

ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

Written Questions and Responses

RFP2026-0005-ACCS — Labor Market Analytics Platform and Career Exploration Platform Solutions
Issued May 2026

This document sets forth ACCS's written responses to vendor questions received in connection with RFP2026-0005-ACCS (Labor Market Analytics Platform and Career Exploration Platform Solutions). These responses are issued in accordance with RFP Section 11-8 and constitute the only authorized source of clarification for this procurement.

These responses are posted on the ACCS vendor website and are binding on all offerors. Offerors must acknowledge receipt of this document in their letter of transmittal. Any RFP provisions not addressed in these responses remain in full force and effect as published.

All proposals must be received no later than June 9, 2026, at 3:00 PM CDT. Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered. Electronic submissions will not be accepted. All questions regarding this document must be submitted in writing to barry.may@accs.edu

Questions 1–8 (General Procurement Questions)

Q1

Option A and
Option B
Awards

Question: Is submitting proposals for both Option A and Option B an all-or-nothing proposition?

ACCS Response: No. Submission for both Option A and Option B is not an all-or-nothing proposition. Vendors may submit proposals for either option or both. Each option will be evaluated independently and ACCS reserves the right to award Option A and Option B to the same or different vendors.

Q2

Procurement
Budget

Question: Can ACCS share its proposed budget allotted for this initiative?

ACCS Response: ACCS is not disclosing a proposed budget for this procurement. Vendors should submit their most competitive pricing based on the requirements outlined in the RFP.

Q3

Data Conversion
Requirements

Question: What types of data conversion are expected or required for this solution?

ACCS Response: ACCS has not identified any specific data conversion requirements at this time. However, vendors should describe their data migration and conversion capabilities, including any experience transitioning data from existing labor market information, career exploration, or related workforce development platforms. ACCS is

interested in understanding the available options should data conversion needs arise during implementation.

Q4

System Integration Requirements

Question: Are there any systems not listed in the RFP that the solution would need to integrate with?

ACCS Response: ACCS has not identified any additional required system integrations beyond those described in the RFP. However, vendors should describe their platform's integration capabilities, available APIs, data exchange methods, and experience integrating with education, workforce, credentialing, and learner record systems. ACCS is interested in understanding the platform's flexibility to support future integration opportunities.

Q5

Existing Platforms

Question: Can ACCS share details on the legacy system (e.g., system name, available APIs, etc.)?

ACCS Response: ACCS currently utilizes Lightcast Analyst as its labor market analytics platform and Lightcast Career Coach as its career exploration platform. Vendors are encouraged to describe any migration, implementation, or transition support they would provide should ACCS elect to move from its current solution.

Q6

Demonstration Requirements

Question: Is the demonstration live, in-person, or virtual?

ACCS Response: Demonstrations will only be required at the request of ACCS as part of the evaluation process. If requested, demonstrations may be conducted either virtually or in person, at the discretion of ACCS.

Q7

Contract Award Timing

Question: What is the anticipated contract award date?

ACCS Response: ACCS anticipates making an award determination in July 2026. This timeline is subject to change based on the volume of responses received, evaluation activities, and applicable procurement requirements.

Q8

Implementation Timeline

Question: What is the anticipated system go-live date?

ACCS Response: ACCS's target implementation timeframe is August 2026. However, ACCS recognizes that implementation schedules may vary based on the proposed solution and implementation requirements. Vendors should provide a recommended implementation timeline, including key milestones and estimated timeframes for deployment.

Q9

Integrations

Question: What level of integration with the Alabama Talent Triad ecosystem is required? Specifically, should the proposed navigation platform integrate with components such as the Credential Registry, LER.me, or other Talent Triad resources?

ACCS Response: ACCS does not currently require a specific level, method, or architecture for integration with the Alabama Talent Triad ecosystem, including the Credential Registry, LER.me, or related workforce and education technology components. However, ACCS recognizes the value of interoperability and encourages vendors to describe existing integrations, APIs, data exchange capabilities, and recommended approaches for connecting with statewide workforce, credentialing, learner record, and career navigation systems. ACCS is interested in understanding each vendor’s capabilities and vision for supporting Alabama’s evolving talent development ecosystem.

Questions 9–11 (Talent Triad and Interoperability Questions)

Q10

Labor Demand and Program Alignment Metrics

Question: Should labor market demand scores, workforce alignment metrics, program relevance indicators, or similar analytics be integrated with external systems such as credential registries, learner records, or talent marketplace platforms?

ACCS Response: ACCS views labor market demand indicators, workforce alignment metrics, and similar analytical tools as valuable features that may help students, institutions, employers, and workforce partners make informed decisions. Vendors are encouraged to describe any capabilities that generate, utilize, or share these types of insights and to explain how such information could be integrated with or made available to external systems. ACCS is interested in understanding the capabilities and potential benefits of these features but is not prescribing a specific implementation approach.

Q11

Preferred Vendor or Technology

Question: Does ACCS have a preferred solution, vendor, or technology approach based on existing statewide initiatives or incumbent providers?

ACCS Response: No. ACCS does not have a preferred vendor, solution, or technical approach. The purpose of this procurement is to conduct an open and competitive evaluation of available solutions and identify the option that best meets the needs of ACCS, its colleges, students, employers, and workforce partners. Vendors are encouraged to propose innovative approaches and to demonstrate how their solutions align with the objectives outlined in the RFP.

Questions 12–14 (Accessibility and Security Questions)

Q12

Question: Regarding Section XI, item 6, where ACCS notes, “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,” can ACCS advise whether a cover letter signed and notarized by an authorized officer meets this requirement?

Proposal
Signature and
Notarization

ACCS Response: Yes. A cover letter signed by an authorized officer of the proposing organization and properly notarized will satisfy this requirement, provided the cover letter clearly indicates the officer's authority to bind the organization and is included as part of the proposal submission.

Q13

Accessibility
Compliance

Question: Regarding Section IV, item (b), which requires the proposed solutions to meet WCAG 2.1 Level AA accessibility standards, can ACCS clarify whether vendors with documented VPATs and active remediation plans aligned to meet or exceed the Department of Justice ADA regulation under 28 C.F.R. § 35 (effective April 26, 2027) will be considered compliant for purposes of this RFP?

ACCS Response: The WCAG 2.1 Level AA requirement in Section IV, item (b), is an ACCS procurement requirement established independently of any vendor-specific compliance timeline under 28 C.F.R. Part 35. Vendors should note that while the Department of Justice has extended the compliance deadline applicable to public entities, WCAG 2.1 Level AA remains the required technical accessibility standard for this procurement.

ACCS will evaluate accessibility based on the documented current conformance status of the proposed solution. The required VPAT should accurately reflect the solution's accessibility status at the time of proposal submission. Where full conformance has not yet been achieved, vendors must disclose known non-conformances and provide a detailed remediation plan that includes specific milestones and anticipated completion dates.

Solutions demonstrating full current conformance may be evaluated more favorably than solutions relying upon future remediation activities. ACCS reserves the right to consider both current accessibility status and the feasibility of proposed remediation plans during the evaluation process.

Any resulting contract may include requirements related to maintaining accessibility compliance throughout the contract term.

Q14

Security
Documentation

Question: Regarding Section IV, item (i), would ACCS consider equivalent security and compliance documentation, such as ISO 27001 certification, acceptable in place of SOC 2 Type II documentation?

ACCS Response: SOC 2 Type II documentation remains the preferred security and compliance framework for this procurement. Vendors that do not currently possess a SOC 2 Type II report may submit current ISO 27001 certification and related supporting documentation for consideration.

While ISO 27001 certification demonstrates a mature information security management framework, it will not be considered a direct equivalent to SOC 2 Type II for evaluation

purposes. Vendors submitting ISO 27001 certification in lieu of a SOC 2 Type II report should also provide:

The scope of the certification;

The date of the most recent Stage 2 audit and any subsequent surveillance audits;

A summary of security controls covered by the certification; and

A description of any known gaps relative to the AICPA Trust Services Criteria.

ACCS reserves the right to request additional security documentation, questionnaires, or clarifications from any vendor during the evaluation process.

Vendors are encouraged to indicate whether a SOC 2 Type II audit is currently in process and, if applicable, the anticipated completion date.

Questions 15–17 (Vendor Experience and Administrative Questions)

Q15

Metrics
Anonymization

Question: Regarding Section IX, Vendor Experience, References, and Platform Adoption, item 3, Platform Utilization and Adoption Metrics: ACCS requires metrics from comparable statewide or multi-campus higher education implementations and requests that vendors identify the source institution or system associated with the metrics. Given the sensitive nature of some usage statistics, may this data be anonymized?

ACCS Response: ACCS understands that some institutions or systems may consider specific utilization statistics to be sensitive. Vendors may anonymize institution or system names within submitted metrics, provided sufficient contextual information is included to demonstrate that the implementation is comparable in scope, scale, and complexity to a statewide or multi-campus higher education environment.

ACCS encourages vendors to identify the institution or system whenever possible, as doing so may provide additional context during the evaluation process.

Q16

Presentation
Format

Question: Regarding Section IX, Vendor Experience, References, and Platform Adoption, item 3, Platform Utilization and Adoption Metrics: Does ACCS prefer that the metrics be presented using Option A, Option B, or a combined approach?

ACCS Response: ACCS does not have a preferred format for presenting platform utilization and adoption metrics. Vendors may utilize Option A, Option B, or a combined approach, provided the information is presented in a clear, organized, and easily understandable manner.

ACCS encourages vendors to present the information in a format that most effectively demonstrates user adoption, engagement, utilization, and overall platform effectiveness within comparable implementations.

Q17

Vendor
Registration and
D-1 Form

Question: We understand Alabama requires vendor registration under §41-4-142. As a provider of non-taxable SaaS, can ACCS confirm which registration(s) vendors are expected to maintain to satisfy this requirement?

ACCS Response: Vendors should comply with all applicable Alabama statutory and regulatory requirements associated with doing business with a public entity in the State of Alabama.

For purposes of this procurement, ACCS requires submission of the completed D-1 form included in the RFP package. Vendors should complete all applicable sections of the form, including the immigration status certification requirements.

Failure to submit a completed D-1 form with the proposal may result in the proposal being deemed non-responsive and excluded from further evaluation.

Vendors with questions regarding the applicability of specific state registration, tax, or compliance requirements to their organization should consult their legal or tax advisor.

Questions 18–26 (Implementation, Administration, and Deployment Questions)

Q18

Statewide
Deployment

Question: Does ACCS anticipate selecting a single vendor for statewide deployment for each option, or could institutions independently adopt different solutions following award?

ACCS Response: ACCS anticipates making a statewide award for Option A and a statewide award for Option B. ACCS reserves the right to determine the final implementation approach and contractual structure; however, vendors should prepare proposals based on the assumption that a single statewide solution will be selected for each option.

Q19

Centralized
Administration

Question: For the Career Exploration Platform, the RFP notes that ACCS “prefers the ability for centralized administration across all instances but does not require it.” Can ACCS elaborate on:

- the desired centralized administrative functions;
- which responsibilities would reside at the System Office versus colleges; and
- whether centralized reporting, employer management, content management, or user provisioning are priorities?

ACCS Response: ACCS is interested in understanding the capabilities available within each proposed solution and has intentionally avoided prescribing a specific administrative model. In general, ACCS would view favorably capabilities that allow the System Office to

monitor utilization, aggregate reporting, share content and resources, support employer engagement activities, and manage selected administrative functions across multiple institutions while still allowing colleges appropriate autonomy over their local operations. Vendors are encouraged to describe available centralized and decentralized administrative capabilities and associated best practices.

Q20

Artificial Intelligence

Question: Is ACCS currently pursuing any systemwide AI initiatives or strategic priorities that vendors should align with as part of this proposal?

ACCS Response: ACCS is actively evaluating opportunities to responsibly leverage artificial intelligence and related technologies to support student success, workforce development, career navigation, institutional effectiveness, employer engagement, and administrative efficiency. As AI technologies continue to evolve, ACCS recognizes their potential to enhance education and workforce outcomes across the System.

However, AI functionality is not a specific requirement of this procurement. Vendors are welcome to describe existing or planned AI-enabled capabilities that may provide additional value, provided such capabilities align with appropriate security, privacy, transparency, accessibility, and ethical standards.

Q21

Rollout Strategy

Question: Does ACCS envision a phased rollout or simultaneous deployment across all colleges and the System Office?

ACCS Response: ACCS is open to either phased or simultaneous deployment approaches. Vendors should propose the implementation strategy they believe will best support successful adoption and long-term utilization while minimizing disruption to users.

Q22

Institutional Readiness

Question: What level of institutional participation or readiness currently exists among the colleges for adoption of these solutions?

ACCS Response: Institutional experience and readiness levels vary across the System. ACCS seeks a solution that can effectively support institutions with differing levels of experience, staffing, technical resources, and user engagement. Vendors are encouraged to describe onboarding, training, support, and change-management strategies that promote successful adoption across a diverse multi-college environment.

Q23

Employer Engagement

Question: For employer engagement functionality, does ACCS already maintain employer partnerships or workforce intermediary relationships that vendors should support or integrate into the platform strategy?

ACCS Response: Yes. ACCS and its colleges maintain extensive relationships with employers, industry associations, workforce development partners, economic development organizations, workforce boards, and other stakeholders throughout Alabama. Vendors are encouraged to describe how their solutions can support, enhance, and scale employer engagement activities across the System.

Q24

Proposal
Organization

Question: Within the RFP document, the order of Section III, Scope of Services, differs from the order of Section XI, Required Proposal Contents. The RFP states in Item J of Section XI to “use the section numbering.” Should our proposal response be organized according to Section III or Section XI?

ACCS Response: ACCS will not extend the proposal submission deadline at this time. The deadline identified in the RFP remains in effect. Any future changes to the procurement schedule will be communicated through an official amendment or written response issued by ACCS.

Q25

Funding Model

Question: Within the RFP document, the order of Section III, Scope of Services, differs from the order of Section XI, Required Proposal Contents. The RFP states in Item J of Section XI to “use the section numbering.” Should our proposal response be organized according to Section III or Section XI?

ACCS Response: Vendors should organize their proposals according to Section XI, Required Proposal Contents, and use the section numbering identified therein. Vendors may reference applicable portions of Section III, Scope of Services, within their responses as appropriate.

Q26

Budget
Allocation

Question: Will both platforms be funded by the System, or will there be institution-level participation or cost-sharing models?

ACCS Response: ACCS anticipates entering into the agreement and funding the selected solution(s) at the System level. Vendors should submit pricing based on a statewide deployment model that supports ACCS and its colleges as outlined in the RFP.