specifically described in this solicitation are required for Vendor’s proper performance, provision and delivery of the Service and deliverables under a resulting Contract, or are an inherent part of or necessary sub-task included within such Service, they will be deemed to be implied by and included within the scope of the Contract to the same extent and in the same manner as if specifically described in the Contract. Unless otherwise expressly provided herein, Vendor will furnish all of its own necessary management, supervision, labor, facilities, furniture, computer and telecommunications equipment, software, supplies and materials necessary for the Vendor to provide and deliver the Services and/or other Deliverables.

4.8 AGENCY INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS MODIFICATION

A. Default Insurance Coverage from the General Terms and Conditions applicable to this Solicitation:

Small Purchases

Contract value in excess of the Small Purchase threshold, but up to \$1,000,000.00

Contract value in excess of \$1,000,000.00

4.9 SUBCONTRACTORS

No portion of the work shall be subcontracted without prior written consent of the State. In the event that the Vendor desires to subcontract some part of the work specified herein, the Vendor shall furnish with their bid the names, qualifications, and experience of their proposed subcontractors. The Vendor shall, however, remain solely and fully liable and responsible for the work done by its subcontractor(s) and shall assure compliance with all the requirements and specifications of the contract. equity

4.10 SECRETARY OF STATE REGISTRATION

Prior to entering into a contract with the State, the awarded Vendor(s) must complete registration with the NC Secretary of State. Upon notification of award, the selected Vendor(s) must furnish evidence of filing within 10 business days. Failure to provide this documentation may result in the disqualification of the Vendor(s) bid from further consideration for the award. **No purchase orders shall be issued prior to confirmation of completed registration with the Secretary of State.**

No purchase orders shall be issued prior to confirmation of completed registration with the Secretary of State.

A contract award under the above-referenced solicitation, and the resulting purchase orders, will produce repeated orders and transactions in North Carolina and will constitute “transacting business” in the State, which requires a certificate of authority from the North Carolina Secretary of State as provided in G.S. §55-15-01 (corporations) or §57D-7-01 (LLCs). Please go to: <https://www.sosnc.gov/> to register.

Vendor registered with the North Carolina Secretary of State: Yes No

4.12 LOBBYING ACTIVITY CERTIFICATION FOR FEDERAL GRANTS

Federal law prohibits recipients of federal funds, whether through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements, from using those funds to influence or attempt to influence (lobby) a federal official in connection with obtaining, extending, or modifying any federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement. Further, federal law requires that applicants for federal funds certify:

- that they abide by the above restrictions;
- that they disclose any permissible (non-federal) paid lobbying on the Federal Awards being applied for; and
- that such certification requirements will also be included in any subawards meeting the applicable thresholds.

Vendors must complete and submit the CERTIFICATION FOR CONTRACTS, GRANTS, LOANS, AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS and the OMB STANDARD FORM LLL when responding to this solicitation.

5.0 SPECIFICATIONS AND SCOPE OF WORK/SERVICES

5.1 GENERAL

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (N.C. A&T) is seeking proposals from qualified vendors to provide AI-assisted, data-driven enrollment marketing services in support of the University’s Double Masters Ag MBA Program, jointly administered by the College of Agriculture & Environmental Sciences (CAES) and the Willie A. Deese College of Business & Economics (COBE).

The selected vendor will support recruitment, inquiry management, engagement, and enrollment growth for upcoming admission cycles, with an emphasis on continuity, data integrity, and sustained market presence.

5.2 SPECIFICATIONS, TASKS, & DELIVERABLES

A. Enrollment Projections

Based on comparable dual-degree and professional graduate programs, institutional capacity, and market demand, our realistic enrollment targets are as follows:

- **End of Year One (2026–2027): 10 enrolled students**
- **End of Year Two (2027–2028): 20 enrolled students**

These projections reflect a deliberate, sustainable growth model focused on academic quality, student support, and long-term program viability.

Vendors must address each area in their Technical Proposal response. Upload responses in Bonfire aligned with the appropriate sections under Required Information

B. Experience and Qualifications

1. **Experience** - Provide a narrative that gives the company history and background. Ensure the narrative addresses the following:
 - Identify how long the company has been in business providing all of the services requested herein in this RFP.
 - Discuss prior experience working with a land grant institution or HBCU on a project this size or larger.
 - Discuss a minimum of two (2) previous projects (preferably with higher education institutions) that the company provided the same or similar to the services requested in this RFP. The information must:

- Include the strategy and transparency of how the supplier managed expectations from the initial consultation to final delivery.

2. Qualification – Identify the personnel, the title, role and responsibilities for this project. t. Provide each person’s resume as part of this response.

Name	Title	Role	Responsibilities

C. AI-Assisted Enrollment Marketing Strategy & Execution

1. Scope

- Design and execution of targeted digital enrollment marketing campaigns
- Use of artificial intelligence and data analytics to identify, segment, and engage prospective students
- Personalized outreach strategies aligned with student interests and program objectives
- Continuous campaign optimization using performance metrics and analytics

2. Discuss a different project (from above) (within the last 12 months) in which the company developed and designed an enrollment marketing campaign using AI and data analytics to identify, segment, and engage prospective students.

3. Discuss the performance metrics and analytics used to measure the projects campaign optimization. Discuss any adjustments that may have been made to ensure the success of the campaign.

D. Digital Content Development & Distribution

- Development of enrollment marketing content including:
 - Digital advertisements
 - Social media campaigns
 - Program-specific landing page content
 - Email and automated nurture campaigns
- Distribution of content across web-based and digital communication platforms
- Messaging tailored to graduate-level, working professional, and agribusiness audiences

Describe how you will develop, manage, and distribute digital marketing content tailored to the Ag MBA audience, including messaging strategy and channel selection.

E. Customer Service & Engagement Support

- Provision of inquiry management services for prospective students
- Online chat and digital inquiry response capabilities
- Escalation and routing of inquiries requiring university staff involvement
- Tracking and reporting of inquiries and follow-up actions

Explain how you as the vendor will manage prospective student inquiries, including response workflows, AI-supported engagement tools, escalation procedures, and methods for engagement tracking to support outcomes.

F. Virtual Recruitment Events and Webinars

- Development and management of live, virtual, and evergreen recruitment events
- Promotion and marketing of recruitment events
- Tracking of participation, engagement, and follow-up activities
- Reporting on event effectiveness and outcomes

Describe your approach to planning, promoting, managing, and evaluating virtual recruitment events, including how participation and post-event follow-up will support enrollment goals.

G. Data Analytics, Reporting, and Optimization

- Ongoing monitoring of enrollment marketing performance
- Analytics related to inquiries, engagement, and conversion trends
- Market analysis and enrollment forecasting
- Monthly and quarterly performance analytics reports

Provide a description of proposed reporting and analytics approach, including performance metrics tracked, reporting frequency, dashboard capabilities, and how data insights will be used to improve results. Include sample data analytics, reporting, and dashboards.

H. Systems, Hosting, Automation, and Licensing

- Provision and maintenance of platforms required to support enrollment marketing activities
- Hosting and system support necessary to deliver services
- Automation tools to support workflow efficiency and personalization
- User access and licensing required for service delivery

Explain the platforms, systems, hosting environment, and automation tools that will be used to deliver services, including system support, user access, data security, and licensing requirements.

I. Project Management and Implementation

The project timeframe requires vendor to be positioned to start kick off meetings with NC A&T SU stakeholders the first week of April, 2026. Are you able to meet timeframe? **YES or NO**

Describe your overall implementation plan, including project phases, timeline, communication structure, and how progress toward deliverables and enrollment targets will be managed.

If, at the conclusion of Year Two, the enrollment target of twenty (20) students has not been achieved what guarantees, if any, do you propose?

Out of Scope

The following are explicitly excluded unless separately negotiated:

- Capital equipment purchases
- Unapproved third-party software or subscription costs
- Content or services not aligned with enrollment marketing objectives
- Additional services beyond the defined scope without an approved amendment

5.3 TECHNICAL APPROACH

Vendor’s proposal shall include, in narrative, outline, and/or graph form the Vendor's approach to accomplishing the tasks outlined in the Scope of Work section of this RFP. A description of each task and deliverable and the schedule for accomplishing each shall be included.

6.0 CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION

All Contract Administration requirements are conditioned on an award resulting from this solicitation. This information is provided for the Vendor’s planning purposes.

6.1 CONTRACT MANAGER AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

The Vendor shall be required to designate and make available to the State a contract manager. The contract manager shall be the State’s point of contact for Contract related issues and issues concerning performance, progress review, scheduling, and service.

Contract Manager Point of Contact	
Name:	
Office Phone #:	
Mobile Phone #:	
Email:	

6.2 INVOICES

Vendor shall invoice the Procurement Entity. The standard format for invoicing shall be Single Invoices meaning that the Vendor shall provide the Procurement Entity with an invoice for each order. Invoices shall include detailed information to allow Procurement Entity to verify pricing at point of receipt matches the correct price from the original date of order. The following fields shall be included on all invoices, as relevant:

Vendor’s Billing Address, Customer Account Number, NC Contract Number, Order Date, Buyer’s Order Number, Manufacturer Part Numbers, Vendor Part Numbers, Item Descriptions, Price, Quantity, and Unit of Measure.

Note: Please ensure the PO Number is clearly printed on the invoice for proper processing

INVOICES SHOULD BE EMAILED TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:

Accounts Payable

Email Address: NCAT.Invoices@trustflowds.com

or

North Carolina A&T State University

PO Box 3986

Scranton, PA 18505

INVOICES MAY NOT BE PAID UNTIL AN INSPECTION HAS OCCURRED AND THE GOODS OR SERVICES ACCEPTED

6.3 POST AWARD BUSINESS REVIEW MEETINGS

The Vendor, at the request of the University, shall be required to meet periodically, *monthly and increasing to bi-weekly as needed*, with the State for Business Review meetings. The purpose of these meetings will be to review project progress reports, discuss Vendor and State performance, address outstanding issues, review problem resolution, provide direction, evaluate continuous improvement and cost saving ideas, and discuss any other pertinent topics.

6.4 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The State encourages the Vendor to identify opportunities to reduce the total cost the State. A continuous improvement effort consists of various ways to enhance business efficiencies as performance progresses.

6.5 ACCEPTANCE OF WORK

Performance of the work and/or delivery of Goods shall be conducted and completed at least in accordance with the Contract requirements and recognized and customarily accepted industry practices. Performance shall be considered complete when the Services or Goods are approved as acceptable by the Contract Manager.

Renewal is contingent upon satisfactory performance, continued program need, and availability of funds.

Performance will be based on the following criteria at minimum but may be expanded as outlined in a mutually agreed upon MSA:

- Meeting End of Year One (2026–2027) Goal : 10 enrolled students
- Meeting End of Year Two (2027–2028) Goal: 20 enrolled students
- Data analytics that show how growth in digital presence has resulted in successful click through rates
- Quarterly Reporting showing inquiry-to-application conversion rate, application-to-enrollment conversion rate, enrollment growth percentage, and Tracking of applicant follow-up, advising interactions, and response times

- Monthly performance reports documenting campaign ROI, cost per lead, and cost per enrollment

6.7 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

During the performance of the Contract, the parties agree that it is in their mutual interest to resolve disputes informally. Any claims by the Vendor shall be submitted in writing to the State’s Contract Manager for resolution. Any claims by the State shall be submitted in writing to the Vendor’s Project Manager for resolution. The Parties shall agree to negotiate in good faith and use all reasonable efforts to resolve such dispute(s).

During the time the Parties are attempting to resolve any dispute, each shall proceed diligently to perform their respective duties and responsibilities under this Contract. The Parties will agree on a reasonable amount of time to resolve a dispute. If a dispute cannot be resolved between the Parties within the agreed upon period, either Party may elect to exercise any other remedies available under the Contract, or at law. This provision, when agreed in the Contract, shall not constitute an agreement by either party to mediate or arbitrate any dispute.

6.10 CONTRACT CHANGES

Contract changes, if any, over the life of the Contract shall be implemented by contract amendments agreed to in writing by the State and Vendor. Amendments to the contract can only be made through the contract administrator.

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7.0 ATTACHMENTS

****IMPORTANT NOTICE****

RETURN THE REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS WITH YOUR RESPONSE
FOLLOW THE LINKS TO ACCESS EACH ATTACHMENT

ATTACHMENT A: FULL PROPOSAL & PRICING

Complete and return your full proposal associated with all requirements within this RFP including the proposed pricing sheet in Bonfire.

ATTACHMENT B: INSTRUCTIONS TO VENDORS

The Instructions to Vendors, which are incorporated herein by this reference, may be found here:

<https://www.doa.nc.gov/pandc/north-carolina-instructions-vendors-1-2025/open>

ATTACHMENT C: NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL TERMS & CONDITIONS

The North Carolina General Terms and Conditions, which are incorporated herein by this reference, may be found here:

<https://www.doa.nc.gov/north-carolina-general-terms-and-conditions-5-2025/open>

ATTACHMENT D: HUB SUPPLEMENTAL VENDOR INFORMATION

Complete and return the Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUB) Vendor Information form, which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.doa.nc.gov/pandc/onlineforms/pc-hub-supplemental-vendor-information-92021-pdf/open>

ATTACHMENT F: LOCATION OF WORKERS UTILIZED BY VENDOR

Complete and return the Location of Workers Utilized by Vendor, which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.doa.nc.gov/pandc/onlineforms/pc-worker-location-92021-pdf/open>

ATTACHMENT G: CERTIFICATION OF FINANCIAL CONDITION

Complete, sign, and return the Certification of Financial Condition, which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.doa.nc.gov/pandc/onlineforms/pc-certification-financial-condition-92021-pdf/open>

LOBBYING ACTIVITY CERTIFICATION FOR FEDERAL GRANTS

The Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements and the OMB Standard Form LLL are separate documents that can be found at the following link:

<https://www.doa.nc.gov/pc-contracts-grants-loans-cooperative-agreements-certification-72020-pdf/open>

***** Failure to Return the Required Attachments May Eliminate
Your Response from Further Consideration *****