

Vendor Q&A Addendum
Strategic Insights for New Jersey Higher Education Request for Quotations (RFQs)

Last Updated: 2/3/2026

Link for RFQs: <https://www.nj.gov/highereducation/finance/grants.shtml>

- 1. Does the scope of these projects focus only on public four-year colleges and universities, or will projects be expected to consider possible reconfigurations that may include any postsecondary education institution in the state (e.g., private institutions or county colleges)? Are out-of-state institutions in other states included in the scope?**
 - a. No. The scope of the Strategic Insights for New Jersey Higher Education (Strategic Insights) project is inclusive of all institutions of higher education licensed to operate in New Jersey. This includes public two-year colleges and independent public-mission institutions. Priority should focus on New Jersey institutions of higher education that receive state-operating aid; however, out-of-state institutions that are licensed to operate in New Jersey may be included in the scope.
- 2. Since the content of the three RFPs is overlapping, would OSHE accept a single proposal that covers two or three of the projects in a holistic way? If yes, how would the proposal need to be organized? Would OSHE expect multiple separate proposals? Or would it be possible to produce one coherent proposal with an aligned budget and timeline? If a bidder intends to submit a response to multiple projects, does the budget limit apply to each scope separately, or can the amounts listed in each RFQ be summed?**
 - a. No. Each technical Strategic Insights proposal and quotation must be submitted separately. While the three RFQs are related topically, vendors must respond to each Scope of Services outlined in the RFQ. OSHE will consider all submissions. The budget limit applies to each scope separately and cannot be combined across RFQs.
- 3. Does OSHE anticipate any dependencies between the separate projects that would affect the timeline, such that the results of one should be available to inform the work of the other? In particular, the effectiveness of the third RFQ activities may be dependent on information emerging from the first two projects. How will OSHE ensure that the stakeholder engagement contractor receives necessary information in a timely fashion?**
 - a. We anticipate the Strategic Insights projects operating in tandem. Ideally, each individual project would inform work across the entire Strategic Insights initiative; however, they may also be completed independently, if necessary. The State will continuously monitor progress and promptly flag issues/concerns in accordance with project plans.
- 4. Some public universities in New Jersey are already moving toward consolidation—New Jersey City U and Kean, and Montclair has absorbed Bloomfield College. Are there others now in active conversation regarding consolidation? And to what extent are these projects expected to inform the mergers already underway?**
 - a. OSHE does not oversee conversations regarding forthcoming mergers and consolidations in the State. The purpose of the Strategic Insights projects is not to inform current mergers, but to provide a state perspective on the future of the New Jersey higher

education ecosystem based on external and internal conditions impacting institutions of higher education.

- 5. All three RFQs focus on consolidation as the desired solution to the issues facing OSHE and the state of New Jersey. Has the state already pursued activities that have designated consolidation as the only desired solution, and if so, will those materials be made available to the selected contractor? Could the scope of a successful proposal include other possible solutions outside of mergers or consolidations? Does the scope of the background research in the first project extend to creation and dissolution of governance systems of higher education?**

- a. OSHE did not pursue activities designating consolidation as the sole desired solution. Yes, the scope of a successful proposal may include possible solutions beyond mergers and consolidations. Yes, the scope of the background research may include the creation and dissolution of governance systems in higher education.

- 6. Could OSHE please describe the data resources that would be made available to the selected contractor? In particular, are there any resources beyond those used to create the dashboards presented on the OSHE website? Will the selected contractor be able to request any additional needed data from the institutions directly? Does OSHE have an agreement with the National Student Clearinghouse to provide data about student mobility among private and out-of-state institutions?**

- a. The data resources available would be dependent on the RFQ in question. The *Opportunity Outlook* RFQ would necessitate the contractor to access the fiscal assessment and risk monitoring (FARM) data collected by OSHE. Additional resources may be made available through signed data-sharing agreements beyond what is available on OSHE's website and in accordance with State data security and confidentiality rules as indicated in the Standard Terms and Conditions. Any additional data requested will be limited to that of which is necessary to the contractor to meet the deliverables as outlined and approved by designated parties. OSHE does not have an agreement with the National Student Clearinghouse to provide data about student mobility among private and out-of-state institutions.

- 7. Is there a core group of individuals, including but not limited to OSHE staff (e.g., a "steering committee"), that will need to be consulted about and updated on project progress on a regular basis? If so, what roles would constitute that group?**

- a. The core group of individuals working on the project will be OSHE staff. Additional stakeholders may be provided regular updates regarding the project but will not be included in the core project management. These individuals may include the Governor's office, Legislative offices, and institutional representatives. Similarly, the RFQ requires that, should multiple contractors be selected across the broader Strategic Insights project, they would be subject to regular meetings with OSHE and the companion contractors.

- 8. Are the three engagements intended to proceed in sequence or overlap?**

- a. New Jersey OSHE intends for the three projects within the Strategic Insights work to overlap in their implementation.
- 9. Given that RFP #2 “Opportunity Outlook” specifies a detailed timeline and milestones, are RFP #1 and RFP #3 expected to follow a similar timeline?**
 - a. The timelines and milestones for *Mapping the Future* and *Collaborative Engagement and Outreach* are subject to the discretion of the selected vendor with approval from New Jersey OSHE. New Jersey OSHE anticipates working collaboratively with the selected vendors to appropriately detail the timeline and milestones for these projects.
- 10. What are the expectations for in-person, hybrid, or virtual engagement with NJ OSHE and its stakeholders?**
 - a. Vendors are encouraged to suggest a work approach that they feel best aligns with the project's objectives. Any necessary travel or in-person interactions must be accounted for in the proposed budget. The initial project kickoff meeting and the biweekly project management meetings with OSHE, as outlined in each RFQ, will be conducted virtually.
- 11. If candidates will be engaged in response evaluation following submission, what will that process look like (e.g., oral presentations) and on what timeline? When does NJ OSHE expect to communicate a decision?**
 - a. Once quotations are submitted, New Jersey OSHE will engage in an internal state review process to guide vendor selection. At this time, we cannot provide an estimate on the timing of the selection process.
- 12. Does NJ OSHE have a desired response page limit per RFP?**
 - a. No.
- 13. The link to applicable terms and conditions provided on page 11 of the RFP leads to a broken webpage. We were able to locate these terms and conditions (linked) on the State of New Jersey’s website. Can you confirm these are the terms and conditions that will govern any contract related to this RFP or if these are materially similar to the applicable terms and conditions?**
 - a. Please find a corrected link to the New Jersey State Terms and Conditions here: <https://www.nj.gov/treasury/purchase/forms/CombinedStateofNewJerseyStandardTermsandConditionsandWaiveredSupplement.pdf>. We have amended the RFQs to reflect this corrected link.
- 14. Will OSHE accept exceptions and/or redlines to the terms and conditions provided?**
 - a. No. The Terms and Conditions are established by the State and cannot be adjusted.
- 15. Would OSHE allow for the negotiation of a direct damages cap on liability?**
 - a. No.

16. Is OSHE open to providing a special, consequential, incidental, and the like damages exclusion?

- a. No.

17. Do small business use requirements apply to this RFP?

- a. Yes.

18. To clarify the expectations around the “FARM-integrated performance dashboard” in RFP #2: Does OSHE currently maintain a technical dashboard or toolset as part of the existing FARM framework? If so, will vendors be expected to build on that system, or design a new dashboard aligned with FARM metrics and processes?

- a. OSHE does not currently maintain a technical dashboard or toolset as part of the existing FARM framework. We have data in excel spreadsheets and other MS365 tools. The intent of this requirement is to develop a mechanism for performance monitoring. Vendors will be expected to design a dashboard aligned with FARM metrics and processes.