COLUMBUS STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR GRADUATION SUPPLIES

RFP number 27-004

Proposals must be received by:
Columbus State Community College

Darrin Albaugh
Assistant Director, Procurement
Email address: dalbaug1@cscc.edu

On or before

Friday, November 20, 2026, by 2pm EST

Overview

Columbus State enrolls approximately 25,000 students each semester at its downtown and Delaware campuses and six regional learning centers. More Central Ohio residents attend Columbus State Community College than any other college or university. For sixty years, Columbus State has been the front door to higher learning, providing an accessible and affordable point of access to a quality college education.

Summary

Columbus State Community College is seeking proposals from qualified and experienced vendors to provide graduation supplies and commencement-related products that support the College's graduation ceremonies and student recognition efforts. The selected vendor will serve as a strategic partner in delivering high-quality graduation regalia, recognition items, and related services that contribute to a positive and memorable commencement experience for graduates, their families, faculty, and staff.

Products and services may include, but are not limited to, graduation caps and gowns, tassels, stoles, honor cords, diploma covers, commencement regalia, graduation announcements, recognition apparel, memorabilia, and other graduation-related accessories. Vendors should demonstrate the ability to provide reliable order management, responsive customer service, flexible purchasing options, competitive pricing, and timely delivery to meet the needs of the College's commencement schedule.

The College's objective is to establish a contract with a vendor that can consistently provide quality products and exceptional service while supporting Columbus State's commitment to celebrating student achievement. The successful vendor will have experience serving higher education institutions and the capability to accommodate evolving graduation program needs throughout the term of the agreement.

Through this solicitation, Columbus State Community College seeks a partnership with a vendor that shares the College's dedication to student success and excellence. The selected supplier will play an important role in ensuring that every graduate has access to affordable, high-quality graduation products that reflect the significance of this academic milestone.

Request for Proposal (RFP) Schedule (subject to change)

Friday, October 23, 2026,	Request for Proposal released.
Wednesday, November 4, 2026,	Questions from participants due by 5pm EST.
Tuesday, November 10, 2026,	Responses to questions returned to participants by 5pm EST.
Friday, November 20, 2026,	Proposals are due by 2:00 PM, Eastern Standard Time (EST).

Proposal Submission Requirements

Proposals must address all questions and required services detailed in this RFP and shall not exceed ten (10) pages in length. Additional information regarding your firm and services may be included as addenda to the proposal and will not count toward the ten (10) pages. Such information, however, will be considered at the college's discretion.

Proposals shall be sent by the due date and time by email to:

Darrin Albaugh
Assistant Director – Purchasing, Accounts Payable and Travel
Email address: dalbaug1@cscc.edu
614.287.2641

The "Subject" line in the email shall state, **"RFP 27-004 Graduation Suppliers"**.

The firm is responsible for verifying its proposal has been received before by no later than the due date. Late proposals will not be accepted or considered. The time stamp on the email as received by Darrin Albaugh will determine the timeliness of the proposal's receipt.

Questions Related to the Request for Proposal

Questions regarding the RFP should be made in writing via email to Darrin Albaugh at dalbaug1@cscc.edu by no later than **5:00 p.m. EST Wednesday, November 4, 2026.** No questions as to the substance of the RFP will be answered by phone nor will questions left on voice mail be answered. All bidders will receive by email the questions and responses by **5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 10, 2026**.

Other Terms and Conditions

Firms responding to the RFP should not contact the Columbus State Community College's President, Cabinet members, Board members or their respective staffs concerning the RFP from the date hereof until the selection process has been completed.

The College reserves the right to cancel and withdraw this request for proposals and to reject any and/or all proposals submitted. The College reserves the right to conduct an interview with any or all

the firms submitting a proposal and to request additional information from any or all the firms as it deems necessary and appropriate. The College reserves the right to modify the RFP schedule as needed.

Proposal Components

Proposals should address all items requested information in a document that shall not exceed ten (10) pages in length. Any additional information regarding the firm and its services may be included as addenda to the proposal, however, will be considered by the college at its discretion.

Provide Columbus State Community College with the information requested below:

Supplier:

- Who is the primary contact person or person?
  - Name
  - Company
  - Address
  - Telephone Number
  - Fax Number
  - E-mail address
- Who formalizes contract agreements?
- When was the company established?
- What are your specialized products?
- Please provide a current reference list of Ohio clients.
- Who processes purchase orders?
  - Name
  - Company
  - Address
  - Telephone Number
  - Fax Number
  - E-mail address
- Columbus State may need a 48-hour "Rush" service. Do you provide this service?
- Do you accept orders via e-mail request?
- Do you provide design services if needed?

Specification and Pricing:

- Proposed Items for Bid:
  - Diploma Cover (Padded)
  - Certificate Holder
  - Diploma
  - Ceremony Certificate
  - Honor sticker
  - Electronic Diploma

Processing Orders:

- Provide confirmation by e-mail when an order has been received.
- Provide confirmation to the student when the diploma has been shipped.
- After the initial printing, can your company provide a turn-around period of 10 business days?

Provide pricing for yearly quantity three-year (2027-2029) quantity for all the items listed below. Also, provide samples.

Printing:

Pricing to include 3-year contract January 1, 2027 and ending December 31, 2029

Item Name and Description	Size	Material	Color	Yearly Quantity	One Year Pricing	Three Year Quantity	Three Year Pricing
Diploma Cover (Padded) ▪ Gold embossed with school name in the center of the front cover ▪ Lined with two pads, one with four corner pockets to accommodate 9" x 7" diploma certificate ▪ Short side hinge with landscape position ▪ Acetate/Tissue: One piece acetate and tissue per cover ▪ Camera ready (JPG) artwork proved by the college	For 9" L x 7" H Diploma Certificate	Smooth finish leathered	Royal Blue	3500		10500	
Portfolio/Envelope Ceremony Certificate Cover ▪ Cover Material – linen material, with gold embossed stamping (bright gold) with college name, city/state. Seal and adornment application. ▪ To accommodate an 11" x 8.5" certificate ▪ Orientation – landscape, back envelope flap ▪ Camera ready (JPG) artwork proved by the college	For 11" L x 8.5" H Ceremony Certificate	Linen	Royal Blue	1600		4800	
Diploma Certificate ▪ 9" x 7" certificate ▪ Printed with Header (college name) and text ▪ Gold engraved college seal ▪ Engrossed student name, degree, signatures ▪ Design proof consistent with current Columbus State Community College diploma ▪ Artwork format applicable to printing process	9" L x 7" H diploma certificate	American Parchment	Cream	3500		10500	
Ceremony Certificate ▪ 11" x 8.5" certificate ▪ Printed with Header (college name) and text ▪ Blue engraved college seal ▪ Engrossed graduate information, President signature ▪ Design proof consistent with current Columbus State Community College certificate ▪ Artwork format applicable to printing process	11" L x 8.5" H Ceremony Certificate	American Parchment	Cream	1600		4800	
Honor Sticker - Cum Laude ▪ Gold embossed sticker which is affixed to each honor graduate's diploma to signify the honor status	1 1/8" L x 1/4" H		Gold	600		1800	

Honor Sticker - Magna Cum Laude ▪ Gold embossed sticker which is affixed to each honor graduate's diploma to signify the honor status	1 3/4" L x 1/4" H		Gold	200		600	
Honor Sticker - Summa Cum Laude ▪ Gold embossed sticker which is affixed to each honor graduate's diploma to signify the honor status	1 3/4" L x 1/4" H		Gold	200		600	

1. Experience of the Firm

A. Provide a brief description of the firm, including organizational structure, years in business in Ohio.

B. Provide brief professional biographies describing the experience of the primary and secondary contact persons for the College, including office mailing addresses for both. Please also indicate the name and title of the individual(s) completing the response to the RFP if not the primary and/or secondary contacts for the College.

C. Please describe the types of clients that your firm typically serves and its experience relative to the Columbus State Community College. Provide a list of college, university, and private clients, with specific experience. For five (5) of the most representative clients on the list, provide the contact's name, email address and telephone number and discuss the nature of services provided if different among clients, the number of years each has been a client, and the size and type of services.

2. Non-Discrimination

The firm shall certify in its proposal that:

- it is in compliance with all applicable equal employment opportunity requirements under law as required by Section 153.59 of the Ohio Revised Code and any other applicable state or federal laws; and

- it will not discriminate in the hiring of employees for the performance of work under this contract against any citizen of the state who is qualified and available to perform the work to which this contract relates on the basis of race, creed, sex, disability, as defined in Section 4112.01 of the *Ohio Revised Code*, or color.

3. Compliance/Conflict of Interest

A. Has any regulatory body or market authority issued any orders or other sanctions against your firm in the last five years? If yes, please describe.

B. Is your firm or any affiliate the focus of any pending or ongoing litigation, formal investigation, or administrative proceedings related to money management activities? If yes, please describe. Also, affirm that no employees proposed to work on the engagement have ever been convicted of a felony.

C. Please describe any potential conflicts of interest your firm may have in the management of this account. If there are conflicts, please describe how they are addressed?

4. Fee Arrangement

The firm shall

A. Provide proposed fee(s) and payment terms.
B. Describe terms for cancellation of the contract.

If the decision is to go forward the College will enter negotiations on fee(s) and payment terms with the selected firm. The College has the right to cease negotiations with selected firm(s) if it is not satisfied with the negotiations. In this event, the College retains the right to begin negotiations with another firm.

Any contract resulting from this RFP is not an exclusive contract. The College will reserve the right to contract for services in any manner deemed to be in its own best interest.

Evaluation and Contract Award

Selection and award of contract will be made to the supplier whose proposal, in the sole opinion of the Columbus State Community College, is most responsive to the specifications of this RFP and represents the best overall value to the College. Factors that determine the award will include, but will not be limited to, the following: The completeness of all requested responses; assessment of the firm's ability to deliver the requested services; the extent to which the firm's proposed solution fulfills the College's stated requirements as set out in this RFP; the firm's stability, experience and record of past performance in delivering similar services; availability of sufficient high-quality firm personnel with the required skills and experience for the proposed approach; and acceptance of Columbus State Community College contractual terms and conditions, if applicable. Payment terms will be considered as determining factors in the contract award.

The firm's proposal in response to this RFP will be incorporated into the final agreement between the Columbus State Community College and the firm.

Upon award of the contract, the selected firm and appropriate College contacts will confer to agree upon the schedule of events, timeline, constraints, etc. and to reach a consensus on targets and methodology.

Proposer Interviews

Proposers submitting proposals that meet the selection criteria and which are deemed to be the most advantageous to the College *may* be scheduled for an interview (in person or virtual) with the College selection team.

Supplier Diversity

Columbus State Community College encourages women, minority groups, and EDGE vendors to respond to College's Requests for Proposal. Columbus State Community College is committed to a proactive and comprehensive supplier diversity program that ensures an active and full participation of historically disadvantaged, economically, and socially underutilized businesses located within the College's geographic region and beyond with specific attention to include Minority Business Enterprises (MBE), Women-Owned Business Enterprises (WOBE), and State of Ohio EDGE Enterprises.

Compliance with Federal, State and Local Laws

Supplier represents and warrants in submitting a Proposal to the RFP and in the performance of any contract awarded because of this RFP, it has complied with and/or shall with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws, rules and regulations. No Supplier or any person acting on behalf of any Supplier shall, in any manner, discriminate against, intimidate, or retaliate against any employee hired for the performance of work under the contract on account of race, color, religion, sex, age, handicap, national origin or ancestry.

Philanthropic

Columbus State has built its student success strategy on deep partnerships with universities, K12 districts, employers, social service groups, government agencies and suppliers.

The College is seeking a supplier partner that shares our commitment to student success. Philanthropic partnership opportunities include, but are not limited to, student scholarships, in kind contributions and student internships.

Include any philanthropic opportunities in your proposal.

Governing Law

The laws of the State of Ohio will govern the interpretation, validity and effect of the RFP and any resulting contract documents. Any disputes arising out of this RFP or resultant contract shall be litigated in the appropriate Court in Franklin County, Ohio.

O.R.C 9.24

Ohio Revised Code (O.R.C.) Section 9.24 prohibits the State from awarding a contract to any offeror(s) against whom the Auditor of State has issued a finding for recovery if the finding for recovery is "unresolved" at the time of award. By submitting a proposal, offeror warrants that it is not now, and will not become subject to an "unresolved" finding for recovery under O.R.C. 9.24, prior to the award of any contract arising out of this RFP, without notifying the College of such finding.

Public Record Law

It is expressly understood by the parties that Columbus State Community College is a public institution and is subject to the Ohio Public Records Act, O.R.C. 149.43, et seq. Upon receipt of a public records request, Columbus State is required to provide prompt inspection or copies within a reasonable period of responsive records that Columbus State determines, in its sole discretion, are public records subject to release. Regardless of any other term in this contract or agreement, release of public records in compliance with Ohio law will not be deemed a breach of this RFP.

Columbus State Community College agrees not to disclose, without giving prior notice, any specific information that Supplier has previously identified as a proprietary trade secret. If a person seeks that information through a public records request, Columbus State will notify bidder during Columbus State's legal review to give the bidder an opportunity to establish to the satisfaction of Columbus State that the information constitutes a proprietary trade secret that is exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act. If Columbus State does not find that the information constitutes a proprietary trade secret, Columbus State will notify bidder of its intention to disclose the information in accordance with law. Bidder may choose to seek appropriate legal action, including injunctive relief, to prevent disclosure of the information at issue.

Taxes and Infringement

It is understood that all Proposals received shall be exclusive of any Use, Sales, Federal, State, or local tax. Columbus State Community College is an institution qualified for exemption from customary taxes. Tax Exemption certificates will be furnished upon request.

Columbus State Community College shall be saved harmless by the Supplier from payment of all claims and costs (including attorney fees) arising out of any infringement, alleged infringement, or use of any patent or patented device, article, system, arrangement, materials, processes, or any copyright,

trademark, trade secret, or any proprietary right of any third party used by them in the execution of the contract.

Endorsements

The Supplier shall not permit endorsements by photographs or written statements involving the College or use of the College trademarks or logos, without prior written approval of the College.

Appendix A

(COMPLETE AND ATTACH TO PROPOSAL)

NON-COLLUSION AFFIDAVIT

The undersigned bidder or agent, being duly sworn on oath, states that all of the following are true:

1. He/she has not, nor has any other member, representative, or agent of the firm, company, corporation, or partnership represented by him, entered into any combination, collusion, conspiracy, or agreement, directly or indirectly, with any person relative to the price to be bid by anyone at such letting;
2. He/she has not, nor has any other member, representative, or agent of the firm, company, corporation, or partnership represented by him, entered into any combination, collusion, conspiracy, or agreement, directly or indirectly, with any person to prevent any person from bidding;
3. He/she has not, nor has any other member, representative, or agent of the firm, company, corporation, or partnership represented by him, entered into any combination, collusion, conspiracy, or agreement, directly or indirectly, with any person to include anyone to refrain from bidding;
4. This bid is made without reference to any other bid and without any agreement, understanding, or combination with any other person in reference to such bidding; and
5. This bid is genuine and not a sham.

He/She further states that no person or persons, firms, or corporation has, have, or will receive, directly or indirectly, any rebate, fee gift, commission, or thing of value on account of such sale.

OATH AND AFFIRMATION

I HEREBY AFFIRM UNDER THE PENALTIES FOR PERJURY THAT THE FACTS AND INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE FOREGOING BID FOR PUBLIC WORKS ARE TRUE AND CORRECT.

Dated this_____day of_____, _____

_____

Name of Organization

_____

Title of Person Signing

_____

Signature

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

STATE OF_____)

COUNTY OF_____)

Before me, a Notary Public, personally appeared the above-named and swore that the statements contained in the foregoing document were true and correct.
Subscribed and sworn to me this_____day of_____,_____.

_____
Notary Public Signature

My Commission Expires: _____