

Request for Quote (RFQ)

Year 2 Strategic Consulting and Continuous Improvement Support for the Mississippi Workforce Intelligence Scorecard

1. Introduction and Background

AccelerateMS is requesting quotes from qualified consultants or consulting firms to provide Year 2 strategic consulting and continuous improvement support for the Mississippi Workforce Intelligence Scorecard.

The Mississippi Workforce Intelligence Scorecard is a statewide decision-support tool designed to help leaders understand how Mississippi's workforce system is performing and where opportunities for improvement may exist. The Scorecard brings together workforce, education, employment, wage, and industry-alignment measures and allows users to examine performance at the State, Workforce Ecosystem, and County levels.

The initial phase of the project focused on stakeholder engagement, metric development, methodology, Scorecard design, implementation, and statewide launch. Year 2 will focus on strengthening the Scorecard through stakeholder feedback, strategic analysis, user adoption, refinement of existing measures and supporting materials, and recommendations for future improvement.

This engagement is intended to support the strategic use and continued evolution of the existing Scorecard. Technical dashboard development, programming, and routine system maintenance will be procured separately by AccelerateMS and are not the primary purpose of this engagement.

2. Scope of Work

The selected consultant will work with AccelerateMS to strengthen the usability, relevance, adoption, and long-term value of the Mississippi Workforce Intelligence Scorecard.

Services may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Stakeholder Engagement and User Feedback

- Conduct targeted engagement with Scorecard users and key stakeholders to understand how the Scorecard is being used.

- Gather structured feedback from primary stakeholder groups, including policymakers, economic developers, site selectors, workforce leaders, education partners, and industry representatives.
- Identify opportunities to improve the clarity, usefulness, and accessibility of Scorecard information.
- Assist AccelerateMS in identifying unmet information needs or opportunities for future Scorecard enhancements.

Scorecard Evaluation and Refinement

- Review the existing Scorecard framework, strategic questions, performance measures, interpretations, and supporting documentation.
- Evaluate whether existing measures effectively communicate workforce system performance and support decision-making.
- Recommend refinements to existing metrics, targets, thresholds, interpretation language, and supporting materials where appropriate.
- Support AccelerateMS in reviewing and refining Green, Yellow, and Red performance interpretations.
- Review the Scorecard glossary, definitions, Priority Sector documentation, High-Value Program documentation, and related user-support materials.

AccelerateMS will retain final authority for approval of all metrics, methodologies, data definitions, targets, thresholds, and business rules.

Strategic Analysis and Workforce Insights

- Assist AccelerateMS in interpreting Scorecard results and identifying meaningful trends, gaps, and regional differences.
- Help translate Scorecard data into actionable workforce intelligence for policymakers and other stakeholders.
- Identify opportunities to connect Scorecard findings to workforce planning, economic development, education alignment, and resource allocation.
- Support development of key insights and narratives that explain what Scorecard results mean for Mississippi's workforce system.

User Adoption and Decision Support

- Develop recommendations for increasing awareness and use of the Scorecard among priority stakeholders.
- Assist AccelerateMS in identifying practical use cases for policymakers, economic developers, site selectors, workforce leaders, education partners, and employers.
- Support development of materials that demonstrate how the Scorecard can inform workforce and economic development decisions.

- Recommend approaches for integrating the Scorecard into existing planning, reporting, and decision-making processes.

Communication and Storytelling

- Assist AccelerateMS in translating complex workforce information into clear, concise messages for nontechnical audiences.
- Support development of executive summaries, presentations, briefs, talking points, or other materials based on Scorecard findings.
- Identify examples or case studies demonstrating how workforce intelligence can support improved decision-making.
- Help communicate the value and purpose of the Scorecard to external stakeholders.

Continuous Improvement and Future Planning

- Identify opportunities to improve the Scorecard based on stakeholder feedback, emerging workforce needs, and Year 2 implementation experience.
- Develop recommendations for future measures, analyses, functionality, or supporting resources.
- Assist AccelerateMS in establishing priorities for future phases of the Scorecard.
- Provide a Year 2 assessment and recommendations for continued development and use.

3. Anticipated Deliverables

Anticipated deliverables may include:

- Stakeholder engagement and user-feedback summary;
- Review and recommendations related to existing Scorecard metrics, interpretations, and supporting documentation;
- Recommendations for improving Scorecard usability and stakeholder adoption;
- Strategic workforce insights derived from Scorecard findings;
- Executive-facing communication materials, presentations, briefs, or talking points;
- Use cases demonstrating how different stakeholder groups can apply Scorecard information;
- Recommendations for future Scorecard improvements and priorities; and
- Final Year 2 summary documenting activities, findings, recommendations, and proposed next steps.

Specific deliverables and priorities will be established in coordination with AccelerateMS throughout the contract period.

4. Relationship to Technical Development

AccelerateMS intends to separately procure technical development and maintenance services for the Mississippi Workforce Intelligence Scorecard.

The consultant selected through this RFQ will primarily provide strategic, analytical, stakeholder-engagement, communication, and continuous-improvement support.

AccelerateMS will coordinate work between the consultant and technical developer as necessary. Recommendations requiring technical changes to the Scorecard will be reviewed and prioritized by AccelerateMS before being provided to the technical developer for implementation.

The consultant will not be responsible for routine dashboard programming, software maintenance, hosting, or technical troubleshooting unless specifically authorized by AccelerateMS.

5. Contract Period

The anticipated period of performance is:

October 2026 – June 2027

Work will be conducted throughout the contract period based on priorities established by AccelerateMS.

6. Budget

The total contract amount shall **not exceed \$50,000**.

Respondents should provide a proposed pricing structure demonstrating how consulting services will be delivered within the available budget.

The proposed budget should identify, as applicable:

- Professional consulting rates;
- Estimated hours or level of effort;
- Costs associated with stakeholder engagement;

- Costs associated with development of reports, presentations, or other deliverables;
- Travel or other anticipated expenses, if applicable; and
- Any assumptions or limitations associated with the proposed pricing.

AccelerateMS may prioritize activities and deliverables based on organizational need, available funding, and anticipated level of effort.

7. Vendor Response Requirements

Interested consultants or firms should provide a concise response containing the following:

Company Overview and Qualifications

- Brief description of the consultant or firm.
- Experience in workforce development, workforce intelligence, economic development, education, public policy, performance measurement, or related areas.
- Experience working with state government, workforce systems, education institutions, employers, or economic development organizations.
- Relevant examples of similar projects.

Proposed Approach

- Proposed approach for supporting Year 2 implementation and continuous improvement.
- Approach to stakeholder engagement and gathering user feedback.
- Approach to evaluating and interpreting workforce performance measures.
- Approach to translating data into actionable insights for executive and nontechnical audiences.
- Proposed timeline and work plan for the October 2026 – June 2027 contract period.

Staffing Plan

- Identification of key personnel who will perform the work.
- Relevant qualifications and experience of proposed team members.
- Proposed roles and responsibilities.

Budget

- Proposed cost structure.
- Allocation of the proposed budget across major activities or deliverables.

- Identification of any additional costs or assumptions.

References

- Contact information for at least two recent clients for whom similar consulting, workforce, research, strategic planning, or performance-management services have been provided.

8. Evaluation Criteria

Responses will be evaluated based on:

- Relevant experience and qualifications – 30%
- Strength and feasibility of proposed approach – 25%
- Understanding of workforce intelligence, performance measurement, and decision support – 20%
- Cost-effectiveness and overall value – 15%
- Past performance and references – 10%

AccelerateMS will consider the respondent's ability to support the long-term development of the Mississippi Workforce Intelligence Scorecard while translating workforce data into practical information that can be used by policymakers, economic developers, site selectors, workforce leaders, education partners, and employers.

9. Submission Instructions

Responses must be submitted electronically in PDF format to:

info@acceleratems.org

Submission Deadline:

Friday, September 25, 2026, at 5:00 PM CT

Please use the following subject line:

RFQ Submission – Mississippi Workforce Intelligence Scorecard Year 2 Consulting

Late submissions may not be considered.

AccelerateMS may request additional information or clarification from respondents as necessary during the evaluation process.

10. Contact Information

Questions or requests for clarification regarding this Request for Quote should be directed to:

Cliff Thames

Director of Data & Insights
AccelerateMS
cthames@acceleratems.org

11. Other Terms and Conditions

AccelerateMS reserves the right to reject any or all submissions, to waive minor irregularities, and to request additional information as needed. No costs incurred in the preparation of a submission will be reimbursed.

Award decisions will be based on documented evaluation results and the determination of best value in accordance with applicable procurement standards.

It is expressly understood and agreed that by issuing this Request for Qualification AccelerateMS has no obligation to issue an award or enter a contract, and it, in its sole discretion, may withdraw or amend this Request for Qualification before doing so.

Discussions may be had with applicants determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for the award; however, submissions may be accepted without such discussions.

If a contract or agreement is entered, invoices shall be emailed to maryannmyers@acceleratems.org.

All goods and services must meet the specifications outlined in this RFQ. Non-confirming goods and services must be replaced at the vendor's expense.

Vendor acknowledges, accepts, and agrees to comply with the State of Mississippi's Standard Terms and Conditions, as set forth in Exhibit A, and agrees these are fully incorporated into any contract or agreement entered by the Parties related to this RFQ. Failure to comply with these terms and conditions may result in the termination of any contract or agreement entered.

Exhibit A
State of Mississippi Terms and Conditions
for
Cooperative, Competitive, and Negotiated Contracts

A. PRECEDENCE

The STATE OF MISSISSIPPI TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR COMPETITIVE, NEGOTIATED, and COOPERATIVE CONTRACTS shall take precedence over the Vendor's Proposal and any agreements, and should ambiguities, conflicts, or questions of interpretation of these documents arise, they shall be resolved first by reference to the STATE OF MISSISSIPPI TERMS AND CONDITIONS for COMPETITIVE, NEGOTIATED, and COOPERATIVE CONTRACTS. AccelerateMS is an entity of the State of Mississippi.

B. E-PAYMENT

Vendor agrees to accept all payments in United States currency via the State of Mississippi's electronic payment and remittance vehicle. AccelerateMS agrees to make payment in accordance with Mississippi "Timely Payments for Purchases by Public Bodies" laws, which generally provide for payment of undisputed amounts by AccelerateMS within 45 calendar days of receipt of invoice. Mississippi Code Annotated § 31-7-301, et seq.

C. AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

It is expressly understood and agreed that the obligation of AccelerateMS to proceed under this agreement is conditioned upon the appropriation of funds by the Mississippi State Legislature and receipt of the appropriated funds. If the funds anticipated for the continuing time fulfillment of the agreement are, at any time, not forthcoming or insufficient, regardless of the source of funding, AccelerateMS shall have the right upon 10 business days' written notice to Vendor to terminate this agreement without damage, penalty, cost or expense to AccelerateMS of any kind whatsoever. The effective date of termination shall be as specified in the notice of termination.

D. RECORD RETENTION AND ACCESS TO RECORDS

Vendor shall maintain such financial records and other records as may be prescribed by AccelerateMS or by applicable federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. Provided Vendor is given reasonable advance written notice, and such inspection is made during normal business hours of Vendor, AccelerateMS or any duly authorized representatives shall have unimpeded, prompt access to any of Vendor's books, documents, papers, and/or records which are relevant to this agreement. All records related to this agreement shall be retained by Vendor for three years after final payment is made under this agreement and all pending matters are closed; however, if any audit, litigation or other action arising out of or related in any way to this project is commenced before the end of the three year period, the records shall be retained for one year after all issues arising out of the action are finally resolved or until the end of the three year period, whichever is later.

E. APPLICABLE LAW

The contract shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Mississippi, excluding its conflicts of laws, provisions, and any litigation with respect thereto shall be brought in the courts of Mississippi.

F. ANTI-ASSIGNMENT/SUBCONTRACTING

Vendor acknowledges that it was selected by AccelerateMS to provide the commodity or perform the services required hereunder based, in part, upon Vendor's special skills and expertise. Vendor shall not assign, subcontract, or otherwise transfer this agreement, in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of AccelerateMS, which may, in its sole discretion, approve or deny without reason. Any attempted assignment or transfer of Vendor's obligations hereunder without consent of AccelerateMS shall be null and void. Approval of a subcontract by AccelerateMS shall not be deemed to be approval of the incurrence of any additional obligation of AccelerateMS. Subcontracts shall be subject to the terms and conditions of this agreement and to any conditions of approval that AccelerateMS may deem necessary. Subject to the foregoing, this agreement shall be binding upon the respective successors and assigns of the parties

G. COMPLIANCE WITH EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN EMPLOYMENT POLICY

Vendor understands that AccelerateMS is an equal opportunity employer and therefore, maintains a policy which prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, physical handicap, disability, genetic information, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state, or local laws. All such discrimination is unlawful, and Vendor agrees during the term of the agreement that Vendor will strictly adhere to this policy in its employment practices and provision of services.

H. COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS

Vendor shall comply with, and all activities under this agreement shall be subject to, all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, as now exist and as may be amended or modified.

I. REQUIRED PUBLIC RECORDS AND TRANSPARENCY

Upon execution of a contract, the provisions of the contract which contain the personal or professional services provided, the unit prices, the overall price to be paid, and the term of the contract shall not be deemed to be a trade secret or confidential commercial or financial information pursuant to Mississippi Code Annotated § 25-61-9(7). The contract shall be posted publicly on www.transparency.ms.gov and shall be available at AccelerateMS for examination, inspection, or reproduction by the public. The Vendor acknowledges and agrees that AccelerateMS and this contract are subject to the Mississippi Public Records Act of 1983 codified at Mississippi Code Annotated §§ 25-61-1, et seq. and its exceptions, Mississippi Code Annotated § 79-23-1, and the Mississippi Accountability and Transparency Act of 2008, codified at Mississippi Code Annotated §§ 27-104-151, et seq.

J. E-VERIFICATION

If applicable, Vendor represents and warrants that it will ensure its compliance with the Mississippi Employment Protection Act and will register and participate in the status verification system for all newly hired employees. Mississippi Code Annotated §§ 71-11-1 and 71-11-3. Vendor agrees to provide a copy of each verification upon request of AccelerateMS subject to approval by any agencies of the United States Government. Vendor further represents and warrants that any person assigned to perform services hereafter meets the employment eligibility requirements of all immigration laws. The breach of this clause may subject Vendor to the following:

- (1) termination of this contract and exclusion pursuant to Chapter 15 of the Public Procurement Review Board Office of Personal Service Contract Review Rules and Regulations;
- (2) the loss of any license, permit, certification or other document granted to Vendor by an agency, department, or governmental entity for the right to do business in Mississippi; or
- (3) both. In the event of such termination, Vendor would also be liable for any additional costs incurred by AccelerateMS due to Contract cancellation or loss of license or permit to do business in the state.

K. INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR STATUS

Vendor shall, at all times, be regarded as and shall be legally considered an independent contractor and shall at no time act as an agent for AccelerateMS. Nothing contained herein shall be deemed or construed by AccelerateMS, Vendor, or any third party as creating the relationship of principal and agent, master and servant, partners, joint ventures, employer



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and employee, or any similar such relationship between AccelerateMS and Vendor. Neither the method of computation of fees or other charges, nor any other provision contained herein, nor any acts of AccelerateMS or Vendor hereunder creates or shall be deemed to create a relationship other than the independent relationship of AccelerateMS and Vendor. Vendor's personnel shall not be deemed in any way, directly or indirectly, expressly or by implication, to be employees of AccelerateMS. Neither Vendor nor its employees shall, under any circumstances, be considered servants, agents, or employees of AccelerateMS, and AccelerateMS shall be at no time legally responsible for any negligence or other