

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)**

**RFP # 26-003**

**Upward Bound Consulting**

**ISSUE DATE:**

**February 09, 2026**

**SUBMISSION DATE:**

**March 05, 2026**

This document constitutes a request for competitive, sealed bids from qualified individuals and organizations to provide Consulting Services for Missouri Southern State University's Upward Bound Program in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth herein. These components and systems are intended to describe the project's general requirements and are not intended to be representative of all specifications and details that may be required.

Prior to award of the contract all questions and/or clarifications regarding this proposal should be submitted by email to [Jennings-k@mssu.edu](mailto:Jennings-k@mssu.edu) by 12:00pm CST February 23, 2026. Questions received after this date may not be answered. Only questions answered by formal written Addenda will be binding. Oral and other interpretations or clarifications will be without legal effect.

**Projected Schedule and Timeline:**

Bid Opening date.....March 05, 2026  
Estimated award date ..... March 13, 2026

\*MSSU Reserves the right to change the projected schedule and timeline

**Proposal Due Date:**

No later than 2:00pm, Central Standard Time, March 05, 2026

**Bid Opening:**

Bid opening will begin at 2:00pm Central Standard Time March 05, 2026 in Billingsly Student Center 343, 3950 E Newman Road, Joplin MO 64801.

**Submission Requirements:**

Electronic submission is not allowed.

Bid materials must be completely sealed in an envelope with the bid number showing on the outside of the envelope. Two (2) hard copies and one (1) flash drive/USB compatible device including all attachments and certifications should be included. Bids must be submitted on 8 ½” x 11” paper and shall not exceed one hundred (100) pages in total length.

Hand Delivering Instructions: If you will be hand delivering your bid within 30 minutes of the bid opening time stated above please deliver the bid to Billingsly Student Center Room 343. If you will be hand delivering your bid any time before the 30 minutes noted above, please deliver the bid to Hearnes Hall 211B.

Mail-In Instructions: If you elect to mail in your bid, they need to be received on campus at least 24 hours in advance of the bid opening to ensure enough time for delivery to Financial Services. It is your responsibility to confirm that Financial Services has received your bid in advance of the bid opening. Mailed bids should be mailed to the address below.

Missouri Southern State University  
Financial Services, Hearnes Hall 211  
3950 E Newman Rd,  
Joplin, MO 64801

Please see Offeror’s Information Section for details on proprietary information when submitting bids. Your proposal must be valid for a period of 180 days from the proposal due date.

All pages with a signature line or fillable information are required. Responses with unsigned/unfilled forms may be considered non-responsive.

**Project Description and Scope of Services**

**Project Description:** Missouri Southern State University is seeking to enter into a services contract with a qualified company to provide TRIO SSS grant writing and administration consulting services with ongoing technical assistance for full 5 years in addition to grant writing with a contingency fee contract preferred.

**Scope of Services:** The consultant is to provide professional services in the administration, management, and reporting of grant funds received, including but not limited to the scope below:

1. **Pre-Funding Services:** Consultants will have knowledge of TRIO Federal and State rules such as EDGAR, OMB, Legislation and Regulations, and guidance concerning pre-funding services and receipt of Federal funds. The consultant will work with the Members of Upward Bound an SSS grant at MSSU, to provide concise information needed for receipt and holding of initial and ongoing deposits expected as part of the grant cycle. The consultant will have knowledge of interim Final rules and other guidance released by the US Treasury and the Department of Education and other applicable sources.
2. **Post-Funding Services:** Consultant will advise and oversee fund administration and will work with, and report to, Finance Director or delegate by accurately researching and making determination of eligibility of fund expenditure per Final Rules issued by the US Treasury. Consultant will review MSSU Upward Bound SSS budgets and work closely with MSSU Upward Bound SSS staff, officials and professional service. Consultant will provide budget report and reimbursement recommendation to Finance Director or delegate. Consultant will provide a recommendation to the Finance Director or delegate as it pertains to determination guidelines, project specifics and project budgets.
3. **Reporting:** Consultant will provide ongoing technical assistance for the full five years of this contract.

**Proposal Information:**

1. **Profile - Information** including name, contact information, geographic location, size, history of completing related projects on time and at or under budget, availability, etc. of firm or individual
2. **Qualifications – summary** of background, capabilities, experience in federal or Trio/Upward Bound grants, success rates in completing SSS grants, legal status of vendor organization. Additional qualifications include:
  - a. Experience with local planning and economic development initiatives and how many SSS grants they have written.
  - b. Proven record of collaboration, communications, and project completion what is the success rate of getting the grant renewed for programs that have existed for 20 or more years.
  - c. Consultant/Firm is not debarred or suspended for any reason in the System for Award Management (SAM)
  - d. Resumes of all employees and subcontractors (if applicable) who will or may be assigned to provide technical assistance.
3. **Services – provide detailed work plan** that addresses how work for the University would be performed, including detailed personnel assignments. Include a detailed description of major deliverables to be provided.
4. **Proposed Cost of Services – provide cost proposal** to accomplish the scope of work outlined above and for any additional services required. The proposal must include all foreseeable costs and reimbursable

expenditures that are deemed necessary to successfully complete these activities. Note – the lowest bid will not be used as the sole basis for entering into this contract.

5. References – Recommendations and referrals from past governmental clients
6. Any Additional relevant information

**Authorized to Do Business:** If Contractor is a corporation or limited liability company organized in the State of Missouri, Contractor represents that it is in Good Standing with the Missouri Secretary of State. If Contractor is a corporation or limited liability company organized in a state other than Missouri, Contractor represents that it is authorized to do business in the State of Missouri.

**Contract Term:** The contract shall not bind, nor purport to bind, the University for any contractual commitment in excess of the original contract period, which shall be Contract signing date (mid-March 2026) through Mid-March 2031.

**Examination of Bid Package:**

Before Submitting a Proposal, it is the responsibility of each bidder to:

1. Thoroughly examine this bid package and other related data identified in this bid package.
2. Consider federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, rules and regulations that may in any manner affect cost, progress, performance, and furnishing of the work.
3. Promptly notify the University of all conflicts, errors, ambiguities, or discrepancies which Bidder has discovered in or between the information provided in this bid package and such other related documents.

**Offeror's Information**

1. If your proposal contains any information you consider to be proprietary, you must place it in a separate envelope if mailed and/or folder if saved on a flash drive/USB compatible device and mark it "Proprietary Information". Missouri Southern State University is the final authority as to the extent of material considered proprietary or confidential. Pricing/financial information will not be treated as trade secret or proprietary information, or otherwise be deemed confidential.
2. Pursuant to Section 610.021 RSMo, proposals will not be available for public review until after a contractual agreement is executed or all proposals are rejected. Missouri Southern State University will notify RFP respondents of the vendor who has been selected to perform these services. Any award protest must be received within 10 days after the date of notification of award in accordance with the statute
3. Once an award is announced, all proposals submitted in response to this RFP will be open to inspection by any interested person or organization. Therefore, an offeror shall not request that its entire proposal be treated as confidential or proprietary information. In addition, the pricing/financial proposal will not be treated as trade secret or proprietary information, or otherwise be deemed confidential.
4. To facilitate evaluation, it is highly desirable that the proposal be organized to respond to each section of the RFP, utilizing the same numbering arrangement for each item. In addition, the pages in the proposal should be numbered.

**Evaluation Process:**

1. Proposals will be competitively evaluated based on the responses to all requirements in this RFP. The evaluation of a Contractor’s ability to provide the required services will be based on Contractor’s written proposal, and if selected as a finalist, presentation, interviews, visits to Contractor’s client reference accounts, and best and final offers. The following is the criteria that will be used as part of the evaluation:

Scoring Criteria	Description	Points
Qualifications	Summary of background, capabilities, experience in federal or Trio/Upward Bound grants, success rates in completing SSS grants, legal status of vendor organization.	50
Scope of Services	Provide detailed work plan that addresses how work for the University would be performed, including detailed personnel assignments. Include a detailed description of major deliverables to be provided.	15
Proposed Cost of Services	Provide cost proposal to accomplish the scope of work outlined and for any additional services required. The proposal must include all foreseeable costs and reimbursable expenditures that are deemed necessary to successfully complete these activities.	30
References	Recommendations and referrals from past governmental clients	5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

2. When evaluating a proposal, the University reserves the right to consider relevant information and fact, whether gained from a proposal, a Supplier, a Supplier’s references, or from any other source. Any information submitted with the proposal, regardless of the format or placement of such information, may be considered in making decisions related to the responsiveness and merit of a proposal and the award of an Agreement.

**Proposal:**

1. The undersigned, having examined and being familiar with all the requirements of this RFP, hereby proposes to furnish the requested items or services required for the performance and completion, in a workmanlike manner, of all work for **Consulting Services for Upward Bound**, Missouri Southern State University, Joplin Missouri all in accordance with the aforementioned documents for:

Base Proposal:

The fixed sum of \_\_\_\_\_ Dollars (\$\_\_\_\_\_).

2. In submitting the proposal, it is understood that the right is reserved by the owner to reject any and all proposals, and it is agreed that the proposals may not be withdrawn for a period of one-hundred eighty (180) days after the specified time for receiving the proposals.
3. The undersigned agrees to accept an award for the contract for work above and shall begin the work within ten (10) calendar days after Notice to Proceed is received as defined in the contract documents.
4. This proposal shall remain valid for a period of one-hundred eighty (180) days.
5. **Unsigned proposals will be considered non-responsive.**

Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026

(If an individual) \_\_\_\_\_

Trading as \_\_\_\_\_

(If a partnership) \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

(If a corporation) \_\_\_\_\_

Presiding Officer \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Responders acknowledged receipt of the following addenda:

Addendum No. \_\_\_\_, Dated \_\_\_\_\_                      Addendum No. \_\_\_\_, Dated \_\_\_\_\_

Addendum No. \_\_\_\_, Dated \_\_\_\_\_                      Addendum No. \_\_\_\_, Dated \_\_\_\_\_