

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Request for Qualifications

Auxiliary Communication and Accessibility Services

Disability Resource Center

Item	Information
Solicitation Number	UNC-RFQ-001-27
Issue Date	October 5, 2026
Questions Due	October 19, 2026, 5:00 PM Mountain Time
Statements of Qualifications Due	November 4, 2026, 2:00 PM Mountain Time
Procurement Contact	Curtis.benton@unco.edu
Submission Method	www.bidnetdirect.com//university-of-northern-colorado

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1. Procurement Information

1.1 Purpose

The University of Northern Colorado ("University" or "UNC") is requesting Statements of Qualifications from qualified firms and independent providers capable of furnishing auxiliary communication and accessibility services for the University's Disability Resource Center (DRC).

The intent of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is to identify Respondents capable of providing timely, professional, and legally compliant accessibility services to students, faculty, staff, and visitors requiring accommodations.

The University anticipates awarding contracts to one or more qualified Respondents to provide services on an as-needed basis. Selection under this solicitation does not guarantee any minimum quantity of work, services, or compensation.

1.2 Procurement Method

This solicitation is a formal, competitive Request for Qualifications conducted by UNC Procurement Services. The University intends to conduct this procurement in a manner that is fair, open, transparent, and competitive. Respondents will be evaluated using the criteria and process published in this solicitation.

This RFQ uses a two-phase evaluation process. Phase One is a qualifications evaluation and serves as the shortlisting stage. Phase Two applies only to Shortlisted Respondents and may include structured interviews, pricing, additional information, and final evaluation activities.

Phase One - Qualifications Evaluation (Shortlisting)

Statements of Qualifications will be evaluated using the published Phase One evaluation criteria. Pricing will not be requested or evaluated during Phase One. The highest-ranked Respondents will be designated as Shortlisted Respondents and invited to participate in Phase Two. Shortlisting does not constitute a contract award or guarantee of work.

Phase Two - Interviews and Final Evaluation

Shortlisted Respondents may be invited to participate in structured interviews with the evaluation committee. During Phase Two, the University may request additional technical information, staffing plans, service demonstrations, references, pricing information, clarifications, or additional information or revised proposals if deemed in the University's best interest.

1.3 Procurement Schedule

The anticipated procurement schedule is shown below. The University reserves the right to modify the schedule by written addendum.

Milestone	Date
RFQ Issued	October 5, 2026
Questions Due	October 19, 2026, 5:00 PM Mountain Time
Responses Posted	October 23, 2026, 5:00 PM Mountain Time
Statements of Qualifications Due	November 4, 2026, 2:00 PM Mountain Time
Pricing Request to Shortlisted Respondents	November 18, 2026
Interviews, if conducted	Week of November 23, 2026

1.4 Questions and Submission Information

Questions and Requests for Clarification

Questions regarding this solicitation must be submitted electronically through the University's electronic procurement system.

Questions shall be submitted through:

www.bidnetdirect.com//university-of-northern-colorado

Responses to timely-submitted questions will be issued as a written addendum through the University's electronic procurement system. Oral interpretations or clarifications shall not be binding upon the University.

Submission of Statements of Qualifications

Statements of Qualifications must be submitted electronically through the University's electronic procurement system.

Electronic submissions shall be made through:

www.bidnetdirect.com//university-of-northern-colorado

Late submissions will not be accepted. It is the sole responsibility of the Respondent to ensure that its Statement of Qualifications is submitted successfully prior to the stated deadline.

Email, facsimile, and physical submissions will not be accepted unless expressly authorized by the University in this solicitation.

2. Instructions to Respondents

2.1 Official Communications

During the solicitation process, all official communications regarding this RFQ shall be conducted through the University's designated electronic procurement system. Official communications may include solicitation addenda, responses to questions, clarifications, changes to the solicitation, notices of interview, Notice of Intent to Award, and other procurement-related communications.

Respondents are solely responsible for monitoring the electronic procurement system for updates throughout the solicitation process.

2.2 Respondent Responsibility

Before submitting a Statement of Qualifications, Respondents shall carefully examine the entire solicitation, including all attachments and addenda. Submission of a Statement of Qualifications constitutes acknowledgment that the Respondent has examined the solicitation documents and understands the requirements of this procurement.

2.3 Requests for Clarification

Questions regarding this solicitation shall be submitted only through the University's electronic procurement system by the deadline identified in the Procurement Schedule. Questions received after the published deadline may not be answered.

Responses to timely-submitted questions will be issued in the form of a written addendum. Oral statements or interpretations shall not modify the requirements of this solicitation and shall not be binding upon the University.

2.4 Addenda

The University reserves the right to modify this solicitation through written addenda issued prior to the solicitation closing date. Respondents shall acknowledge receipt of all addenda as a part of their Statement of Qualifications. Failure to acknowledge material addenda may result in the Statement of Qualifications being determined non-responsive.

2.5 Withdrawal or Modification of Responses

A Respondent may withdraw or modify its Statement of Qualifications at any time prior to the solicitation closing date by following the procedures established within the University's electronic procurement system. After the solicitation closing date, Statements of Qualifications may not be modified except as expressly permitted by the University.

2.6 Costs of Proposal Preparation

All costs associated with the preparation and submission of a Statement of Qualifications shall be the sole responsibility of the Respondent. The University shall not reimburse any costs incurred in preparing responses, participating in interviews, demonstrations, negotiations, or any other activities related to this solicitation.

2.7 Public Records and Confidential Information

Statements of Qualifications submitted in response to this solicitation may be subject to disclosure under applicable public records laws. Respondents requesting confidential treatment of specific information shall clearly identify the information claimed to be confidential and provide the legal basis supporting the request.

The University will determine whether confidential treatment is permitted under applicable law and University policy. Neither a response in its entirety nor price information will be considered confidential. Information incorporated into any resulting contract may not be treated as confidential.

2.8 University Rights

The University reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all Statements of Qualifications.
- Waive minor informalities or irregularities.
- Request clarifications or additional information.
- Conduct interviews, presentations, or demonstrations.
- Verify references and qualifications.
- Negotiate with the highest-ranked Respondent(s).
- Make one award or multiple awards.
- Cancel this solicitation at any time prior to contract execution.
- Reissue the solicitation if determined to be in the University's best interest.

3. Scope of Services

3.1 Purpose of Services

The University of Northern Colorado, through the Disability Resource Center (DRC), coordinates interpreting and related communication access services to support equitable participation in the University's academic programs, services, activities, and other University-sponsored experiences. The purpose of this solicitation is to establish one or more contracts with qualified providers capable of furnishing reliable, responsive, and sustainable interpreting services on an as-needed basis.

Interpreting needs may vary based on individual access needs, academic schedules, University programming, duration and complexity of assignments, modality, and other circumstances. Services may be required for classroom instruction, laboratories, advising appointments, meetings, events, trainings, performances, commencement activities, and other University-sponsored activities.

3.2 Service Categories

The successful Respondent(s) shall provide qualified personnel and related services necessary to support communication access and accessibility accommodations requested by the DRC. Services may include, but are not limited to, the following categories.

Service Category	Description
American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreting	Qualified in-person interpreters for academic instruction, laboratories, appointments, meetings, events, performances, and other University activities.
Remote or Video ASL Interpreting	Remote interpreting delivered through secure and reliable technology when requested and appropriate.
DeafBlind Support and Tactile Interpreting	Support providers, tactile interpreting, or related services when required for an individual assignment.
Team and Specialized Interpreting	Team interpreting, specialized terminology, technical academic content, or other assignment-specific support when appropriate.
Related Communication Access Services	Other interpreting-related services specifically requested by the DRC and within the provider's demonstrated capabilities.

4. Service Requirements

4.1 General Requirements

Respondents shall demonstrate the ability to provide reliable, qualified, professional services that support effective communication and equal access. The successful Respondent(s) shall coordinate with the DRC and comply with all applicable University requirements associated with scheduling, communication, confidentiality, invoicing, and performance.

4.2 Personnel Qualifications and Conduct

Personnel assigned under any resulting contract shall possess the required certifications, licenses, registrations, training, experience, and professional qualifications required to perform the assigned services. Personnel shall perform services in a professional, ethical, courteous, and reliable manner.

4.3 Scheduling and Availability

Respondents shall describe their process for receiving service requests, confirming assignments, managing recurring academic assignments, assigning qualified personnel, and communicating with DRC staff. Responses shall address geographic coverage, higher-education or comparable institutional experience, typical response and confirmation times, available interpreter capacity, and limitations on service capacity.

Respondents shall notify the University promptly if an accepted or confirmed assignment cannot be filled or assigned personnel become unavailable. Responses shall describe escalation procedures, efforts to identify qualified alternative coverage, substitution practices, and how quickly the University will be notified.

4.4 Cancellations, Missed Assignments, and Contingency Plans

Respondents shall describe their cancellation policy, including required notice, any cancellation charges, and procedures for handling cancellations by either the University or the provider. Responses shall identify standard notice expectations, short-notice or same-day capabilities, applicable charges, response times, and procedures for missed assignments or provider no-shows.

4.5 Remote Services and Technology

When remote services are used, Respondents shall use secure, reliable technology platforms appropriate for the requested service. Respondents shall describe available platforms, system requirements, backup procedures, technology limitations, and how remote assignments are coordinated with UNC.

4.6 Confidentiality

Respondents shall maintain the confidentiality of student, employee, and University information encountered during performance of services. Respondents shall not disclose confidential information except as authorized by the University or required by applicable law.

4.7 Quality Assurance

Respondents shall describe their quality assurance procedures, including how they recruit, screen, train, evaluate, and supervise personnel assigned to University work. Responses shall explain how the provider determines whether an interpreter is appropriately qualified for a particular assignment, considers specialized terminology or communication needs, supports continuity for recurring assignments, handles planned absences, and investigates and resolves service concerns.

The DRC will retain responsibility for identifying individualized communication access needs. Respondents shall describe how they collaborate with authorized DRC personnel to implement those needs and match qualified personnel to the assignment without independently determining whether an individual qualifies for an accommodation.

Respondents shall describe how they determine when team interpreting or other specialized professional practices may be appropriate, how those recommendations are communicated to UNC, and how the provider identifies and prices any resulting additional personnel or service requirements when pricing is requested during Phase Two.

4.8 Invoicing

The successful Respondent(s) shall submit invoices in sufficient detail to allow the University to verify the services performed, service dates, personnel assigned, hours worked, rates charged, and any approved expenses or fees. Payment terms shall be as stated in the resulting contract.

5. Minimum Qualifications

Respondents shall demonstrate that they possess the minimum qualifications necessary to provide the services described in this RFQ. Failure to meet any stated minimum qualification may result in the Statement of Qualifications being determined non-responsive and removed from further consideration.

5.1 Organizational Experience

Respondents shall have demonstrated experience providing auxiliary communication, accessibility, captioning, interpreting, or comparable services similar in scope and complexity to those requested in this solicitation.

5.2 Professional Qualifications

Personnel assigned under any resulting contract shall possess all licenses, certifications, registrations, and professional qualifications required by applicable laws, regulations, and professional standards. Where industry certifications exist, Respondents shall identify the certifications held by personnel proposed to perform services under the resulting contract.

5.3 References

Respondents shall provide a minimum of three (3) references for clients receiving similar services within the past five (5) years. References shall include the organization name, contact person, title, telephone number, email address, and description of services provided.

5.4 Financial and Operational Capacity

Respondents shall demonstrate sufficient staffing resources and operational capability to perform the requested services throughout the contract term. The University reserves the right to request additional information to verify organizational capacity.

5.5 Insurance

Respondents shall be capable of meeting the University's insurance requirements. Certificates of Insurance that meet the University's requirements shall be obtained prior to contract execution.

5.6 Legal Compliance and Eligibility

Respondents shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, licensing requirements, and professional standards applicable to the services requested under this solicitation. Respondents shall be eligible to contract with the University and shall not be suspended, debarred, or otherwise prohibited from contracting with governmental entities.

6. Proposal Requirements

To facilitate a consistent and efficient evaluation, Respondents shall organize their Statements of Qualifications in the order presented below. Failure to provide the requested information may adversely affect the evaluation of the Respondent's qualifications.

Respondents are encouraged to prepare concise, well-organized responses that directly address the requirements and evaluation criteria contained in this solicitation. Marketing materials, promotional literature, and information not specifically requested should be limited to information directly supporting the Respondent's qualifications. Evaluators will consider only information relevant to the published evaluation criteria.

6.1 Cover Letter

Provide a cover letter signed by an individual authorized to bind the Respondent contractually. The cover letter shall identify the legal name of the Respondent, identify the primary contact for this solicitation, acknowledge receipt of all addenda, affirm the Respondent's ability to satisfy the solicitation requirements, and state that the proposal shall remain valid for 120 calendar days following the proposal due date.

6.2 Organizational Profile

Provide an overview of the organization, including business name, headquarters location, organizational structure, years in business, areas of specialization, and experience providing similar services.

6.3 Relevant Experience

Describe experience providing services similar in scope and complexity to those requested in this solicitation. Include higher education experience, comparable public sector clients, scope of services provided, duration of engagements, and significant accomplishments.

6.4 Technical Approach

Describe the Respondent's approach to providing the requested services, including service delivery methodology, assignment matching, scheduling, recurring academic assignments, continuity, communication procedures, quality assurance, contingency planning, substitution procedures, unfilled-assignment escalation, short-notice requests, remote service capabilities, and use of subcontractors, if applicable.

6.5 Personnel Qualifications

Identify the personnel, interpreter pool, or staffing resources proposed to support services under any resulting contract. Describe qualifications, relevant certifications, years of experience, specialized expertise, service categories, geographic coverage, and the provider's process for matching personnel to assignment requirements. Individual names may be provided as examples and do not guarantee assignment to UNC work.

6.6 References

Provide the references required under Section 5.3.

6.7 Pricing Information

Pricing will not be requested or evaluated during Phase One. Before interviews or presentations, the University will request pricing from Shortlisted Respondents only. The pricing request may require rates and standardized scenario calculations sufficient to evaluate total invoiced cost, including applicable minimums, coordination fees, travel, mileage, parking, team interpreting, cancellation charges, short-notice charges, and other fees. Pricing must be submitted in the format and by the deadline stated in the Phase Two request.

6.8 Required Forms

Respondents shall include all required certifications, acknowledgments, and attachments identified in this solicitation, including the completed Attachment C - Statement of Qualifications Cover Sheet and Vendor Certification.

7. Evaluation Process

7.1 Administrative Review

Following the solicitation closing date, Procurement Services will review each Statement of Qualifications to determine whether the submission is responsive to the requirements of this RFQ. The review may include whether the response was received on time, includes all required forms, acknowledges all addenda, meets minimum qualifications, and complies with mandatory submission requirements.

The University reserves the right to request clarification of minor informalities or administrative deficiencies when doing so is in the University's best interest. Material deviations may result in the response being determined non-responsive and removed from further consideration.

7.2 Phase One - Qualifications Evaluation

Responsive Statements of Qualifications will be evaluated by an evaluation committee using the published evaluation criteria. Pricing will not be considered during Phase One. The highest-ranked Respondents will be designated as Shortlisted Respondents and invited to participate in Phase Two. Shortlisting does not constitute a contract award.

7.3 Phase Two - Interviews and Final Evaluation

Shortlisted Respondents will be asked to submit pricing information before the scheduled interview or presentation. The University may provide a pricing request or standardized service scenarios and may request hourly rates, service-category rates, minimums, cancellation charges, short-notice charges, travel charges, and other applicable fees. Pricing will be reviewed as part of the Phase Two final evaluation and will not be requested from Respondents who are not shortlisted.

7.4 Best Value Determination

Following completion of all evaluation activities, the evaluation committee will recommend one or more Respondents for contract award. The recommendation will be based upon the Respondent(s) determined to provide the best overall value to the University after considering qualifications, technical approach, relevant experience, personnel qualifications, interview performance, references, pricing if requested during Phase Two, and overall ability to meet the University's operational needs. Any tie resolution will be documented as part of the recommendation record.

7.5 Phase One Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria	Points
Firm Experience and Qualifications	20
Service Capacity and Geographic Coverage	25
Assignment Matching, Continuity, and Responsiveness	25
Personnel Qualifications	20
References and Past Performance	10
Total	100

7.6 Evaluation Scoring Methodology

Each evaluation committee member will independently evaluate responsive Statements of Qualifications before committee discussion or consensus using the criteria identified in this solicitation. For each evaluation criterion, evaluators will assign a raw score from 1 to 5 based on the definitions below. Evaluators shall record their name and date completed and provide a brief rationale when assigning a score of 1, 2, or 5.

The University will not treat weighted scores or rankings as final until all required evaluators have entered scores for every criterion for every evaluated Respondent. Following completion of individual evaluations, the evaluation committee may conduct a consensus discussion to clarify differences and confirm final scoring and rankings. Any score changes must be supported by information in the response and documented in the evaluation record.

Score	Rating	Definition
5	Exceptional / Exceeds Requirements	Response exceeds requirements with multiple strengths and no significant weaknesses.
4	Strong / Fully Meets Requirements	Response fully meets requirements with one or more notable strengths and only minor weaknesses.
3	Acceptable / Meets Requirements	Response meets requirements but contains no distinguishing strengths or includes moderate weaknesses.
2	Limited / Partially Meets Requirements	Response partially meets requirements; important information is missing or concerns exist.
1	Does Not Meet Requirements	Response fails to meet requirements or provides insufficient information to demonstrate compliance.

The University may consider both strengths and weaknesses identified within each response when assigning evaluation scores. Raw scores will be converted to weighted points based on the published evaluation criteria. The University will use a standardized scoring methodology to promote consistency among evaluators.

If two or more Respondents receive the same final weighted score, evaluated pricing will be used as the tie-breaker. The Respondent with the lower evaluated price will receive the higher ranking among the tied Respondents. Procurement will document the tie and pricing comparison in the evaluation record. The University reserves the right to request clarifications, conduct interviews, request additional information, and verify references before making an award recommendation.

8. Standard University Requirements

The following requirements apply to this solicitation and any resulting contract unless otherwise stated.

8.1 Insurance Requirements

The successful Respondent(s) shall maintain insurance meeting the minimum requirements throughout the term of the resulting contract. Certificates of Insurance meeting the University's requirements shall be provided prior to contract execution. Failure to maintain required insurance may result in termination of the contract.

8.2 Colorado Special Provisions

The resulting contract shall incorporate the University's required Colorado Special Provisions. Respondents should review these provisions prior to submitting a Statement of Qualifications. The Colorado Special Provisions are included as Attachment B.

8.3 Standard Professional Services Agreement

The successful Respondent(s) shall execute the University's contract documents and provide all required documents, including Certificates of Insurance meeting the University's requirements, prior to contract execution. The University will provide the applicable contract form and final contract requirements during the contract stage.

8.4 Conflict of Interest

Respondents shall disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest that could affect the Respondent's ability to perform the services requested under this solicitation. The University reserves the right to determine whether a disclosed conflict affects the Respondent's eligibility for award.

8.5 Equal Opportunity

The University is committed to providing equal opportunity in its procurement processes and encourages participation by all qualified businesses. Respondents shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws governing nondiscrimination and equal employment opportunity.

8.6 Assignment

The resulting contract may not be assigned or transferred without the prior written consent of the University.

8.7 Subcontracting

If the Respondent intends to utilize subcontractors, the Respondent shall identify the proposed subcontractors and describe the services each subcontractor will perform. The successful Respondent shall remain fully responsible for the performance of all subcontractors.

9. Resulting Contract

9.1 Contract Award

The University intends to award a contract to the Respondent(s) whose Statement of Qualifications is determined to provide the best overall value to the University in accordance with the evaluation criteria identified in this solicitation. Any award, if any, shall be made in the University's best interests.

9.2 Contract Term

Unless otherwise stated in this solicitation, the resulting contract shall have an initial term of one (1) year. The University may renew the contract for up to four (4) additional one-year terms by executing a written renewal amendment signed by authorized representatives of both parties. Renewal is contingent upon satisfactory contractor performance, the continued availability of funding, and all required University approvals.

9.3 Multiple Awards

The University reserves the right to make one award or multiple awards when determined to be in the University's best interest.

9.4 No Guarantee of Work

Award of a contract does not guarantee any minimum quantity of work, services, or compensation. Services shall be requested on an as-needed basis unless otherwise stated in the resulting agreement.

9.5 Contract Execution

The successful Respondent shall execute the University's Professional Services Agreement and provide all required documents, including Certificates of Insurance meeting the University's requirements, prior to contract execution. Failure to timely satisfy the University's contract requirements may result in the University withdrawing its Notice of Intent to Award and proceeding with another Respondent.

9.6 Negotiation

The University reserves the right to negotiate the final scope of services, pricing, and other contract terms with the apparent successful Respondent(s), provided such negotiations do not materially alter the intent of the solicitation or compromise the fairness of the procurement process.

9.7 Contract Documents

The resulting contract may consist of, but is not limited to, the executed contract documents, this solicitation including all addenda, the Respondent's Statement of Qualifications, any Phase Two pricing submission, negotiated amendments, and other documents incorporated by reference. In the event of a conflict, the order of precedence shall be established in the resulting contract.

10. Attachments

The following attachments are included or will be included prior to publication.

Attachment	Description	Status
Attachment A	Colorado Special Provisions	Included
Attachment B	Statement of Qualifications Cover Sheet and Vendor Certification	To be completed and submitted by Respondent
Attachment C	Reserved for Solicitation-Specific Attachments (if needed)	As Required

Insurance Requirements

The successful Respondent(s) shall maintain the following insurance during the term of the resulting contract unless modified in writing by the University. Certificates of Insurance meeting the University's requirements shall be required prior to contract execution.

1. Workers' Compensation Insurance as required by applicable law and Employer's Liability Insurance covering all employees acting within the course and scope of their employment.
2. Commercial General Liability Insurance written on ISO occurrence form CG 00 01 10/93 or equivalent with minimum limits of \$1,000,000 each occurrence; \$2,000,000 general aggregate; \$2,000,000 products and completed operations aggregate; and \$50,000 any one fire.
3. Automobile Liability Insurance covering any auto, including owned, hired, and non-owned autos, with a minimum limit of \$1,000,000 each accident combined single limit.
4. Professional Liability Insurance with minimum limits of liability of not less than \$1,000,000, unless otherwise approved by the University.
5. The University shall be named as additional insured on Commercial General Liability and Automobile Liability policies where required by the University.
6. Insurance shall include provisions prohibiting cancellation or non-renewal without at least thirty (30) days prior written notice to the University.
7. The Contractor shall provide certificates of insurance evidencing required coverage prior to contract execution and shall provide renewal certificates no later than fifteen (15) days prior to expiration of any required coverage.

Attachment A - Colorado Special Provisions

The Colorado Special Provisions shall be incorporated into the resulting contract. The final contract shall include the University's current required version of these provisions at the time of contract execution.

The Colorado Special Provisions will be included in the resulting contract using the current approved version applicable at the time of contract execution.

Attachment B - Statement of Qualifications Cover Sheet and Vendor Certification

Attachment C - Reserved for Solicitation-Specific Attachments (if needed)