

Vermont State Colleges
Request for Proposals
Payment Platform
Issued June 15, 2026

Proposals due:
July 10, 2026
5:00 PM Eastern Time

1.0 Organizational History

1.1 General Information

The Vermont State Colleges (VSC) is comprised of two member institutions – Community College of Vermont (CCV) and Vermont State University (VTSU). The system educates over ten thousand Vermonters and non-Vermonters each year, employs over three thousand Vermonters, and in Spring 2020, graduated over eighteen hundred Vermonters and out-of-state students into the workforce with certificates and degrees.

1.2 Mission Statement

For the benefit of Vermont, the Vermont State Colleges system provides affordable, high quality, student-centered and accessible education, fully integrating professional, liberal, and career study.

This integrated education, in conjunction with applied learning experiences, assures that graduates of VSC programs will:

1. Demonstrate competence in communication, research and critical thinking;
2. Practice creative problem-solving both individually and collaboratively;
3. Be engaged, effective, and responsible citizens;
4. Bring to the workplace appropriate skills and an appreciation of work quality and ethics;
5. Embrace the necessity and joy of lifelong learning.

The Vermont State Colleges system provides continuing educational opportunities for individuals to meet their specific goals.

2.0 Introduction

Vermont State Colleges seeks a payment platform that supports public higher education institutions with complex academic, financial, and compliance requirements. The solution will allow for payments from students, parents/guardians, alumni, third parties, and external sponsors. We are a multiple institution system within a shared technology environment.

3.0 Requirements

The following is a listing of the key functional requirements for the Payment Platform RFP. VSC will measure individual submissions against these.

3.1 Payment Methods & Channels – must support

- 3.1.1 Credit and debit cards (major networks)
- 3.1.2 ACH/eCheck payments
- 3.1.3 International payments and foreign currencies
- 3.1.4 Payment plans and installment schedules
- 3.1.5 One-time and recurring payments

- 3.1.6 Refund processing via original payment method or alternative methods
- 3.1.7 Mobile-responsive and web-based payment experiences
- 3.1.8 Third-party sponsor or employer payments
- 3.2 Higher Education Use Cases – must support**
 - 3.2.1 Tuition and mandatory fees
 - 3.2.2 Course, lab, and program fees
 - 3.2.3 Housing, dining, and campus services
 - 3.2.4 Deposits (enrollment, housing, orientation)
 - 3.2.5 Fines and miscellaneous charges (e.g. parking)
 - 3.2.6 Events and non-credit program payments
 - 3.2.7 Donations
 - 3.2.8 Department events/memberships
 - 3.2.9 Camps and conference payments
- 3.3 User Experience & Self-Service – must support**
 - 3.3.1 Support for authorized users (e.g. parents/guardians)
 - 3.3.2 Real-time balance display and payment confirmation
 - 3.3.3 Automated receipts and payment notifications
 - 3.3.4 Configurable email and SMS communications
 - 3.3.5 Branding options aligned with identity of multiple institutions
- 3.4 Integration & Interoperability – must integrate with**
 - 3.4.1 Workday
 - 3.4.2 Single-Sign On (SAML/OAuth)
 - 3.4.3 Slate
 - 3.4.4 Blackbaud
 - 3.4.5 GiveCampus
 - 3.4.6 Formstack
- 3.5 Financial Management & Reconciliation – must support**
 - 3.5.1 Automated posting of all payments, including student accounts
 - 3.5.2 Configurable business rules for application of all payments
 - 3.5.3 Support for partial payments and payment prioritization
 - 3.5.4 Daily reconciliation and settlement reporting
 - 3.5.5 Support for multiple bank accounts and merchant IDs
 - 3.5.6 Clear handling of chargebacks, disputes, and reversals
 - 3.5.7 Clear General Ledger posting into Workday
 - 3.5.8 Ability to split payment to different GLs
 - 3.5.9 Ability for staff to see full account history of an individual
- 3.6 Reporting & Analytics – must provide**
 - 3.6.1 Standard reports (payments, refunds, failed transactions)
 - 3.6.2 Exportable reports in common formats (CSV, Excel, PDF)
 - 3.6.3 Transaction detail reporting for audits
 - 3.6.4 User activity and administrative access reports
 - 3.6.5 Configurable reporting schedules
 - 3.6.6 Dashboards or analytics views
 - 3.6.7 Support for ad-hoc reporting

3.7 Configuration & Administration – must support

- 3.7.1 Web-based administrative console
- 3.7.2 Role-based permissions
- 3.7.3 Configurable fees, surcharges, and payment rules
- 3.7.4 Ability to support institutional payment policies
- 3.7.5 Institution controlled messaging and notices
- 3.7.6 Ability to enable/disable payment methods by audience or scenario
- 3.7.7 Alignment with internal audit requirements

3.8 Support & Service – must provide

- 3.8.1 Dedicated customer support for institutions
- 3.8.2 Clearly defined support hours and escalation procedures
- 3.8.3 Incident response and breach notification processes
- 3.8.4 Knowledge base and administrator documentation
- 3.8.5 Training resources for functional and technical staff

4.0 Qualifications, References and Pricing

4.1 Qualifications and References

Provide a description of the qualifications and experience of your company. Include responses to the specific required items listed below:

Bidder Profile and Qualifications

- Name, mailing address, email address and telephone numbers of company.
- Number of years in business.
- Number of employees in Vermont and nationally.
- Number of colleges and universities in which the product is installed and maintained by the bidder.
- Location of your data center.
- Please provide a detailed list of any user or institutional information collected and how that information is protected. This will be used to determine what level of IT security review is required for your solution.
- Please include a complete HECVAT or SOC2 with your proposal.

Bidder References

You must demonstrate experience and capability in installation and maintenance of the proposed solution by providing evidence of successfully completing projects of similar size and scope. Please provide at least three customer references, with the following information:

- Customer name and location
- Contact person(s): name, title and telephone number
- Your project manager for the engagement
- Product installation date
- Number of years you have maintained the system

By submitting your proposal, you understand and agree that the VSC may make any investigations it deems necessary to determine your ability to perform the work. You agree to furnish the VSC all such additional information and data for this purpose, as the VSC may request.

4.2 Accessibility Standards and Compliance

You, the Proposer warrants that all digital products, platforms, and deliverables provided under this contract shall conform, at a minimum, to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2, Level AA.

Your proposal should include a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) or an Accessibility Conformance Report (ACR) that clearly outlines compliance with these standards. If any portion of the product does not meet 2.2 AA standards, the Proposer must provide a roadmap for remediation.

4.3 Pricing

Your proposal should include all of the charges, and it should clearly state the pricing structure along with the types of products and/or services accompanying each price. The VSC expects fully bundled pricing for each service offered and any tiered pricing or volume purchasing discounts/rebates that maybe available due to purchasing loads.

4.4 Terms

4.4.1 Please provide 36 & 60 month term options on all pricing, unless otherwise noted.

4.5 Taxes/Fees

4.5.1 Please note any and all proposed taxes, fees, or charges.
4.5.2 The VSC is exempt from sales and use taxes. Submitted proposals shall not include these taxes. The College’s tax exempt number will be provided to the selected bidder. Please clearly note these exemptions in your proposal.

5.0 RFP Instructions, Requirements and Information

This section provides information on how to contact the VSC for questions, deadlines, the selection process, legal and insurance requirements, and other general business matters.

5.1 Questions about this RFP

Please submit your questions to the VSC on or before June 26, 2026, at 5:00 PM Eastern Time. All communication with the VSC regarding this project should go through this sole contact until completion of the RFP process. All questions will be posted on the VSC website, www.vsc.edu, and made available to all bidders. The contact information for questions:

<i>Name</i>	Jim Smith
<i>Title</i>	Manager of IT Operations
<i>Email address</i>	jim.smith@vsc.edu

5.2 Deadline and Delivery

The deadline for submitting responses is 5:00 PM Eastern Time, July 10, 2026. Provide an electronic copy **only, via email**, to:

<i>Name</i>	Jim Smith
<i>Title</i>	Manager of IT Operations
<i>Email address</i>	jim.smith@vsc.edu

5.3 Selection Process

Method of Award

VSC will base the evaluation of each proposal to this RFP on its demonstrated competence, compliance, format, cost, and enterprise applicability. This includes, but is not limited to, product availability, quality, prices, service availability, timing, and delivery. The purpose of this RFP is to identify those vendors having the interest, capability, and financial strength to supply the VSC with a Payment Platform solution. If the VSC does not identify a suitable bidder within the RFP process, the VSC is not obligated to award the project to any bidder.

The VSC, in its best interests, reserves the option to accept or reject any or all proposals, to accept or reject any item or combination of items therein, to waive any irregularities or informalities in any proposal or items therein, and/or to negotiate with particular bidders following the evaluation of proposals without right of recourse by other bidders. A top proposal would be assessed in the judgment of VSC as best complying with all considerations set forth in this RFP. When VSC has tentatively selected a successful proposal, VSC may engage in discussions with the bidder to formulate plans in greater detail, to clarify unclear items for either party, and to otherwise complete negotiations prior to formal selection.

Evaluation Criteria (no weighting is implied by order of listing):

1. The extent to which the bidder's solution matches the requirements of the VSC.
2. Engagement methodology.
3. Bidder’s qualifications and references.
4. Cost and length of contract.

5.4 Bid Process

Date	Milestone
06/15/2026	RFP issue date
06/26/2026	Questions Due
07/02/2026	Question Responses Posted
07/10/2026	Bidder written proposal due date
07/17/2026	Finalists notified
Week of August 3, 2026	Finalist presentations to VSC
08/14/2026	Bidder(s) selected
September 2026	Contract(s) made

The VSC will make its best effort to meet these dates but will take the time necessary to make a well-informed decision and negotiate a good contract. Bidders participating in this RFP should expect this date to change. The VSC will be under no obligation to inform bidders of a change in this date. The VSC will inform bidders of a change in all other dates that are part of the bid process.

5.5 Confidentiality

The Vermont State Colleges comply with the Vermont Public Records Act, 1 VSA § 315 *et seq.* which requires public agencies to allow any person to inspect or copy any public record upon request. Accordingly, bidders are hereby advised that any communications, data or other information received by the Vermont State Colleges during the RFP process could be subject to a public records request. However, certain public records are exempt from public inspection and copying, as set forth in 1 VSA § 317(c), including, for example, those portions of a record which meet the statutory definition of a trade secret. Accordingly, bidders must submit a second copy of their proposal, from which any portion of the proposal that the bidder reasonably believes to be exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act has been redacted.

By submitting a proposal, you indicate that you understand your sole responsibility to provide a redacted version of any confidential materials and the potential applicability of Vermont's Public Records Act to your proposal.

5.6 Indemnification

The bidder shall indemnify and hold VSC, its officers, agents and employees free and harmless from any and all claims, liabilities, losses, actions, proceedings, suits, damages and expenses, including out-of-pocket litigation costs and reasonable legal fees, arising from or relating to the bidder's performance in response to this RFP and under any contract entered into with the successful bidder.

By submitting a proposal, and in exchange for VSC's consideration of same, you agree on behalf of yourself, your shareholders and your officers to be bound by the indemnification provisions of this subsection (5.6).

5.7 Rights of the VSC

VSC reserves the right, at its discretion, to pursue actions that include but are not limited to the following:

- Request additional information
- Request clarification of any sections or questions in the bidder's response to this RFP
- Reject, for any reason, any or all of the proposals submitted to VSC
- Issue subsequent RFP or RFP invitations to bid as a result of changes and/or refinements to the proposed project

This RFP does not obligate the VSC to accept any proposal, negotiate with any bidder, award a contract or proceed with the project as it is outlined in this RFP.

5.8 Assignment

The bidder may not assign or transfer its rights or obligations under this RFP without the prior written consent of VSC, which consent shall not be unreasonably withheld. Any assignment of the RFP agreement by the bidder without the prior written consent of VSC shall void the RFP response from the bidder.

5.9 Insurance

You shall provide with your proposal, proof of insurance as stated below. In the event you do not carry the maximums requested, you must provide written proof that you will be able to provide the maximums if awarded the contract. You shall secure, pay for and maintain in effect the following insurance during the contract period:

- Commercial General Liability Insurance: Including Bodily Injury and Property Damage Liability, Independent Contractor's Liability, Contractual Liability, Product Liability and Completed Operations Liability in an amount not less than \$1,000,000 combined single limit, per occurrence, and \$3,000,000 annual aggregate.
- Workers Compensation and Employers Liability Insurance: For any bidders with employees, standard workers' compensation as required by Vermont State statute and employer's liability insurance in an amount not less than \$100,000 per accident, \$500,000 annual aggregate.
- Automobile Liability: For bidders who will drive on VSC's premises, Automobile Liability in an amount not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence for bodily injury and property damage, including owned, hired, and non-owned vehicle coverage.
- Professional Liability: \$1,000,000 each claim, when applicable.
- Cyber Liability: \$1,000,000 each event for Breach Response

If selected as the successful bidder, you agree to name the VSC as additional insured on your liability policies and shall provide a 30-day notice of cancellation or non-renewal of coverage to the VSC. The VSC does not need to be named as an additional insured on the workers compensation policy.

If selected as the successful bidder, you agree to submit a copy of the Certificate of Insurance verifying the above coverage levels to the VSC twenty (20) days prior to selling or distributing products and services at VSC or otherwise performing under the contract. Any liability coverage on a "claims made" basis shall be designated as such on the certificate.

Failure of the bidder to take out and/or maintain any required insurance shall not relieve the bidder from any liability under the contract, nor shall the insurance requirements be construed to conflict with or otherwise limit the obligation of the bidder concerning indemnification. The bidder's policies shall be considered primary insurance and exclusive of any insurance carried by VSC.

5.10 Compliance with State of Vermont Laws

Any contract awarded will be governed by the laws of the State of Vermont and adjudicated in the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of the State of Vermont.

5.11 Intent to Bid

The undersigned (“You”) agrees to all provisions required in the Payment Platform RFP dated June 15, 2026 and all applicable addenda, with the exception of those listed below. Any exemptions listed may affect the viability of your proposal.

In addition, the undersigned (“You”) agrees to provide all equipment, material and personnel associated with these services as described in the Payment Platform RFP dated June 15, 2026, and all applicable addenda.

Exceptions:

Section Reference Number	Reason for exception

Company Name

Signature of Authorized Representative

Print Name of Authorized Representative

Print Title of Authorized Representative