

Request for Proposal: #2026-04

Merced Community College District

**Ag Technology and Food Systems Pathway Curriculum
Development and Learning Experience Production**



MERCED
COLLEGE

**NOTICE CALLING FOR REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) RFP# 2026-04
Ag Technology and Food Systems Pathway Curriculum Development and
Learning Experience Production**

DISTRICT: MERCED COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Merced Community College District of Merced County, California, acting by and through its Governing Board, hereinafter referred to as "MCCD," invites qualified firms to submit proposals for the following project:

RFP# 2026-04 – Ag Technology and Food Systems Pathway Curriculum Development and Learning Experience Production

Each proposal must conform and be responsive to this invitation, the Information for Bidders, the Specifications, Plans (if any), and all other documents comprising the contract documents.

The District reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, negotiate with any or all responsible firms, and waive any informality in the proposal process.

Proposal

Deadline:

Proposals must be submitted by July 8, 2026, at 2:00 p.m., on the District's Planet Bids Vendor Portal: <https://vendors.planetbids.com/portal/85695/portal-home>

Notice to Bidders:

This solicitation is issued in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and applicable EDA grant conditions. Award of any contract resulting from this RFP is subject to the availability of funds, District procurement requirements, and federal program officer approval where required.

For further information, contact:

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MERCED COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

2026-04 Ag Technology and Food Systems Pathway Curriculum Development and Learning Experience Production

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Merced Community College District (MCCD) is seeking Proposals for a qualified curriculum development and learning experience production firm to support the AgTEC Ag Technology and Food Systems pathway.

The Agrifood Tech and Engineering Collaborative (AgTEC) is a federally funded regional initiative led by Merced Community College District to build workforce pathways for the agricultural technology sector across California's Central Valley. AgTEC is funded through the U.S. Economic Development Administration Build Back Better Regional Challenge.

AgTEC has developed and is actively delivering the Applied Agriculture Systems Certificate, a competency-based credential designed for incumbent workers and regional agricultural employers. Participants completing the certificate sequence have expressed demand for continued pathways that allow them to build from short-term workforce credentials into degree-applicable technical education.

This procurement is being issued following authorization to apply available contract line item savings toward the development of stackable 2-year and 4-year pathways in Ag Technology and Food Systems. The work is aligned with the AgTEC Grants Administration Plan under the pillar Industry-Aligned, Interdisciplinary Workforce Training and Pathways, including the milestone to create new regional stackable certificates and degree programs and the deliverable for additional stackable credentials and a 2-year degree program based on demand.

The purpose of this RFP is to procure a qualified curriculum development and learning experience production firm to design a stackable Ag Technology and Food Systems pathway that builds from the existing Applied Agriculture Systems Certificate. The required scope includes development of the program-specific technical curriculum needed for an Associate of Science pathway, including competency frameworks, course outlines, assessment structures, bilingual student-facing learning materials, and Canvas-ready course shells. The selected firm will also develop the curricular architecture needed to support future expansion into a 4-year/baccalaureate pathway, including upper-division competency mapping and recommended sequencing. Full development of upper-division coursework may be included as optional scope if funding is available and authorization is granted.

II. INSTRUCTIONS AND CONDITIONS

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Action	Date/Time
Last Day for Questions/Clarifications	July 1, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.
Deadline for Receipt of Proposals	July 8, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.
Interviews	July 20-23, 2026
Board of Trustees Contract Award	August 11, 2026

PREPARATION OF PROPOSALS

- Examine all RFP documents before submitting.
- Proposals must be signed by an authorized agent.
- All required items in the proposal must be completed.

INQUIRIES

- Submit all questions via The Planet Bids Vendor Portal:
<https://vendors.planetbids.com/portal/85695/portal-home>
- Do not contact other District personnel or Board members regarding this RFP.

AMENDMENTS

- MCCD reserves the right to revise the RFP before the proposal deadline. All changes will be made via written addendum.
- Oral statements regarding the RFP are unauthorized and non-binding.

SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

- All proposals must be submitted via the Planet Bids Vendor Portal:
<https://vendors.planetbids.com/portal/85695/portal-home>

WITHDRAWAL OF PROPOSALS

- Proposals may be withdrawn prior to the deadline.
 - Proposals are binding for 90 days post-submission.
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III. DESCRIPTION OF DISTRICT

Founded in 1962, **Merced Community College District** serves over 15,000 students across multiple sites. The District offers a wide range of associate degrees and certificate programs, serving a diverse population in California's Central Valley. Support services include advising, tutoring, veteran services, and athletics.

IV. OBJECTIVES

- Develop a competency-based Ag Technology and Food Systems pathway that stacks directly onto the Applied Agriculture Systems Certificate.
 - Design the pathway as a sequence of modular, stackable credentials that are coherent as standalone credentials and that build toward an Associate of Science degree.
 - Develop baccalaureate/4-year pathway architecture that supports future upper-division expansion without requiring redesign of foundational courses.
 - Build the pathway above the general education layer. This scope does not include development of general education courses.
 - Produce one complete Canvas-ready LMS course shell per course in the required crosswalk, including instructional content, assessments, rubrics, competency-tracking tools, and student-facing materials.
 - Develop English and Spanish versions of student-facing materials with equivalent quality and instructional intent.
 - Prepare curriculum documentation, Course Outlines of Record, pathway maps, and COCI-ready materials needed for local and state review.
 - Package all deliverables so AgTEC consortium colleges and other authorized institutions can adopt or adapt the pathway without rebuilding it from scratch.
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V. SCOPE OF WORK

The minimum required scope includes development of a complete Associate of Science pathway in Ag Technology and Food Systems and the curricular architecture necessary to support future upper-division/baccalaureate expansion. If authorized funding is sufficient, the District may exercise optional scope to develop additional upper-division coursework and documentation necessary for a 4-year/baccalaureate pathway. Optional scope may be exercised only if funding

is available, the work remains consistent with the original solicitation, and the exercise of the option complies with applicable federal, state, and District procurement requirements.

A. Phase One: Discovery and Crosswalk Alignment

- The firm will begin by conducting a structured review of the existing Applied Agriculture Systems Certificate, including completed course materials, competency frameworks, and employer validation data. The firm will work with AgTEC faculty, industry partners, and the curriculum committee to:
- Map existing competencies from the certificate to the proposed Ag Technology and Food Systems pathway.
- Identify the full set of program-specific competencies required for the associate degree pathway using occupational data, industry input, and existing AgTEC/F3 Talent Development findings.
- Develop a baccalaureate expansion architecture that identifies recommended upper-division competency areas, sequencing, and future course development needs.
- Produce a final competency crosswalk that defines each credential in the stackable sequence, the competencies it addresses, and how it connects to both the certificate below it and the credential above it.
- Confirm the scope of content to be developed versus content already complete or in progress.
- This phase concludes with a Crosswalk and Scope Confirmation document approved by the AgTEC curriculum committee before full development begins.

B. Phase Two: Curriculum Development

- Working from the approved crosswalk, the firm will develop full curriculum for each required course in the pathway. Curriculum must be:
- Competency-based, using mastery-based assessment structures consistent with CBE best practice and California community college standards.
- Structured for flexible delivery, including open-entry/open-exit models where appropriate and permitted by the competency sequence.
- Designed so prior learning and on-the-job experience can be assessed toward competency credit where allowable and consistent with institutional policy.
- Accompanied by Course Outlines of Record and all documentation needed for local curriculum review and COCI submission.
- Developed in English and Spanish with quality equivalence. Spanish materials should not be an afterthought or simple machine translation of English materials.
- Aligned to regional food processing, agricultural technology, safety, quality control, operations, equipment, and workforce needs.

C. Phase Three: Learning Experience Production

- Curriculum alone is not the deliverable. For each required course in the pathway, the firm will produce a complete, deployment-ready LMS course shell suitable for Canvas. The standard includes:

D. Filmed and Produced Instructional Content

- Instructional video or produced learning content for each module at a professional quality appropriate for college-level instruction.
- Content produced in both English and Spanish where student-facing delivery requires bilingual access.
- Central Valley agricultural and food processing context, including relevant facilities, equipment, safety practices, quality systems, and workforce settings where feasible.

E. AI-Assisted Simulations and Scenario-Based Learning

- Scenario-based learning activities or AI-assisted simulations for technical competencies where remote or hybrid instruction benefits from realistic decision-making practice.
- Simulations or scenarios drawn from food processing, agricultural technology, food safety, quality control, equipment operations, and workforce supervision contexts.
- Functionality and student-facing instructions available in both English and Spanish where applicable.
- Disclosure of AI tools, platforms, licensing requirements, accessibility considerations, data privacy considerations, and ownership of generated instructional materials.

F. LMS Course Shells

- One complete Canvas-ready course shell per course in the approved crosswalk.
- All instructional content, assessments, rubrics, competency-tracking tools, student-facing resources, and instructor guidance.
- Exportable Common Cartridge files or another District-approved export format that allows adoption by consortium colleges.
- Accessibility standards consistent with District expectations and applicable laws, including captions/transcripts for video materials.

G. Phase Four: Curriculum Approval Support and Submission Package

- The firm will support the curriculum approval process from internal review through preparation of submission materials. Final approval authority remains with the appropriate local curriculum committees, faculty senates, governing bodies, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, accrediting bodies, and other official entities. The selected firm will:
 - Prepare all COCI-required documentation for each course and program in the format required by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.
 - Prepare draft program narrative, labor market alignment language, course sequencing, award structure, and catalog-ready descriptions.
 - Support faculty review, local curriculum committee preparation, and faculty senate presentation materials as requested by the District.
 - Advise on CBE, direct assessment, substantive change, and ACCJC-related documentation considerations where applicable.
 - Provide a submission tracker that gives the AgTEC team visibility into the status of each

course and program through the review process.

- Remain available for reasonable follow-up questions and revisions during the contract period.

H. Consortium Adoption Package

- All deliverables will be packaged for adoption by AgTEC consortium colleges and other authorized institutions. The adoption package will include:
 - Course shells in exportable format.
 - Curriculum documentation and Course Outlines of Record for each course.
 - Competency crosswalk, pathway map, suggested degree sequence, and baccalaureate expansion architecture.
 - Implementation guide describing local adoption steps, potential modifications, staffing considerations, and curriculum approval considerations.
 - All source files for filmed and produced content, with ownership and licensing rights assigned to Merced Community College District for educational use and consortium adoption.
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VI. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Limit to **15 pages maximum** (excluding attachments). Follow the sequence below:

A. Technical Approach

- Describe the proposed approach to developing competency-based, stackable credentials in a workforce context.
- Describe the proposed approach to bilingual curriculum development and quality equivalence between English and Spanish content.
- Describe the production model for filmed instructional content and AI-assisted or scenario-based simulations.
- Describe the approach to developing Canvas-ready LMS course shells and exportable adoption files.
- Describe the approach to California community college curriculum documentation, local review support, and COCI-ready submissions.
- Describe how the proposed work will support future baccalaureate/4-year pathway expansion.
- Describe accessibility, quality assurance, and revision processes.

B. Relevant Experience

- Provide at least three examples of comparable engagements, including client name, scope, dollar value, and outcomes.
- At least one example must demonstrate bilingual curriculum or content production.

- At least one example must demonstrate California community college curriculum approval, COCI, CBE, or comparable postsecondary curriculum development experience.
- At least one example must demonstrate competency-based education or competency-framework curriculum development.
- Examples involving food processing, agricultural technology, manufacturing, workforce education, or incumbent worker training are preferred.

C. Proposed Team

- Identify key personnel, roles, qualifications, and availability for the full period of performance.
- Identify bilingual curriculum specialists, subject matter experts, instructional designers, media production personnel, LMS developers, and curriculum approval specialists.
- Identify subcontractors or partners and describe their role.
- Disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

D. Project Timeline

- Provide a detailed timeline for completing all vendor-controlled deliverables within six months of Notice to Proceed.
- Identify key decision points requiring District, faculty, curriculum committee, or industry input.
- Identify timeline risks and mitigation strategies.
- Distinguish vendor-controlled deliverables from external approval timelines.

E. Cost Proposal

- Submit the cost proposal as a separate document.
- Provide a fully loaded fixed price for each deliverable milestone.
- Break down costs by labor category, hours, and loaded rate for all personnel.
- Identify subcontractor costs and provide a brief justification.
- Identify any requested advance and provide justification.
- Confirm that all proposed costs are allowable, allocable, and reasonable under 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.
- Provide optional pricing for upper-division/baccalaureate course development, if available. Optional pricing is for planning purposes and may be exercised only if allowable, funded, authorized, and consistent with procurement requirements.

VII. DELIVERABLES AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The following schedule is indicative. Final milestone amounts will be negotiated and incorporated into the contract based on the successful offeror's proposal and Purchasing requirements.

Deliverable	Target Month	% of Contract
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Executed contract and Notice to Proceed	Month 1	5%
Crosswalk and Scope Confirmation document, including AS pathway map and baccalaureate expansion architecture	Month 1	10%
Complete curriculum drafts for required AS pathway courses, including CORs and competency assessments, submitted for faculty review	Month 3	25%
Canvas-ready LMS course shells complete in English and Spanish, including student-facing materials, assessments, rubrics, and produced learning content, submitted for QA review	Month 4	30%
Curriculum approval package complete, including COCI-ready documents, local approval support materials, and submission tracker	Month 5	20%
Final delivery: all source files, adoption package, implementation guide, final tracker, and optional upper-division/BS pricing or materials if exercised	Month 6	10%

The District may approve an advance only if allowable under applicable grant, federal, state, and District requirements and only where the selected offeror demonstrates that the nature of the work requires upfront production costs. Offerors requesting an advance must address the need explicitly in their cost proposal.

VIII. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Criterion	Description	Points
Technical Approach	Quality, specificity, and feasibility of the proposed approach to CBE curriculum, bilingual development, LMS course shells, scenario-based learning, and baccalaureate expansion architecture.	30
Relevant Experience	Demonstrated record in comparable work, with particular weight given to bilingual production, CBE, California community college curriculum, workforce education, and food/ag/manufacturing contexts.	25
Proposed Team	Qualifications, availability, and demonstrated capacity of key personnel and subcontractors.	20
Timeline and Risk Management	Realism of the timeline, distinction between vendor-controlled and external approval timelines, and quality of risk mitigation.	15
Cost	Reasonableness of total cost and cost breakdown relative to the scope, deliverables, and federal cost principles.	10

IX. FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS AND CONTRACT CONDITIONS

Any contract awarded under this solicitation will be subject to applicable federal, state, grant,

and District requirements, including but not limited to the following.

- 2 CFR Part 200 procurement standards and cost principles.
- Full and open competition requirements where applicable.
- Required contract provisions under 2 CFR Part 200 Appendix II, as applicable.
- Debarment and suspension certification and SAM.gov verification as required.
- Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment certification where applicable.
- Conflict-of-interest disclosure and non-collusion certification.
- Audit rights for Merced Community College District, the U.S. Economic Development Administration, and other authorized representatives.
- Record retention requirements consistent with federal requirements and District policy.
- Rights in data and intellectual property assigning ownership of deliverables to Merced Community College District, with educational-use rights for AgTEC consortium colleges and authorized public partners.
- Accessibility requirements for digital learning materials, videos, documents, and LMS content.
- Data privacy and AI tool disclosure requirements for simulations, learning tools, and produced content.

X. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Item	Instruction
Submission Method	Electronic submission via PlanetBids
Technical Proposal Format	PDF or Word; page limit 15 pages
Cost Proposal Format	Separate PDF or Excel file clearly labeled Cost Proposal
Questions	Submit via the PlanetBids Portal. Responses will be shared with all prospective offerors through the official process. Verbal responses are not binding.
Late Submissions	Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered.
Addendums	Any addendums to this RFP will be issued through the PlanetBids Portal. Bidders are responsible for checking for addendums before submitting.

XI. AWARD AND PROTEST

Merced Community College District reserves the right to award to the offeror representing the best value, reject any or all proposals, waive minor informalities, request clarifications, negotiate final terms, and cancel this solicitation at any time without obligation. Award is subject to

availability of funds and, where required, approval from the U.S. Economic Development Administration.

Following the public opening and reading of Bid Proposals, the District will issue a Notice of Intent to Award the Contract, identifying the Bidder to whom the District intends to award the Contract and the date/time/place of the District's Board of Trustees meeting at which award of the Contract will be considered.

The Contract for the Work, if awarded, will be by action of the District's Board of Trustees to the responsible Bidder submitting the best valued responsive Bid Proposal. If the Bid Proposal requires Bidders to propose prices for Alternate Bid Items, the District's selection of Alternate Bid Items, if any, for determination of the best valued Bid Proposal and for inclusion in the scope of the Contract to be awarded shall be in accordance with the Instructions for Bidders.

Submittal of Bid Protest. Any Bidder submitting a Bid Proposal to the District may file a protest of the District's intent to award the Contract provided that all of the following are complied with: (i) the bid protest is in writing; (ii) the bid protest is filed and received by the District's Vice-President, Administrative Services not more than five (5) calendar days following the date of issuance of the District's Notice of Intent to Award the Contract; and (iii) the written bid protest sets forth, in detail, all grounds for the bid protest, including without limitation all facts, supporting documentation, legal authorities and argument in support of the grounds for the bid protest; any matters not set forth in the written bid protest shall be deemed waived. All factual contentions must be supported by competent, admissible and creditable evidence. Any bid protest not conforming to the foregoing shall be rejected by the District as invalid.

XII. QUESTIONS AND CONTRACT

All questions must be submitted via the PlanetBids Portal prior to the deadline of July 1, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. Verbal responses to questions are not binding.

XIII. SIGNATURE FORM

(To be submitted with proposal)

I hereby submit this proposal in response to RFP #2026-04 – Ag Technology and Food Systems Pathway Curriculum Development and Learning Experience Production and affirm, under penalty of perjury, that all representations are true and accurate.

Note: ALL ENTRIES SHALL BE LEGIBLE AND SHALL BE TYPEWRITTEN OR PRINTED.

Signature: _____

_____ Type or Print
(Name/Title)

_____ Name of Company

_____ Address

_____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code

_____ Telephone Number
(Area Code)

_____ Email Address

_____ Tax Identification Number