

VERMONT STATE COLLEGES
- REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR FY2024 - FY2027 AUDITING
SERVICES-

The Vermont State Colleges System hereby invites proposals from certified public accounting firms licensed in Vermont, for annually renewable auditing services to cover the four fiscal years ending June 30, 2024, 2025, 2026, and 2027. Essential activity is: (a) coordination with appropriate officials on annual audit planning and progress; (b) audit of annual financial statements in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, to reflect combined System as well as individual institution information covering the Chancellors Office, Community College of Vermont, Vermont State University, Workforce Development (WFD); (c) audit of federal expenditures under requirements imposed by the Federal Uniform Guidance Single Audit; (d) preparation of System and individual institution management letters; (e) non audit services in connection with this audit engagement; (f) ongoing counsel to the State Colleges regarding new as well as evolving accounting issues, especially critical changes in federal and GASB guidelines; (g) financial statements and footnote disclosures; (h) lease agreements and calculation of GASB87 and GASB 96 Leasing Standard Adjustments and footnote disclosure calculations.

Interested parties can obtain additional information and material by submitting questions to Toby Stewart at the email address below by December 4, 2023. Consolidated questions with responses will be shared with all parties by December 8, 2023. Bids are due by December 22, 2023. Interviews of finalists are anticipated on January 9, 2024, and will be held virtually.

Electronic submissions of proposals should be a maximum of 10 pages. Appendices can be added but will be optional reading only. Please also include your most recent peer review report. Proposals should be submitted electronically on or before December 22, 2023, to:

Toby Stewart
Vermont State Colleges
VSC System Controller
Email: toby.stewart@vsc.edu

Background

The Vermont State Colleges (VSC) is a higher education public corporation established in 1961 by State statute (VSA 16, 2171), to provide instruction and public service throughout Vermont. Included within the VSC is a four-year college, Vermont State University with campuses at Castleton, Johnson, Lyndon, and Randolph Center and Williston (VTSU also manages the Allied Health Program at twelve sites across the state, as well as provides administrative support to VMEC

and SBDC), two-year Community College of Vermont offering educational services at twelve sites across the state, plus the Chancellors Office based in Montpelier which provides system administration, certain consolidated business functions, technology services and legal counsel. VSC's FY 2023 financial statements reflect total assets of nearly \$380 million and a combined annual budget of over \$183 million.

Accounting System

Vermont State Colleges' accrual accounting system presently utilizes Colleague software from vendor Ellucian. The VSC's computer system interconnects to VSC locations statewide from a base in Montpelier, where VSC Technology Services staff provide support to each college campus.

Points of Emphasis

The Vermont State Colleges System as a public educational institution is exempt from federal and state income taxes. The VSC is a component unit of the State of Vermont, and the Authority's operating fund will be included in the State's financial statements for the year ended June 30. The VSC audited annual report is due to the State by October 31 every year. VSC's public accountants should be well-versed regarding new and existing accounting and tax regulations affecting public institutions of higher education, providing ongoing counsel to strengthen financial position while maintaining tax-exempt status. Further needs from the public accountants include knowledge of and demonstrated experience with capital construction and bonding, endowments, and federal student financial aid. It will also be beneficial to have access to Washington-based insight on GASB, NACUBO, Uniform Guidance, Dept. of Education, etc.

Effective July 1, 2023, the Vermont State Colleges instituted a new chart of accounts addressing the creation of Vermont State University and shared services. The new chart of accounts for the fiscal year 2024 may require some reconciliation within the trial balance relative to prior year results.

Bid Evaluation Criteria - See attached.

Bid Evaluation Committee

Jocelyn Haley, VSC Director of Financial Operations
Sharron Scott, VSC Chief Financial and Operating Officer
Toby Stewart, VSC Systems Controller
David Tabaruka, CCV Controller
Littleton Tyler, VTSU Assistant VP Finance and Compliance

Bid Schedule

<i>November 28, 2023:</i>	Request for Proposals advertised
<i>December 4, 2023:</i>	Questions from Interested Parties due to Toby Stewart
<i>December 8, 2023:</i>	Responses shared with Interested Parties
<i>December 22, 2023:</i>	Bid Submissions Due to VSC (electronic submission)
<i>January 4, 2024:</i>	Bid Evaluation & Selection of Finalists
<i>January 9, 2024:</i>	Finalist Interviews by Bid Evaluation Committee Virtual
<i>January 15, 2024:</i>	Auditing Services Recommendation to VSC Audit Committee
<i>January 22, 2024:</i>	Auditing Services Contract Approval by VSC Board

VERMONT STATE COLLEGES
- FY2024-FY2027 AUDITING SERVICES BID EVALUATION -

Bidder: _____ (Name of Firm)

Bidder Point Summary for Evaluation Criteria:

- | | | |
|--------------|--|----------|
| A) | <i>Organization of the Firm</i> | _ Points |
| B) | <i>Description of Audit Approach</i> | _ Points |
| C) | <i>Qualification and Experience of the Firm</i> | _ Points |
| D) | <i>Fees</i> | _ Points |
| TOTAL | | _ Points |

Bid Evaluation Criteria

Max Points

- | | | |
|-----------|---|-------------------------|
| A) | <i>Organization of the Firm and Capacity</i> | <u>10</u> Points |
| | 1) Brief History | |
| | 2) Internal structure (include # employees by type) | |
| | 3) Availability/capacity to work on this audit at required time period | |
| | 4) Ownership of firm | |
| | 5) Scope of practice (range of client activities) | |
| | 6) Procedures to assure quality of service to VSC | |
| | 7) Reference material & training for key financial mgmt personnel | |
| B) | <i>Description of Audit Approach</i> | <u>20</u> Points |
| | 1) Info on Senior partner/manager/primary audit contact people | |
| | 2) Audit timing/prelim work expected/provided to meet deadlines | |
| | 3) Method of evaluating internal accounting controls within audit | |
| | 4) Approach to financial statement audit | |
| | 5) Approach to UG Single Audit (compliance tests, fieldwork, etc) | |
| C) | <i>Qualifications and Experience of the Firm</i> | <u>35</u> Points |
| | 1) Experience w/higher education clients, including Single audit requirements | |
| | 2) Relevant client list with names of reference contacts | |
| | 3) Recent Peer Reviews | |
| | 4) Advisory capabilities regarding tax-related issues | |
| | 5) Capacity to suggest improvements to fiscal systems & reporting | |

D) *Fees*

35 Points

- 1) Hourly cost per type of professional and estimated number of hours, separated by "Financial Statements Audit" (including management letters), "Uniform Guidance Single Audit", "Lease Agreement and Calculation for GASB87 and GASB96 Including Disclosures", and "Financial Statements and Footnote Disclosures" for each year FY 2024 - 2027
- 2) Specification of any extra costs proposed for particular services