



Navajo Technical University
Request for Proposal (RFP)
RFP#2025-002
for IT Department Support Services

Important Dates

RFP Release Date: April 7, 2025
Deadline for Questions: April 24, 2025
Proposal Due Date: April 24, 2025 5:00 pm

Questions/Clarifications related to this RFP should be directed to both email addresses below:

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Navajo Technical University
P.O. Box 849, Lowerpoint Road, State Hwy 371
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Objective of this RFP

Navajo Technical University (NTU) is issuing this request for proposals (RFP) for selecting a most qualified firm (also called as "Vendor" or "Consultant" in this RFP) to work with NTU's IT department to provide expertise, guidance, and skill-building support services.

About Navajo Technical University:

Navajo Technical University is a tribal technical university established in 1979 and chartered by the Navajo Nation. Located in Crownpoint in Northwest New Mexico, the University prepares Navajos and other students with a quality technical and vocational education, associate degrees, bachelor degrees, master degrees, or community education in a higher learning setting. With a current enrollment of 1,200 students at the main campus and at its satellite campus in Chinle, Teec Nos Pos Arizona and Zuni and Kirtland, NM, the university is in a unique position to transition students directly into the workforce or into four-year schools; it addresses the higher education needs of the Navajo Nation in an immediate and comprehensive manner. Navajo Technical University is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Universities and Schools and is a member of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium.

Today, NTU is one of the premier institutions of higher education in the nation, providing a unique balance between science and technology and culture and tradition. Much of what guides NTU's success is our mission and our identity rooted in the Diné Philosophy of Education.

Scope of Work:

NTU is seeking proposals from Qualified Vendors to fulfil the scope of work. Refer to Attachment A.

Proposal Specification

The Proposals must be submitted in two parts: A. One (1) original and four (4) copies of the "RFP-2025-002 NTU-IT Department Support Service" proposal and including all other attachment(s); B. One (1) original of the Cost Proposal must be submitted in a sealed envelope, which specifies on its face the name of the Proposer and must clearly be marked the " NTU-IT Department Support Service proposal". Proposer shall indicate Navajo Nation Priority 1 or Priority 2 Vendor on the envelope. Proposals received after the due date and time specified shall be returned unopened. In order for your proposal to be considered, it must include the following:

Qualified Vendor Information

1. A signed letter of interest, stating the Proposer's interest and qualifications in providing the required service. Brief Proposer qualifications should be limited to two pages.
2. Client references, a minimum of three references for projects completed within the last five years and for services provided to educational institutions or organizations. List of references must include the name of the organization, address, telephone number, and name/title of individual to contact.

Indian Preference

All Navajo Technical University procurement is subject to the Navajo Nation Code and Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) as amended. Navajo Nation Business Opportunity Act (5 NNC§203 et. sea.) and Indian Preference (48 C.F.R. 1452.226-70) will be applied. The Navajo Nation Business Opportunity Act provides qualified and certified Navajo-owned businesses the opportunity to propose on Navajo Technical University contracts. A 5% proposal preference will be given to any Navajo-owned or Native American- owned Firm. To receive this preference, Navajo-owned or Native American-owned Firms must be certified by the Navajo Nation Business Regulatory Department.

PROPOSER CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Navajo Nation Business Opportunity Act (5 NNC§203 et. seq.) and Indian Preference (48 C.F.R. 1452.226-70) will be applied.

In compliance with this request for proposals and to all the conditions imposed herein, the undersigned offers and agrees to furnish the services in accordance with the attached signed proposal.

Name of Firm: _____

Name of DBA (If Applicable): _____

Represented By: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone No.: _____ Fax No.: _____

Email: _____

FEIN No.: _____ DUNS No.: _____

Proposal Submittal Check List

- ☐ Proposal/ Proposal Requirements
- ☐ Attachment A - Cost Proposal (Separate Sealed Envelope)
- ☐ Attachment B - Debarment Status
- ☐ Completed IRS W-9 Form
- ☐ Proposer Certification Statement
- ☐ Navajo Nation Business Certification - Priority 1 / Priority 2 (if applicable)

The above Firm DOES ____ DOES NOT ____ intend to respond to this Request for Proposal.
(Select One)

Special Terms and Conditions

A. Qualifications of Proposers:

The University may make such reasonable investigations as deemed proper and necessary to determine the ability of the Proposer to perform the work and the Proposer shall furnish to the University all such information for this purpose as may be requested. The University further reserves the right to reject any proposal if the evidence submitted by, or investigations of, such Proposer fails to satisfy the University that such Proposer is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract.

B. Cancellation of Contract

- The University reserves the right to cancel and terminate any resulting contract, in part or in whole, without penalty, upon 30 days' written notice to the Proposer. Any contract cancellation notice shall not relieve the Proposer of the obligation to deliver and/or perform on all outstanding services prior to the effective date of cancellation. In the event of termination by mutual agreement, the Proposer may be compensated for hours worked at the specified contractual rate for which the University received consulting services within the scope of the contract.
- If, through any cause other than acts of nature, or other like restrictions beyond the control of the parties rendering performance under the contract impossible, the Proposer fails to fulfill in a timely and proper manner obligations under the contract, the University shall have the right to terminate the contract on written notice to the Proposer specifying the effective date of termination.
- The Proposer shall not be relieved of liability to the University for damages sustained by virtue of any breach of the contract by the Proposer. The University may withhold, or require to be withheld, any payment to the Proposer for the purpose of setoff until such time as the exact amount of damages is agreed upon or is otherwise determined.

Indemnification

The Proposer agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the University, its officers, agents, and employees from any claims, damages, and actions of any kind or nature, whether at law or in equity, arising from or caused by the use of any materials, goods, or equipment of any kind or nature furnished by the Proposer or any services of any kind or nature furnished by the Proposer, provided that such liability is not attributable to the sole negligence of any University employee or the failure of University employees to use the materials, goods, or equipment in the manner described by the Proposer on the materials, goods, or equipment delivered.

Subcontracts

No portion of the work shall be subcontracted without prior written consent of the University, who may refuse to grant its approval for any reason. In the event that the Proposer desires to subcontract some part of the work specified herein, the Proposer shall furnish the University with the names, qualifications, and experience of their proposed subcontractors. The Proposer shall remain fully liable and responsible for the work/service to be performed by his/her subcontractor(s) and shall assure compliance with all requirements of the contract.

Proprietary Information

The University will not accept responses to Invitations for Proposals in cases where the Proposer declares the entire response to the RFP to be proprietary information. The Proposer must designate in the smallest increments possible, that part of the proposal which is deemed to be proprietary.

Integrated Agreement

Any resulting contract represents the entire and integrated agreement between the Proposer and the NTU and supersedes all prior negotiations, representation, or agreements, whether written or oral. The contract may only be amended by written agreement of the Proposer and the University.

Worker's Compensation

The Proposer shall be required at all times during the term of this agreement to subscribe and comply with applicable Workers' Compensation laws and to hold harmless the University and its authorized agents from any and all liability from or under said act.

Insurance Requirements

The successful respondent shall be required to have professional liability insurance in full force and effect upon award of the contract and provide proof of coverage and limitations. The Proposer shall provide the required Certificate(s) of Insurance within ten (10) working days of the contract award notification and maintain such insurance during the entire term of the contract.

NTU Rights for Solicitation Cancellation, Rejection of a Proposal or All Proposals:

Navajo Technical University reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals submitted, to waive any informalities or irregularities and to re-advertise in its best interest, and to request additional information from all Proposers. The advertisement for Proposals does not commit Navajo Technical University to award a contract nor to pay any costs incurred for the preparation of the Proposal. Any contract awarded will be awarded to the Proposer, who, based upon evaluation of all Proposals, is determined to have submitted the best Proposal, considering both qualifications and cost.

The NTU may cancel the procurement or reject any or all proposals. The NTU is not liable to any proposer for any loss or expense caused by or resulting from the proposals of a solicitation or rejection of a proposal.

The NTU will not reimburse any costs incurred in preparation of the proposal in response to this RFP.

Changes to the RFP and Addenda:

If the NTU determines that additional information or clarification to the RFP is necessary, or if changes are made to the RFP, such information will be supplied in addenda. Addenda shall have the same binding effect as though contained in this RFP. Verbal statements made by the NTU's representatives are not binding on the NTU unless confirmed by written addendum.

Rights of NTU:

During the evaluation process, the NTU reserves the right, where it may serve the NTU's best interest, to request additional information or clarifications from proposers, or to allow corrections of errors or omissions. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance of the conditions contained in the request for proposal (RFP), unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract between the NTU and the Firm selected.

Upon submission, all proposals become the property of the NTU and become part of our official files without any further obligation on the part of the NTU. The NTU will not pay for any information herein requested, nor is it liable for any costs incurred by the bidder.

Proposal Review and Notification:

The NTU Administrator and a selection panel will review and evaluate each proposal submitted. It is anticipated that the proposal review process will be completed in the last week of April 2025 or early May. A written notice will be sent only to those firms that were selected for interview.

Proposal Evaluation and Criteria:

The NTU will be evaluating prospective proposals based upon the following criteria:

- A. An Evaluation Committee consisting of officers and employees of Navajo Technical University will be established. The Committee will make all decisions regarding the evaluations, determination of responsible Proposers and the competitive range; recommend the selection of the Proposer, if any, that may be awarded the Contract, and in negotiations.
- B. All aspects of the evaluations of the proposals, any discussions/negotiations, including documentation, correspondence and meetings, will be kept confidential during the evaluation process.
- C. All proposals must conform to the specifications. Proposals will be analyzed for conformance with the instructions and requirements of the RFP. Proposals that do not comply with these instructions and do not include the required information may be rejected as insufficient or not be considered for competitive range. Navajo Technical University reserves the right to request of a Proposer to provide any missing information and to make corrections.
- D. **Minimum Requirements for Bidders:** The proposing firm must demonstrate the following qualifications to ensure alignment with Navajo Technical University's leadership role in higher education and tribal higher education:
 1. **Higher Education Expertise**
 - Extensive experience supporting IT governance, infrastructure, and policy development in higher education institutions.
 - Proven ability to collaborate with and address the unique needs of tribal higher education entities, ensuring culturally relevant and community-aligned solutions.
 2. **Research and Education Network Expertise**
 - Demonstrated knowledge of and experience with high-performance research and education networks, such as Internet2.
 - Expertise in designing, optimizing, and managing high-capacity carrier network connections and peering for research and education initiatives.
 3. **Science-Driven Technology Projects**
 - Experience supporting science and research-focused teams and initiatives, including technology projects designed to advance academic, scientific, and technical goals.
 - Proven ability to integrate science-driven solutions into IT infrastructure, ensuring alignment with institutional priorities.
 4. **Advanced Technology and Emerging Fields**
 - Demonstrated knowledge of advanced technologies, including AI and data-driven automation, as tools to enhance IT systems and infrastructure.
 - Experience guiding IT teams in responsibly integrating and managing emerging technologies to support institutional goals and the broader academic mission.
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5. Cyber Infrastructure and IT Policy Development

- Proven expertise in designing and implementing robust cyber infrastructure systems that align with modular IT policy frameworks.
- Experience developing adaptable and dynamic IT policies that support governance, compliance, cybersecurity, and institutional priorities.

E. Evaluations will be made in strict accordance with all of the evaluation criteria specified herein.

Evaluation of proposals will be based upon the following criteria:

1. Responsiveness of the proposal in clearly stating and understanding the scope of work/services, and in meeting the proposal requirements of the RFP.
2. Previous experience of the Consultant, in general, as well as, that of its partner(s), associate(s), and key support personnel (if applicable).
3. Qualifications of the Consultant to provide the University with services for the required period of time, provide adequate staffing, and show a history of demonstrated competence.
4. University's assessment of the Consultant's abilities to meet and satisfy the needs of the University; taking into consideration additional services or expertise offered that exceed the proposal requirements or the inability to meet some of the proposal requirements.
5. Relevancy to the University and appropriateness of Consultant's affiliations, professional memberships, and background or experience in the areas of higher education policy and funding, educational research methods, research design, program development and evaluation, involvement and knowledge of higher education related matters; in particular, advocacy for Native American Tribal Colleges will be of special interest in evaluating proposals.
6. Information obtained from Consultant's references or other clients.
7. Proposed Fee and expense schedule for services to be provided by the Consultant.
8. Cost-effectiveness strategies and a proposed action plan with projected benchmarks and outcomes.
9. Best interests of the University, only the University is in a position to determine their own best interests, and their decision shall be final.

Availability of Funds

This procurement is subject to the availability of funding. Navajo Technical University's obligation hereunder is contingent upon the availability of appropriated funds from which payment for the Contract purposes can be made. No legal liability on the part of Navajo Technical University for any payment shall arise until funds are made available to the Director of Finance for this Contract and until the Contractor receives notice of such availability, to be confirmed in writing by the Director of Finance. Any award of Contract hereunder will be conditioned upon said availability of funds.

Opening of Proposals

Proposals will not be publicly opened. Except for the "**RFP 2025-002 Cost Proposal for IT Department Support Service**" this will be publicly opened, read aloud, and recorded immediately after the date and time of submission of proposal. All proposals and evaluations will be kept strictly confidential throughout the evaluation, selection, and negotiation. Only members of the Evaluation Committee, Navajo Technical University administrative officers, and its agents having a legitimate interest will be provided access to the proposals and evaluation results.

No proposal shall be withdrawn for a period of ninety (90) days after the due date of the submission of the proposal. A Proposer may notify or withdraw the proposal at any time prior to the proposal due date by written request, signed by the same person who signed the proposal.

Proposals are to be signed by an individual authorized to bind the submitter to its provisions. Proposals are to contain a statement indicating the period during which the proposal will remain valid. Failure to sign the proposal will disqualify it.

Award of Proposal

- A. Submission and award of a Contract will be awarded to the most responsible Proposer submitting a responsive Proposal that is the most advantageous to Navajo Technical University, taking into consideration the factors outlined in this Request for Proposal.
- B. Independent Contractor: It is expressly understood and agreed that the Proposer, if selected, and all persons designated by it to provide services in connection with the subsequent award of a Contract, is and shall be deemed to be an independent contractor, responsible for its respective acts or omissions and that Navajo Technical University shall in no way be responsible, therefore, neither party hereto has authority to bind the other or to hold out to third parties, that has the authority to bind the other.

Proposal Submission:

Completed proposal must be accepted via mail (with subject line "**RFP 2025-002 IT Department Support Service**") **proposal** or postmark on or before due date mention in this RFP at:

Navajo Technical University

Attn: Business Office

Geraldine Gamble, Accounting Manager

Enclosed: "RFP 2025-002 NTU-IT Department Support Service"

P.O. Box 849

Crownpoint, New Mexico 87313

Late proposals will not be considered.

Thank you for your interest.

Attachment A - Scope of Work

The Navajo Technical University requests qualified vendors to complete the work outlined below.

The selected firm will partner with Navajo Technical University's IT department to provide expertise, guidance, and skill-building support through the following initiatives, advancing NTU's mission as a leader in higher education and tribal higher education:

1. Development of a Living IT Policy Framework

- Collaborate with the IT team to review current policies and identify opportunities for improvement.
- Facilitate the creation of a dynamic, modular IT policy framework that remains responsive to new technologies and the evolving needs of NTU.
- Ensure the framework comprehensively addresses critical IT governance areas, including cybersecurity, infrastructure management, hardware/software standards, data privacy, compliance, and emerging technological considerations.

2. Policy Coaching and Skill Development

- Equip the IT team with advanced techniques for policy creation, documentation, and management.
- Provide hands-on training to staff on tools and methodologies to maintain and update the framework in alignment with NTU's strategic goals and rapidly advancing fields.

3. IT Cyber Infrastructure Mentorship

- Guide the IT team in the analysis, design, and implementation of cyber infrastructure systems to meet NTU's long-term needs.
- Build expertise within the IT team to integrate advanced technologies, including automation and data-driven solutions, into the university's IT systems.

4. Research and Education Network Expertise

- Support NTU's leadership in tribal higher education by optimizing connectivity with Internet2 and large-scale carrier networks.
- Collaborate with the IT team to enhance high-performance networking for research and education initiatives critical to NTU's mission.

5. Tribal College Collaboration and Cultural Alignment

- Provide culturally attuned guidance to address the unique IT needs of tribal colleges and ensure solutions align with NTU's institutional goals and community priorities.
- Reinforce NTU's leadership role in tribal higher education by ensuring IT strategies directly support the university's mission and enhance the student and community experience.

6. Project Exploration and Capacity Building

- Train the IT team to identify, evaluate, and pursue new project opportunities that support NTU's mission and growth.

- Develop staff capacity to produce actionable project plans and implement innovative strategies that align with NTU's priorities.

7. Support for Strategic IT Initiatives and Leadership Growth

- Partner with NTU's IT department to advance technology-related initiatives that benefit students, faculty, staff, and the wider tribal community.
- Provide mentorship to the IT team to design, implement, and sustain cutting-edge solutions that reflect NTU's status as a leader in tribal higher education.
- Foster internal capacity to address emerging challenges and opportunities, including responsibly integrating advanced technologies and automation.

Deliverables

The selected firm will be responsible for producing the following deliverables, designed to strengthen Navajo Technical University's IT capabilities and align with its mission as a leader in tribal higher education:

1. Comprehensive Living IT Policy Framework

- A dynamic, modular IT policy framework that addresses NTU's critical governance areas, including cybersecurity, infrastructure management, compliance, data privacy, and hardware/software standards.
- A documented roadmap for maintaining and updating the framework, tailored to NTU's operational needs and capacity.
- Templates and tools for ongoing policy development and management by NTU's IT team.

2. Training and Capacity-Building Workshops

- Delivery of hands-on workshops and training sessions for NTU's IT team, focused on effective policy creation, documentation, and management techniques.
- Development of training materials and guides that can be used by IT staff for ongoing education and future team onboarding.

3. Cyber Infrastructure Strategy and Implementation Guidance

- A detailed analysis of NTU's current cyber infrastructure, including recommendations for improvements and alignment with institutional goals.
- Strategic guidance on the design, implementation, and optimization of robust cyber infrastructure systems, ensuring alignment with the Living IT Policy Framework.

4. Research and Education Network Optimization Plan

- A connectivity optimization strategy for NTU's use of Internet2 and high-capacity carrier networks, enhancing the university's ability to support high-performance networking for research and education.

- Recommendations for improving network performance and reliability to meet the needs of NTU's students, faculty, and research teams.

5. Customized Tribal College Collaboration Plan

- A culturally relevant coaching plan to address the unique needs of tribal colleges, ensuring IT strategies align with NTU's institutional and community goals.
- Documentation of best practices for addressing tribal college-specific challenges, emphasizing community engagement and cultural alignment.

6. Science-Driven Technology Roadmap

- A detailed plan for integrating science-focused technologies, including research-driven projects, into NTU's IT ecosystem.
- Recommendations for leveraging advanced technologies, such as automation and emerging tools, to support NTU's mission and enhance student outcomes.

7. Project Exploration and Strategy Reports

- Reports outlining potential IT project opportunities, including feasibility assessments and actionable strategies for implementation.
- Frameworks for IT staff to evaluate, plan, and execute future projects independently.

8. Final Report and Knowledge Transfer Package

- A comprehensive final report summarizing all deliverables, activities, and outcomes achieved during the engagement.
- A knowledge transfer package, including all documentation, training materials, templates, and resources, to ensure NTU's IT team can sustain and build on the work performed.

Attachment B - Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters

Navajo Technical University is prohibited from contracting with or making prime or sub-awards to parties that are suspended or debarred or whose principals are suspended or debarred from participating in Federal, State of New Mexico, State of Arizona, or Navajo Nation funded contracts. Covered transaction include procurement contracts for goods or professional services in any amount and all non-procurement transactions. This certification is required for all bidders of Navajo Technical University to be awarded and all non-procurement transactions.

The prospective Applicant certifies, to the best of its knowledge and belief, that it and its principals:

- 1) Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in transactions under federal non-procurement programs by any federal department or agency;
- 2) Have not, within the three-year period preceding the proposal, had one or more public transactions (federal, state, or local) terminated for cause or default; and
- 3) Are not presently indicted or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a government entity (federal, state, or local) and have not, within the three-year period preceding the proposal, been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against it:
 - a) For the commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public transaction (federal, state, or local) or a procurement contract under such a public transaction;
 - b) For the violation of federal or state antitrust statutes, including those proscribing price fixing between competitors, the allocation of customers between competitors, or bid rigging; or
 - c) For the commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property.

The Applicant hereby certifies that its firm and its principals are not currently suspended or debarred from bidding on any Federal, State of New Mexico, State of Arizona, or Navajo Nation funded contracts.

Applicant Name (print)

Name of individual signing on Applicant's behalf

Applicant Address

Title of individual signing on Applicant's behalf

Signature of individual signing on Applicant's behalf

Date