

RFP Number: RFP2026-0002-ACCS

Title of RFP: Nursing Support Technician Certification Testing Services

RFP Issue Date: February 19, 2026

Purpose: The Alabama Community College System (ACCS) is seeking proposals from qualified and experienced companies to provide comprehensive testing services for developing and administration certification exams such as the Nursing Support Technician (NST) exam.

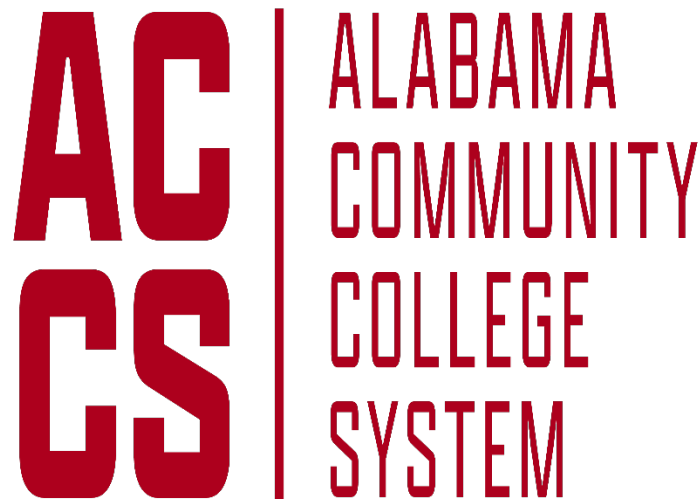
Procurement Method: Invited competitive proposals

Contract Term: To be determined based on selected proposal

Issuing Office: Alabama Community College System

Issuing Office Point of Contact: Dr. Bryant Cline, bryant.cline@accs.edu

Deadline for Receipt of Proposals: March 12, 2026, 2 pm CST



SECTION I:

INTRODUCTION

The Alabama Community College System (ACCS) is seeking proposals from qualified and experienced testing service companies to provide comprehensive services in developing and administering career & technical education (CTE) certification exams (e.g., Nursing Support Technician or NST). Offerors submitting a response to this RFP should provide a detailed description of the offeror's experience in developing and administering the Nursing Support Technician-C (NST-C) exam for the determination of an applicant's eligibility to be registered as a certified NST-C. The selected vendor should provide a robust software platform, along with thorough training and ongoing support across our System. The purpose of this RFP is to solicit proposals from qualified vendors who can meet our requirements.

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY:

The ACCS is Alabama's gateway to world-class, affordable education and technical training for the necessary skills to compete in a constantly evolving workforce. The ACCS consists of the System Office, 23 community and technical colleges, the Alabama Training Network, and Marion Military Institute – one of five junior military colleges in the nation. The Alabama Training Network (ATN) is a part of the ACCS and the Manufacturing Extension Partnership. ACCS is governed by the Alabama Community College System Board of Trustees.

SECTION II: PURPOSE OF RFP

The ACCS invites responses to this RFP to engage a qualified and experienced company to provide comprehensive testing development and administration services. The proposal shall not be limited to the general requirements listed below and each vendor is encouraged to respond with their ability to perform or expand on each item as well as provide additional capabilities not listed.

SECTION III: PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS:

Interested vendors are requested to submit a detailed proposal addressing the following points:

- Oversee the design and development of the NST-C exam, with a comprehensive pool of test questions, that complies with the State of Alabama NST-C competency evaluation program requirements, for the administration to applicants to meet the exam requirement for registration as a certified NST-C.
- Provider information around item authoring (human and AI-assisted), item review and editing, and bias/sensitivity reviews.
- Perform a psychometric evaluation of the exam to determine the efficacy, reliability, and validity and a process to share the results with stakeholders.

- Coordinate administration of a proctored online NST-C exam, including the option to administer the exam orally for candidates with low literacy or reading skills.
- Provide exam proctor training for state approved delivery locations, approval process, and maintenance of a database of proctors.
- Administer the online NST-C exam in a secure and confidential manner.
- Score the NST-C exam and report the results to the candidate and the State of Alabama.
- Allow the State of Alabama to review and provide feedback on the pool of questions for the exam.
- Respond and be available to communicate with the State of Alabama as needed.
- Provide information on how offerors can submit candidate result information in near real time via API integration.
- Provide information around the offeror's ability to scale the program if needed.
- Provide phone and online assistance and support to test candidates and exam proctors.
- Provide exam resources for candidates.
- Receive and retain revenue generated from the scope of work to administer the exam.
- Description of Offeror's data retention policies.
- Description of Offeror's ability to protect exam taker's/candidate's data.
- Description of Offeror's security policies to include security standards/certifications for which the bidder complies. Examples include ISO, SOC-2, PCI-DSS.
- Any additional information deemed important in assessing your firm's ability to provide the services requested.

SECTION IV: PROPOSAL RESPONSE FORMAT & ORGANIZATION:

1. All proposals must be organized, tabbed with labels and presented in this exact order:
 - a. Executive Summary. The one-to-two page executive summary is to briefly describe the offeror's proposal. This summary should highlight the major features of the proposal. It must indicate any requirements that cannot be met by the offeror. The reader should be able to determine the essence of the proposal by reading the executive summary.
 - b. Detailed response. This section should constitute the major portion of the proposal and must contain the following information:
 - c. A complete narrative of the offerors assessment of the work to be performed, the offeror's ability and approach, and the resources necessary to fulfill the requirements. This should demonstrate the offerors understanding the of the desired overall performance expectations.
 - d. A specific point-by-point response, in the order listed, to each requirement in the RFP. The response should identify each requirement being addressed as enumerated in the RFP.
 - e. A clear description of any options or alternatives proposed.

- f. Cost Proposal. Offerors must provide the proposed price to include the additional administrative fee charged (example: vendor price + \$65 = fee proposed). All fee proposals will be evaluated independently from the technical proposal. All costs related to the provision of the required services must be included in the proposal offered.
- g. Provided proposed fees to be collected:
 - i. Online, proctored, written exam fee:
 - ii. Online, Proctored, oral exam fee:
 - iii. Test proctor training or approval fees:
- h. Experience and reliability of the offeror's organization are considered subjectively in the evaluation process. Therefore, the offeror is advised to submit any information which documents successful and reliable experience in past performances, especially those performances related to the requirements of this RFP.
- i. The qualifications of the personnel proposed by the offeror to perform the requirements of this RFP, whether from the offeror's organization or from a proposed subcontractor, will be subjectively evaluated. Therefore, the offeror should submit detailed information related to the experience and qualifications, including education and training, of proposed personnel.

SECTION V: PROPOSAL SUBMISSION:

The ACCS will select based on completeness and clarity of the proposal, understanding of the scope of work, prior experience, references, fees, and other factors which in the judgment of ACCS staff might have an impact to the provider's ability to provide services to the ACCS. In order to submit a response, Responders must read and follow all instructions, terms, conditions, and specifications of this RFP.

1. Responses must be received by March 12, 2026, 2:00 pm (CST):

Use address below for FedEx, UPS or USPS Express Mail

Alabama Community College System
Attention: Robin Head, Fiscal Agent
135 South Union Street, Suite 451
Montgomery, AL 36104

Use address below if sending by regular or certified mail through USPS.

Alabama Community College System
Attention: Robin Head, Fiscal Agent
P.O. Box 4504
Montgomery, AL 36130-4504

Email: robin.head@accs.edu

****Late responses will not be accepted****

2. Responses may be submitted or delivered by regular mail or postal service, express or courier service, or hand delivery within a single sealed envelope or package. The outside of the package must clearly identify the Vendor Name, RFP2026-0002-ACCS, and Deadline to Respond: March 12, 2026, 2:00 p.m. CST. Email and faxed responses are not accepted.
3. It is the proposer's sole responsibility to ensure delivery in the Fiscal Office by the deadline. ACCS does not accept late responses for any reason including those due to postal or courier service delay.
4. ACCS requires an original and one exact digital copy on a USB drive of the signed response to include any required addendum(s) and documentation. The original and the copy should be submitted together as a response package.
5. An authorized officer of the proposer must sign all proposals in ink and obtain proper notarization; failure to do so will result in rejection of response.
6. No response may be withdrawn without approval from the Alabama Community College System. Any request for withdrawal must be in writing to the Alabama Community College System representative within received within five (5) days after the opening date with justification for reason of withdrawal. No response may be withdrawn after awards have been made. The vendor will be required to provide the item or service quoted at the price quoted. If a withdrawal is made after the award the vendor will be considered in default.
7. Any further information or interpretation of the services requested must be submitted to Bryant Cline at bryant.cline@accs.edu submitted no later than March 5, 2026. Answers to such requests will be placed on the ACCS website at <https://www.accs.edu/vendors/>. The title of the RFP must be referenced in the subject line. Written replies of general significance will be posted with the RFP.

No one-on-one conversation are allowed. Vendors should not contact anyone outside of the contacts listed on this RFP. Prospective vendors acknowledge that no other source is authorized to provide information concerning this request. Vendors failing to comply risk being removed from consideration.

8. It is anticipated that a short list of vendors may be invited or required to make a presentation to ACCS. Presentations will give vendors the opportunity to review proposal highlights, introduce their team and articulate why they are best able to meet the needs of the System. Presentations will be included in the final evaluation of the vendor's response to this solicitation.

SECTION VI: PROPOSER'S RESPONSIBILITY

A proposer, by submitting a Proposal, represents and understands that:

1. The proposer is familiar with the conditions under which the services defined in this RFP must be performed. The proposer possesses the capabilities, resources, and personnel necessary to provide efficient and successful service to the ACCS; and
2. The proposer shall be solely responsible for all services provided. It is the responsibility of the proposer to verify the completeness of the requirement and its suitability to provide the services described in this RFP.

SECTION VII: GENERAL TERMS

1. All responses become a matter of public record at award. The ACCS accepts no responsibility for maintaining confidentiality of any information submitted with a response whether labeled confidential or not.
2. The Alabama Community College System reserves the right to reject any or all responses and to waive informalities in the best interest of ACCS. The Alabama Community College System reserves the right to not make any awards and re-issue this RFP at any time if it serves the ACCS' best interest.
3. The successful proposer shall, at its sole expense, procure and keep in effect all necessary permits and licenses required for its performance of the requested work or service.
4. The successful proposer shall be required to complete a State of Alabama Disclosure Statement. Alabama Act# 2001-955 requires the disclosure statement to be completed and filed with all proposals, responses, contracts, or grant proposals to the State of Alabama in excess of \$5,000. Any changes to the status of the information on this form will require the submission of an updated form to the ACCS.
5. All selected vendors are required to complete the Alabama Immigration Law Compliance documents and IRS Form W-9.
6. Verification of enrollment in the E-Verify program will be required prior to any award to a vendor who employs one or more employees within the State of Alabama. Failure to provide documentation within 5 calendar days of notification will result in the rejection of your response. To enroll in the E-Verify program visit <https://www.e-verify.gov/mye-verify>.
7. The ACCS reserves the right, for its convenience and without cause or penalty, to terminate any contract for services at any time with 30 days written notice. This provision may not be changed by subsequent contract.
8. Notwithstanding any other provision in this RFP, the proposing vendors acknowledge and agree that the terms and commitments contained herein shall not constitute a debt of the

State of Alabama in violation of Section 213 of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901, as amended by Amendment No. 26.

9. The vendor shall observe, perform and comply with or require compliance with all federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, rules and regulations and all amendments thereto which in any manner may affect the operation and vendor's activities undertaken pursuant to this agreement. The vendor shall also comply with all state and local building, fire, health, zoning laws, codes and/or regulations that affect or that are applicable to the vendor's activities and operations.
10. Alabama law (section 41-4-142, code of Alabama 1975) provides that every proposal submitted and contract executed shall contain a certification that the vendor, contractor, and all of its affiliates that make sales for delivery into Alabama or leases for use in Alabama are registered, collecting, and remitting Alabama state and local sales, use, and/or lease tax on all taxable sales and leases into Alabama. By submitting a proposal in response to this Request for Proposal, the bidder is hereby certifying that they are in full compliance with Act No. 2006- 557, they are not barred from bidding or entering into a contract pursuant to 41-4-142, and acknowledges that the Alabama Community College System may declare the contract void if the certification is false.
11. Any contract resulting from an award in connection with this RFP shall include the following terms:
 - a. This agreement shall be governed and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Alabama without giving effect to any choice or conflict of laws, provisions, or rules (whether of the State of Alabama or any other jurisdiction) that would cause the application of the laws of any jurisdiction other than the State of Alabama.
 - b. It is further agreed that the terms and commitments contained herein shall not constitute a debt of the State of Alabama in violation of Section 213 of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901, as amended by Amendment Number 26.
 - c. If any provision of this agreement shall contravene any statute or constitutional provision, either now in effect or which may be enacted during the term of this agreement, then the conflicting provision of this agreement shall be deemed null and void.
 - d. Contractor understands, acknowledges, and agrees that its sole and exclusive remedy for any claim which may arise from or relate to this agreement is to file a claim with the Board of Adjustment of the State of Alabama.
 - e. By signing this agreement, the parties affirm, for the duration of this agreement, that they will not violate federal immigration law or knowingly employ, hire, for employment, or continue to employ an unauthorized alien within the State of Alabama. Furthermore, a contracting party found to be in violation of this provision shall be deemed in breach of this agreement and shall be responsible for all damages resulting there from.
 - f. This agreement constitutes the sole and entire agreement of the parties to this agreement with respect to the subject matter contained herein, and supersedes all prior and contemporaneous understandings, negotiations, and agreements, both oral and written, with respect to such subject matter.

- g. In compliance with Act 2016-272, the parties hereby certifies that they not currently engaged in, and will not engage in, the boycott of a person or an entity based in or doing business with a jurisdiction with which this state can enjoy open trade.
- h. This agreement may be executed in counterparts, each of which shall be deemed and original, but all of which together shall be deemed to be one and the same agreement.
- i. The Contractor shall provide all materials, supplies, workspace, personnel, and equipment that it deems necessary to perform the services provided for herein.
- j. The relationship between the parties is that of independent contractors. Nothing contained herein shall be construed as creating any agency, partnership, joint venture, or other form of joint enterprise, employment, or fiduciary relationship between the parties, and neither party shall have authority to contract for or bind the other party in any manner whatsoever.
- k. In accordance with Alabama Act 2023-409, the contractor does hereby verify that, without violating controlling law or regulation, it does not and will not, during the term of the contract, engage in economic boycotts.