

**WEST VIRGINIA HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY COMMISSION
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
VERIFICATION AND DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICES
RFP #19007**

Table of Contents

Section 1	General Information
Section 2	Eligibility Requirements
Section 3	Project and Services Requested
Section 4	Bidder Response and Evaluation Criteria
Section 5	Other Requirements
Section 6	General Terms and Conditions

Exhibits:

Exhibit A	Vendor Registration Form
Exhibit B	Taxpayer Identification Form W9
Exhibit C	Purchasing Affidavit
Exhibit D	Title Page
Exhibit E	Agreement Addendum

Questions will be received until August 31, 2018 by 5:00pm EST

Proposals due October 3, 2018 by 3:00pm EST

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
VERIFICATION AND DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICES
RFP #19007**

Section 1: General Information

1.1 Purpose: The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (Commission) and the West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education (Council) are seeking proposals from qualified vendors to provide Verification and Document Management Services for the public higher education institutions in West Virginia.

1.2 Schedule of Events:

Release of RFP: August 15, 2018
Question Deadline: August 31, 2018 by 5:00 PM, EST
Addendum/Response to Questions: September 14, 2018
Proposal Due Date: October 3, 2018 by 3:00 PM, EST
Target Award Date: November 16, 2018

1.3 Bidder's Point of Contact: The sole point of contact for questions, clarification and inquiries concerning this Request for Proposal (RFP) is:

Mary Blashford
Director of Procurement
WV Higher Education Policy Commission
1018 Kanawha Blvd., E, Suite 700
Charleston, WV 25301
Phone: 304-558-0281 Ext. 241
E-mail: mary.blashford@wvhepc.edu

1.4 Posting of Information: This RFP and any addenda, including answers to questions, will be posted on the webpage address listed below. It is the vendor's responsibility to check this webpage for current information regarding this RFP.

<http://www.wvhepc.edu/resources/purchasing-and-finance/>

1.5 Questions and Answers: Questions concerning this RFP will be received in writing (via e-mail is acceptable) by the point of contact until the deadline identified in Section 1.2. When submitting questions by e-mail, please reference RFP 19007 in the subject line. Questions, if any, will be answered by addendum and posted to the webpage identified in Section 1.4 above.

1.6 Proposal Submission: Deliver an original and four (4) copies of the proposal on or before the date required in Section 1.2. The outside of the proposal submission envelope should be clearly marked with the RFP number, the bid opening date/time and the Director of Procurement's name. In addition, an electronic copy of the proposal should be submitted; the preferred method for submission of the electronic copy is by flash/thumb drive.

Proposals received after the due time and date will not be considered. It is the bidder's sole responsibility to ensure timely delivery of the proposal.

1.7 Interviews: Discussions and/or interviews may be held with the bidders under final consideration prior to making a selection for award; however, the RFP may be awarded without such discussions or interviews.

1.8 Oral Statements and Commitments: Any oral representations made or assumed to be made during discussions held between the bidder's representatives and the Commission/Council personnel are not binding. Only the information issued in writing and added to the RFP by an official written addendum is binding.

1.9 Rejection of Proposals: The Director of Purchasing reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, in part or in whole, at her discretion. The Director reserves the right to withdraw this RFP at any time for any reason. Submission of, or receipt by, the Director confers no rights upon the bidder nor obligates the Commission/Council in any manner.

1.10 A proposal will not be considered for award if the price in the proposal was not arrived at independently, without collusion, consultation, communication or agreement as to any matter relating to such prices with any other offer or with any competitor. The price quoted in the bidder's proposal will not be subject to any increase and will be considered firm for the life of the contract unless specific provisions have been provided for adjustment in the original contract.

1.11 The Commission/Council will not be held liable for any expenses incurred by any bidder responding to this RFP including expenses to prepare or deliver the proposal or attend any oral presentation.

Section 2: Eligibility Requirements

2.1 Vendor Registration – WV Code § 5A-3-12. The West Virginia Code requires that all vendors be registered with the WV Department of Administration, Purchasing Division, prior to receiving a purchase order for competitive products and/or services exceeding \$25,000. See Exhibit A.

2.2 Debarment – WV Code §5A-3-33 through §5A-3-33F. Vendors that have been debarred by the federal government are not eligible to offer on or receive contracts to supply goods or services to the state and its subdivision for a specified period of time.

2.3 West Virginia Secretary of State. The vendor must be in compliance with the Secretary of State and should provide a copy of their business license with the proposal. For more information, contact the WV Secretary of State.

2.4 Taxpayer Identification Information. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires the Commission to request a taxpayer identification number (TIN) for tax reporting purposes. IRS Form W9 is used to obtain this information. See Exhibit B.

2.5 Purchasing Affidavit – WV State Code §5A-3-10a. WV State Code requires all vendors to submit an affidavit regarding any debt owed to the State. The Affidavit (Exhibit C) should be completed, signed and returned with the bidder’s proposal.

Section 3: Project and Services Requested

3.1 The Commission and the Council are soliciting proposals from qualified vendors under an open-end contract to provide Verification and Document Management Services for public higher education institutions in West Virginia. The Commission is a state government agency located in Charleston, WV. The Commission maintains policy oversight over four-year higher education institutions in West Virginia. The Council maintains policy oversight for the community and technical colleges.

The Commission and Council are interested in partnering with the best qualified company that provides state-of-the-art services and solutions for institutions in West Virginia to assist institutions in the verification process and managing documents. To that end, the Commission requires that the chosen company be able to meet the RFP requirements indicated herein, and provide for expansion and service enhancement needs, and represent the best balance of benefits to costs to the state.

Any contract issued as a result of this RFP is anticipated to begin December 1, 2018 and extend through November 30, 2019. The contract may be renewed annually for up to five years upon mutual agreement between both parties and satisfactory performance by the vendor.

Institutions that may elect to participate in this contract include:

Four-year Institutions:

- Bluefield State College
- Concord University
- Fairmont State University
- Glenville State College
- Marshall University
- Shepherd University
- West Liberty University
- West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine
- West Virginia State University
- West Virginia University
 - Potomac State College of West Virginia University
 - West Virginia University Institute of Technology

Community and Technical Colleges:

- Blue Ridge Community and Technical College
- Bridge Valley Community and Technical College
- Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College
- Mountwest Community and Technical College
- New River Community and Technical College

- Pierpont Community and Technical College
- Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College
- West Virginia Northern Community College
- West Virginia University at Parkersburg

Private institutions of higher education in West Virginia are also eligible to participate in this contract.

3.2 Scope of Services Requested: The Commission/Council seeks to contract with a vendor experienced in partnering with an institution to provide customized services to each institution. Their needs may range from providing fully outsourced financial aid verification services to offering a secure electronic solution that will improve the efficiency and flow of documents from students to the financial aid office with e-sign capabilities.

Any bid response must certify that their product/service complies with:

Federal E-Sign Act
 Title IV Financial Aid applicable statutory and regulatory requirements
 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Items 1-9 below are intended to aid the Evaluation Committee in evaluating each firm's response to determine the degree to which the Commission/Council's needs can be met.

1. Stability
 - a. In an effort to assess your company's overall stability, please provide a history of ownership from *inception to present*, including any and all company name changes, the dates of any strategic equity investments, mergers, buyouts and/or potential buyouts, bankruptcies, downsizing, and processing center relocations.
 - b. If your company is owned by a parent company, please indicate the name of your parent company?
 - c. Indicate the total number of Financial Aid Verification/Document Management Servicing Clients you have added and lost within the past five (5) years.
2. Experience
 - a. How long has your company been providing financial aid verification and/or document management services to higher education institutions?
 - b. How many higher education institutions does your company provide financial aid verification and/or document management services to?
 - c. Of the higher education institutions currently receiving your services, what is the percentage of institutions in each sector (public 4-year, public 2-year, private non-profit, proprietary)?
 - d. Provide three (3) references with similar services as being requested in this RFP. Provide the institution name, a contact name, address, phone number and e-mail.
3. Qualifications
 - a. Describe your company's ability to provide financial aid verification and/or document management services.
 - b. Provide a list of management and staff personnel to be used for this contract. Resumes for key management personnel should be included.

- c. Is your company recognized as a Third Party Servicer in good standing by the Federal Student Aid Third Party Servicer Oversight Group of DOE?
- d. Has the company had any audit findings regarding compliance with federal financial aid laws and regulations?
- e. Describe the company's experience and knowledge of the financial aid process, regulations, as well as FERPA.

4. Project Detail Information

- a. Provide detailed information that defines the company's approach for ensuring system and data security.
- b. What is your approach to analyzing and trending data for an institution?
- c. What is the company's procedures for redundancy of data storage in case of disaster recovery?
- d. Is there mid-year on boarding for institutions that begin using your services after FAFSA and verification processing has already begun for an award year at an institution?
- e. Differentiate how much IT support is needed by the institution for initial implementation and how much is needed for continued processing.
- f. What is the average timeline for implementation?
- g. How much IT support will the institution be required to provide in transferring data to your company?
- h. Describe the services or technology that your company offers that is different from your competitors.
- i. Describe how your company's system is compatible and capable of interfacing with Banner and the secure exchange of verification data and document images with current imaging systems.
- j. What are the institution's responsibilities in the interfacing process for Banner?
- k. Is your student interface for verification and document management mobile friendly and do you offer a mobile app?
- l. Does the solution provide e-signature for students as well as parents?
- m. Can your document management system be used for other processes besides verification? For instance, to collect documents for financial aid appeals?
- n. Does the company employ sub-contractors in order to fulfill either verification or document management services provided to institutions?

5. Verification Services

- a. Briefly describe the verification services you offer institutions.
- b. When would your system ready to start a new verification year?
- c. When is your peak processing time?
- d. What is the average time it takes to complete a verification file once all the documents are received?
- e. Does processing during peak times affect the length of time required for the completion of the verification file?
- f. If your company offers fully outsourced financial aid verification, what number of employees are dedicated to financial aid verification services?
- g. If your company offers fully outsourced financial aid verification, what is the average time it takes to complete a verification file once all documents are received?
- h. How does your company train staff who complete the verification process on behalf of institutions?

- i. What quality assurance measures does your company employ to ensure that verification is completed according to regulations?
 - j. Describe how your company is able to handle increases in verification volume either through additional clients or peak processing time?
 - k. Provide a detailed description regarding how your company verifies and determines the accuracy of various data elements reported by the student/parent on the student's Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and through technology limits the mistakes that a student may make when completing verification forms.
 - l. If your company offers fully outsourced financial aid verification, is the staff located in a central location or are staff that are employed decentralized and work remotely?
 - m. What support does the vendor provide during SCHOOL's annual external Title IV audit required by the Department of Education?
6. Customer Service
- a. What are the hours of operation when either institution representatives or students can contact you?
 - b. Is there a dedicated phone number that institution representatives can call to receive assistance?
 - c. Would each institution have a dedicated representative?
 - d. Does your company provide training to institutional staff? What kind of training is offered? How is the training offered?
7. Reports
- a. What standard reports are available to institutions?
 - b. How are standard reports made available to institutions?
 - c. How often are standard reports updated?
 - d. Are reports available where an institution can drill down to the student level details within a report?
 - e. Are custom reports available? What is the cost for custom reports? Does each institution receive a set amount of custom report requests per contract year?
 - f. What steps does an institution need to go through to request a custom report?
 - g. On average, how long does it take for a custom report to be created?
 - h. Does your company provide dashboard reporting?
8. Document Management
- a. Describe security levels for authenticating students and parents who access any necessary software utilized by the company to complete verification or comment code resolution.
 - b. Detail how your company secures all data with a combination of encryption and data management.
 - c. Describe the document management solution from the student's perspective and what they would experience.
 - d. Describe the document management solution from the financial aid officer's perspective and what they would experience as they process forms.
 - e. Does the solution allow staff a paperless solution from the financial aid officer's perspective and what they would experience as they process forms?
 - f. Does the solution support automation of other financial aid forms besides verification?
 - g. Does the solution provide unlimited system users at no additional cost?
 - h. Does the solution provide secure document upload from any device using encryption?

- i. Is all user interaction logged and accessible via an audit trail?
 - j. If you've recently enhanced your Document Management Servicing Technology/ Platform, please indicate the date in which your product went live.
 - k. Based upon your response to 1.c., indicate the total number of clients actively utilizing your new Document Management Servicing Platform to date.
9. Cost Information
- a. Provide pricing for your base verification/document management services.
 - b. Identify pricing for varying levels of service that an institution may select including a straight technology platform if the institution chooses to manage the collection of verification documents or if the institution wants to fully outsource its verification services.
 - c. How is pricing determined (i.e. based upon the number of verification files completed, a flat rate or some other metric)?
 - d. Indicate if there are discounts to price based upon the number of institutions that participate.
 - e. Provide a breakdown of costs for any services you are offering that are not included above.

Section 4 Bidder Response and Evaluation Criteria

4.1 Economy of Preparation: Proposals should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the bidder's ability to satisfy the requirements of the RFP. Emphasis should be placed on completeness and clarity of content.

4.2 Proposal Format

4.2.1 A Title Page (Exhibit - D) should be provided. The Title Page includes the RFP Number, the Bidder's business name, business address and telephone number, a contact name and e-mail address and includes a signature line and date for the individual authorized to obligate the business. Note: The Title Page is the preferred method of providing the bidder's information. If the bidder does not utilize the Title Page, the bid must provide a cover letter with, at a minimum, the signature of an individual authorized to obligate the company and a date.

4.2.2 Part 1 – Qualifications and Experience. Responses to Section 3.2 Scope of Services Requested, Item 1 Stability, Item 2 Experience and Item 3 Qualifications and should be included here.

4.2.3 Part 2 – Project Detail. Responses to Section 3.2 Scope of Services Requested, Item 4 Project Detail Information should be included here.

4.2.4 Part 3 – Services. Responses to Section 3.2 Scope of Services Requested, Item 5 Verification Services, Item 6 Customer Service, Item 7 Reports and Item 8 Document Management should be included here.

4.2.5 Part 4 – Cost. Responses to Section 3.2 Scope of Services Requested, Item 9 Cost should be included here. All cost information should be placed in a separate sealed envelope clearly marked "Cost Information". It is the intent of the Evaluation Committee to evaluate cost separately from the project information.

4.3 Evaluation.

The proposal will be evaluated on a 100 point scale with points assigned as outlined below.

Qualifications and Experience – 20 points

Project Detail – 20 points

Services – 30 points

Cost – 30 points

An Evaluation Committee comprised of Financial Aid staff and a representative from the Procurement Division will be responsible for point assignments.

It is possible that there will be multiple awards as a result of this RFP; the vendor is encouraged to bid all products and services accordingly.

Section 5: Other Information

5.1 The bidder may include terms and conditions it wishes to offer for consideration in its proposal. If terms and conditions are offered, the Commission will require the successful vendor to sign the WV-96 Agreement Addendum form as prepared by the WV State Attorney General's Office. See Exhibit E.

5.2 By signing the proposal, the bidder affirms that it and its' officers, members and employees have no actual or potential conflict of interest, beyond the conflicts disclosed in its' proposal and will not acquire any interest, direct or indirect, that would conflict or compromise in any manner or degree with the performance of its services under this contract. If any potential conflict is later discovered or if one arises, the vendor must disclose it to the Commission promptly.

5.3 All documents submitted in response to the RFP and any documents created as a result of this RFP are considered public record. All bids, proposals or offers submitted shall become public information and will be available for inspection during normal business hours at the Commission.

The only exception for public record is disclosure information listed in WV Code § 29B-1-4. Primarily, only trade secrets are considered exempt from public disclosure.

Section 6: General Terms and Conditions

6.1 Contract: The RFP and the bidder's response will be incorporated into the contract by reference. The order of precedence is the contract, the RFP and any addendum and the bidder's proposal in the response to the RFP.

6.2 Contract Term: This contract will be effective upon award and shall extend for a period of five (5) years.

6.3 Invoices: The vendor shall submit monthly invoices, in arrears, to the Center at the address listed above in Section 1.1. State law prohibits payment of invoices prior to receipt of services. State law does not provide for interest payments on late payments. Invoices properly prepared and submitted in accordance with the terms and conditions of the contract are usually paid within thirty (30) days.

6.4 Preferred Method of Payment: The Commission prefers to pay invoices via credit card. The Commission and Center utilize a P-card which is state issued. If the vendor does not accept credit card payment, it should be noted in the bid response.

6.5 Contract Changes: Any changes to the original contract will be made via a Change Order issued by the Commission. No change is official until a signed Change Order is produced.

6.6 Contract Termination for Unavailability of Funds. If funds are not appropriated or allocated for the services provided under this contract, the Commission may terminate the contract at the end of the affected current fiscal period without charge or penalty. The Commission shall give the vendor written notice of such non-appropriation or non-allocation of funds as soon as possible after the Commission receives notice.

6.7 Contract Termination for Failure to Perform: The Commission may terminate the contract resulting from this RFP immediately at any time the vendor fails to meet the terms of the contract.

6.8 Governing Law: This contract shall be governed by the laws of the State of West Virginia.