

## Request for Proposal: Recruitment and Enrollment Services

### Proposals due August 27, 2020

#### **Project Summary**

The Vermont State Colleges System is a comprehensive, cohesive and interconnected system that provides affordable, high quality, student-centered, accessible education. The System is made up of three residential institutions and the Community College of Vermont. The residential colleges are Castleton University (CU), Northern Vermont University (NVU) and Vermont Technical College (Vermont Tech). The colleges maintain five residential campuses with extended campuses and distance sites around the state of Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Wisconsin, and Alaska.

The decline in demographics of the Northeast, historical underfunding by the State of Vermont, and the coronavirus pandemic have created multiple strains on enrollment within the system. The residential institutions are seeking to expand their capacity to identify new markets and reach students more effectively. We wish to invest for prosperity to create a larger community of undergraduate students.

The scope of this RFP is for the three residential institutions to engage with an experienced Institute for Higher Education (IHE) recruitment and enrollment services provider through a system-wide contract. The agreement should be a framework to allow individual institutions to increase their respective fall 2021 classes and beyond with good-fit students to retain them throughout their education. The institutions seek to increase the number of inquiries and applicants for the fall 2021 classes and maintain or increase yield performance without direct consequence to enrollment at a sister institution within the system. The benefits of a partnership at the system-level could include enhanced recruitment of minority students and consultation with each institution's Admissions teams, helping to add capacity to their current staff. The system-level contract is to provide efficiency and economy of scale and to recognize cost-savings based on this arrangement.

The scope of services the IHE's expertise must contain and which each institution can utilize at their discretion should include:

- Inquiry-generation programs
- Application-generation programs
- Parent communications
- Yield optimization
- Financial aid optimization
- Targeting analysis
- Project management and oversight
- Creative services
- Reporting and analysis, preferably in a single dashboard
- Primary and best-practices research

The System requests that any services contract allow for flexibility in light of future changes within the system as programs and institutions may evolve. The System also requests that any agreement include annual termination options. To provide proposers with information to assist in

developing cost proposals, we provide population estimates by institution within each area of services required. These figures are for any year-one agreement and subject to change in subsequent years.

**Castleton University List Estimates:**

- Inquiry Generation
  - List source names contacted 40,000
  - Student Responders 4,800
- Application Generation
  - Inquiry pool 6,000
  - Senior search 25,000
  - Common App starters 1,000

**Vermont Tech List Estimates:**

- Inquiry Generation
  - List source names contacted 25,000
  - Student responders 3,750
- Application Generation
  - Inquiry pool 2,000
  - Senior search 20,000
  - Previously purchased names 10,000

**Northern Vermont University Estimates**

- Inquiry Generation
  - List source names contacted 45,000
  - Student responders 5,400
- Application Generation
  - Inquiry Pool 5,000
  - Senior Search 25,000
  - Common App Starters 500

Please also provide a breakdown of estimated expenses for digital advertising, postage, list purchase or any other anticipated costs.

**Qualifications should include:**

1. Demonstrated extensive experience and measurable success with full-funnel IHE inquiry-generation, recruitment and marketing.
2. A portfolio of work inclusive of effective communication strategies, traditional and web-based, designed for today's college-bound student market, as well as any other qualifications the proposer chooses to illustrate.
3. Demonstrated partnerships with institutions using Slate. Ability to extract, manage, and share data with the institution(s) with a customized data integration solution.
4. Demonstrated use of research, data and analytics to inform recruitment efforts, including demonstrated ability to attract students more likely to enroll, persist and graduate.
5. Demonstrated long-term client relationships.
6. A client-centric project management style based on regular meetings and communication among senior leadership of both vendor and client teams.

7. Demonstrated experience working with a higher education system that includes separate institutions with multiple campuses. Demonstrated ways in which the vendor has implemented campaigns within a system that factors for any overlapping academic programs, geographic recruitment territories, and name purchase variables to eliminate prospective students receiving similar messages from each partnering institution.

### **Project Term**

The terms of the resulting contract arising out of this RFP will be from the project award (anticipated: September) to June 30, 2021 with an option on the part of both parties to extend the agreement on the same terms and conditions for an additional term of up to three (3) years.

### **Project Timeline**

RFP release	August 13, 2020
Due date for questions about this RFP	August 20, 2020
Proposal due date	August 27, 2020
Select Vendors for Presentation	August 31, 2020
Vendor Presentation	Week of September 1, 2020
Vendor(s) selected	Week of September 7, 2020

### **Proposals must include:**

- Information on the service providers capabilities and core competencies
- References
- Proposed cost structure, including breakdown of anticipated expenses
- Clear definition of deliverables and client expectations
- Metrics the vendor will use to define success of partnership
- Description of any business relations that your organization currently has or has had with the Vermont State Colleges System, its member institutions, or key resources of the institutions.
- Project timeline(s)
- Project Leader and key team member biographies

### **Award Criteria**

The successful service provider(s) will be selected based on the individual's fit with the VSCS institutions as well as a combination of the following factors:

- Experience with similar work, with preference given to higher education and long-term client experience
- Ability to integrate with Slate
- Data-driven decision-making
- Quality of proposer's work
- Ability to develop a plan within client's timelines and budgets
- Proposed deliverables
- Timeline
- Quality of the proposed team
- Proposed cost



Office of the Chancellor  
PO Box 7  
Montpelier, Vermont 05601

Tel: 802 224 3000  
URL: [vsc.edu](http://vsc.edu)  
Email: [info@vsc.edu](mailto:info@vsc.edu)

The VSCS reserves the right to award some, all, or none of this RFP to one or more bidders.

## **Proposal Submission**

### **Deadlines**

- August 20, 2020: Submit all questions via email to [achaulk@vtc.edu](mailto:achaulk@vtc.edu). Questions and VSCS responses will be shared with all bidders by end of day on August 21
- August 27, 2020: Proposal submission. Submit your proposal in PDF format by 12:00 PM to [achaulk@vtc.edu](mailto:achaulk@vtc.edu).