



**THIS IS NOT
AN ORDER**

REQUEST FOR BIDS/PROPOSALS COVERSHEET
THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI
Procurement and Contract Services
118 College Drive #5003, Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39406-0001

Date: April 6, 2026

RFP No. 26-40

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI is considering the purchase of the following item(s). We ask that you submit your bid and retain one copy for your files. Right is reserved to accept or reject any part of your bid. Your quotation will be given consideration if received in Bond Hall, Room 214 on or before:

2:00 p.m. CST

May 6, 2026

Buyer: Deidre Edwards

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

TERMS - Bidder should state terms of sale. Our terms are 2% ten days, net 45 days.

These terms will apply per Mississippi law.

AWARDING CONTRACT - Cash terms will not be used as a basis for awarding contracts; however, the University will accept cash discounts when earned.

ITEM	QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL NET PRICE
		DESCRIPTION RFP 26-40 USM Innovation and Commercialization Park Property Sale		
		<small>PROPOSAL MUST BE RETURNED TO THE UNIVERSITY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SPECIFICATIONS. RFP NUMBER AND DATE OF BID OPENING MUST BE SHOWN ON THE OUTSIDE OF THE ENVELOPE IF USING THAT METHOD.</small>		

We quote you as above-F.O.B. The University of Southern Mississippi. Shipment can be made in _____ days from receipt of order. DATE _____ TERMS _____

Return quotation to Procurement Services at above address.

Signature Required _____

April 6, 2026

To: Site Developers and Business Owners
RE: University of Southern Mississippi– Innovation and Commercialization Park (ICP) Request for Proposals

The University of Southern Mississippi (“USM”, “The University”) requests written proposals on the sale or lease of up to +/- 36 acres south of Lake Sehay located on the USM Innovation and Commercialization Park. The Site is owned by the University which intends to sell or lease it to the Developer/Company.

The property is located in the USM Innovation and Commercialization Park and part of Sections 35 and 36, Township 5 North, Range 14 West, Forrest County, Mississippi. Parcel sizes range from +/- 8.47 acres to +/- 18.06 acres, and in combination total +/- 36 acres.

The proposal should contain a Multi-Use Development Plan containing an advanced technology headquarters and/or advanced manufacturing, greenspace, limited residential, and conservation area buffers consistent with the USM-ICP Work, Live, Play Masterplan strategy. The Development Plan will describe the development, financing, design, construction, and operation of all property contained within the plan. Public-accessible recreational areas, amphitheater, café, and/or Lodge with cabins located on the University’s property are not required as part of the Development Plan, however, it is desired either on-site or on an adjoining parcel. Proposals will be considered on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

According to state law, the Site must be independently appraised by two Mississippi licensed appraisers with at least one of the appraisers approved by the Department of Finance and Administration. The value of the Site, as established by the average of the two appraisals and listed on a per-square-foot basis, will be the least amount that the university can accept for the property.

The University is committed to work in good faith to enable multi-use development of the land.

Proposals are solicited in accordance with the terms, conditions, and instructions as set forth in this RFP. The RFP and supporting documents are also available online at <https://www.thepolymerinstitute.com/rfp1>. Statement of the Intent to Propose is **due April 16, 2026**, and the Proposal submission is to be **received by 2:00 p.m., May 6, 2026**.

We appreciate your interest.

Inquiries must be made in writing to: bids@usm.edu.

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
26-40**

**PROPOSED INNOVATION PARK DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI**

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....

I — MULTI-USE DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW 3
 PURPOSE 3
 Community Profile 4

II — SITE SPECIFIC INFORMATION 7
 SITE-SPECIFIC TOURISM 7
 SITE-SPECIFIC INNOVATION 8
 SITE-SPECIFIC DESCRIPTION 9
 SITE-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS 10
 DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS 11
 INCENTIVES 12

III — RFP SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS 13
 GENERAL INFORMATION 13
 SCHEDULE 14
 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS 14
 SUBMISSION GUIDELINES 14

III—AWARD PROCEDURES 16
 SELECTION PROCESS 16
 EVALUATION CRITERIA 17
 SPECIAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS 18

ATTACHMENT A: DECLARATION 20
ATTACHMENT B: FINANCIAL QUESTIONNAIRE 21

I — MULTI-USE DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

The RFP is a request for a proposal for a master Multi-Use Development Plan proposals for the sale or lease of up to approximately 36 acres south of Lake Sehay located on the USM Innovation and Commercialization Park. The successful proposal will contain an advanced technology company headquarters and/or operating facility, greenspace, limited residential, and conservation area buffers consistent with the USM-ICP “Work, Live, Play” masterplan strategy. The University is seeking an innovative company or developer (“the Developer”) to engage in this economic development initiative, which is a high priority for USM. The ICP Park land has significant potential to generate short-term and long-term income for the University of Southern Mississippi (USM). Any development will produce positive impacts to USM, the local economy of Hattiesburg, the five county Pine Belt Region and the state of Mississippi.

The goal of the Plan is to create livability by connecting people to an innovative ecosystem for living, work, recreation, environmental preservation, and sense of community, all with ease of walking and biking. The outcome of this project will embody the six livability principles to achieve sustainable communities: 1) Develop safe, reliable, and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health, 2) Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices, 3) Enhance economic competitiveness, 4) increase community revitalization and the efficiency of public works investments and safeguard rural landscapes, 5) Coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment, and 6) Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods [Community Smart Growth](#).

This first major multi-use development is expected to catalyze other high-quality developments within the USM Innovation and Commercialization Park and is a critical ingredient to serve the University’s needs and to play an important role in creating a thriving innovative neighborhood. Respondents are encouraged to propose an integrated multi-use plan.

The USM ICP Master Plan

A group of major stakeholders including Forrest County, the City of Hattiesburg, Lamar Country, and USM, with the aid of Dale Partners created a comprehensive development plan for the 506-acre Innovation and Commercialization Park which was completed in 2022. The ICP Park is a research and technology park in the City of Hattiesburg, Mississippi that is owned by the Mississippi Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning and controlled by The University of Southern Mississippi. The University of Southern Mississippi (USM) is

an R1 university, designated as "Doctoral Universities – Very high research activity" by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. This R1 classification signifies that USM conducts a high level of research activity, a mark of distinction for the institution, and relevant to the development of the ICP Park.

The Master Plan is accessible at <https://www.thepolymerinstitute.com/rfp1>

Community Profile

Hattiesburg is in Southeast Mississippi, about 110 miles northeast of New Orleans, LA, 70 miles north of the MS Gulf Coast, and 90 miles southeast of Jackson, MS. Interstate 59 connects Hattiesburg to New Orleans to the south and to Meridian, Birmingham and Chattanooga to the north.

Known as The Hub City, Hattiesburg is the economic, educational, and cultural center of a fast-growing metropolitan area of nearly 154,000 residents with proximity to a larger population of over 700,000 people within a 60-mile radius. Anchored by two major universities, The University of Southern Mississippi and William Carey University, the region boasts a young, educated, and diverse workforce with a median age of 33 and almost 60% of the City of Hattiesburg's population made up of Millennials and Gen Z. With an average household income of approximately \$81,000 across the MSA, the area continues to attract both talent and investment, fueling an ecosystem where innovation, entrepreneurship, and collaboration converge.

Strategically located along the I-59 corridor, Hattiesburg offers unmatched connectivity to major metros along the Mississippi Gulf Coast, Jackson, Mobile and New Orleans, making it a natural hub for commerce, talent, and innovation. The area blends the vibrancy of a university town with the welcoming charm of a southern community, offering award-winning restaurants, a growing arts and music scene, and abundant outdoor recreation opportunities. Hattiesburg was founded in 1882. The community's history and economy are rich in higher education, military activity, and healthcare. Over the last decade, manufacturing has consistently grown 10-15% and is a target growth sector for the region, currently representing 7% of the total employment pool.



Figure 1. Courtesy of the Area Development Partnership

Higher Education: The University of Southern Mississippi and William Carey University are in Hattiesburg, MS with a total 2024 enrollment of approximately 20,000. Hattiesburg is also home to Pearl River Community College which hosts approximately 6000 students over 3

- USM, employs approximately 2,400 people, is 5 miles from the Site and offers more than 180 degree programs leading to baccalaureate, master's, specialist, and doctoral degrees. Top programs include cyber security, education, music, nursing, and polymer science and engineering. USM's 17 sports programs participate in NCAA Division I athletics and are members of the Sun Belt Conference.
- William Carey University (WCU), 8 miles from the site, is known for its strong professional health programs, including its College of Osteopathic Medicine and School of Nursing. The university was ranked first among Mississippi's four-year schools by Money.com in 2025.
- Pearl River Community College's Hattiesburg campus is 9 miles from the site and is known as the first two-year college in MS, with consistently strong national rankings. Over 1350 students are enrolled in degree programs supporting skilled occupations in Healthcare, Manufacturing,

Construction, Business, and Technology sectors. They play a critical role in workforce training for area companies.

- Additionally, Jones County Community College is 24 miles from the site. Fall 2025 enrollment was over 5000. Jones College is known for strong academic programs, diverse career and technical education programs, and national championships in football, basketball, and softball. Liberal arts, registered nursing, electrician programs, and workforce training are popular curriculums.

Military Activity: Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center is located just south of Hattiesburg. It is the largest state-owned training site in the nation and the largest reserve component training site, covering over 134,000 acres. It brings a significant economic impact, contributing hundreds of millions of dollars annually to the state and local community through operations, payroll, and the thousands of National Guard and Reserve troops who train there annually.

Key entities work to attract defense-related businesses, support military families, and integrate military assets into the broader regional economic strategy, leveraging the substantial defense spending that flows into Mississippi's economy. These entities include Mission 3 and The Governor's Office of Military Affairs (GOMA). Mission 3 is a new public-private nonprofit defense community support organization formed at the state level (funded by the Mississippi Development Authority) to strengthen military installations across South Mississippi, including Camp Shelby, expand economic opportunities, and foster community unity around defense priorities. The Governor's Office of Military Affairs (GOMA) is housed within the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) and works to support and expand military missions within the state, increase defense spending, and improve the communities that support military families and businesses.

Healthcare: There are three large healthcare entities within Hattiesburg, employing approximately 6800 employees, all within six miles of the site: Forrest General Hospital, Hattiesburg Clinic, and Wesley Merit Healthcare. In combination, 759 hospital beds, a wide range of specialties and comprehensive care exists: behavioral, cancer, heart failure care, neurology, neonatal, rehabilitation, hospice, and over 40 more specialty areas.

Manufacturing: Global businesses make up the manufacturing footprint in Hattiesburg because of a diverse and robust logistics network, a pro-business government, and access to a skilled workforce with a strong work ethic. Over 4800 employees are part of 104 manufacturing businesses that produced \$0.7B GDP in 2024. Manufacturing products include engines, industrial components, plastic products, wood and paper products, food products, and specialty chemicals.

Centrally located between all major Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama metropolitan areas, ample transportation solutions for employees and goods exist: 5 nearby airports, 3 class 1 rail lines, and 3 shipping ports.

Twelve miles from the site at hand is a 2155-acre site, Eagle One, being developed to attract up to four high quality industrial companies. \$32M has been

invested to date, and future occupation is certain to bring many opportunities to the area.

The Area Development Partnership (ADP) is greater Hattiesburg’s regional chamber of commerce and offers its services to support growth in the region. For additional area information, contact the ADP at 1.601.310.8673 or <http://www.theadp.com/> .

Quality of Place: With high-quality fields and arenas, thousands of hotel rooms, nearly 200 locally owned restaurants, award-winning attractions, and a vibrant art scene, Hattiesburg is where sports happen. The “Hub City” is drivable from much of the Southeast. Area facilities offer world-class experiences to tens of thousands of youth and collegiate players, coaches, and fans each year. The city’s outdoor offerings also provide the perfect landscape for cycling, running, or water events. Experience exceptional sports facilities and Southern hospitality in Hattiesburg, where the Visit HATTIESBURG team and partners ensure easy travel and memorable experiences for teams and spectators. Football, track and field, disc golf, e-sports, volleyball, basketball, pickleball, golf, swimming, equestrian, gymnastics, and more are all within easy reach. As an Amtrak-connected city and a Certified Retirement Community, Hattiesburg offers accessibility, affordability, and family-friendly fun—turning every sporting event into a seamless getaway and every visit into an invitation to stay longer.



Figure 2. and *Quality of Place* courtesy of Visit Hattiesburg, <https://www.visithburg.org/>

II — SITE SPECIFIC INFORMATION

SITE-SPECIFIC TOURISM

The 506-acre Innovation and Commercialization Park (ICP) has had notable recreational growth in the last three years. The 100 acres surrounding Lake Sehoj is home to a challenge course, disc golf course, mountain biking trails, and a cross-country track which brings in 1000’s of people throughout the year.

- The Lake Sehoj Championship Disc Golf Course is being continually developed aiming for a professional circuit course by 2027. The course brings daily foot traffic, and over the last two years, 850 unique players have played over 3000 rounds on the course. The course has attracted people from 2 countries and 27 US states. Two Spring 2025 tournaments had a total of 180 competitors, and the annual Big Rip Tournament is slated for November 2025.
- Cross country races also continue to break annual records and held their first statewide meet in October of 2024 with 600 runners (ages 8-18) and over 1000 attendees. Two fall 2025 meets are scheduled and expecting larger participation.
- The 8.5-mile trail bike course “The Accelerator” held its first 3 and 6-hour “Eagle Epic” endurance bike race November 2024 with 75 racers and approximately ~250 total attendees from MS, TX, FL, AL, and LA.
- The USM low ropes challenge course attracts ~200 participants per year for team building exercises. While a zip line is in place, certification and management costs prohibit use at this time, but should be highlighted as an additional opportunity for future enrichment.

Within 1 mile west of the site is the Hattiesburg Country Club, a formal access point for the 44-mile Longleaf Trace, and Jed’s Perfect Endurance Bikes & Brew with showers and accoutrements 2.5 miles away and directly across from the Longleaf Trace Jackson Road Station.

Two miles due east of the site lies the Meador Homestead, an 1885 log cabin Bed & Breakfast, and two hotel/lodges adjacent to the I-59 Interchange: Candlewood Suites (2-star, 109 rooms) and Doubletree by Hilton (3-star, 138 rooms).

With the protected recreational space, additional points of attraction such as an amphitheater and Lodge with detached eco-cabins would offer a unique and premier experience for nature lovers and professional retreats while providing a diversified ecotourism economic development opportunity.

SITE-SPECIFIC INNOVATION

Within the Park is the 60,000-sqft technology business incubator known as The Accelerator, designed to grow the footprint of Mississippi’s advanced-materials businesses. The Accelerator contains fitted leasable spaces and houses 12 start-ups, 2 established anchor tenant companies, 3 USM application-oriented entities including the technical service provider, The Mississippi Polymer Institute (MPI). Collectively, the Accelerator provides 41 full time and 28 part time jobs and has an annual economic impact of \$14M+ including products produced.

MPI is strategically growing entrepreneur support services and annually hosts a public business pitch event attracting both bankable and investable business initiatives, which provides a pathway to the Microsoft™ CoBuilders™ 12-wk business accelerator program through Innovate MS which ends with presentations to a large field of investors.

Additionally, MPI is creating a working demonstration site for clean tech energy alternatives and sustainable materials to facilitate commercial adoption of advanced technologies and materials.

As part of the development of the park, a \$3.6M grant from the Mississippi Development Authority is enabling site preparation of a 22 to 33-acre site targeting light advanced manufacturing companies. Site preparation will be completed in 2025.

SITE-SPECIFIC DESCRIPTION

At the heart of this dynamic region, the Innovation and Commercialization Park (ICP), locally also known as The Garden, is where research, technology, and industry meet. USM is requesting proposals involving the sale or lease of approximately 36 acres south of Lake Sehay within the Park.

The Garden's proximity to USM's vibrant academic and research community further enriches its value, offering unparalleled access to resources, talent, and collaboration opportunities in a technology-focused environment. The park offers an abundance of natural assets and public outdoor recreational uses, with underground utilities, 4-lane curb and gutter roads and a new multi-use path.

The Innovation and Commercialization Park (ICP) is located just northwest of the I-59/HWY-49 interchange and four miles to the northwest corner of the campus of The University of Southern Mississippi.

The Park is approximately 506 acres total including roadways and public or common spaces. Located in the northwest quadrant of the City of Hattiesburg, the site was selected from three sites originally considered based on a market feasibility and site analysis study prepared in 2001 by Hammer, Siler, George Associates. It is currently considered a Premier Development Site by the Mississippi Development Authority.

The site historically was the Van Hook Golf Course owned by the University of Southern Mississippi. The course was named for the Mississippi Sports Hall of Famer B.O. Van Hook. As the USM Golf Course, it was fondly known as "The Ranch". The golf course closed in 2004. USM maintains several small buildings on the site for working demonstrations and lab use along with the 60,000 sqft technology incubator, "The Accelerator", which opened in 2010.

The parcels pertaining to this RFP are at the southeast section of the USM property, which lies south of Lake Sehoy, an approximately 18-acre lake surrounded by 100 acres of recreation preserve. This tract is presently unoccupied and includes portions of the previous USM Van Hook golf course with excellent lake views. The entire area has been zoned as Planned Multi-Use (PMU) by the City of Hattiesburg. The property is located in the USM Innovation and Commercialization Park and part of Sections 35 and 36, Township 5 North, Range 14 West, Forrest County, Mississippi. Parcel sizes range from +/- 4.55 acres to +/- 18.06 acres, and in combination total +/- 36 acres. Surveys and Legal Descriptions are available online: <https://www.thepolymerinstitute.com/rfp1>

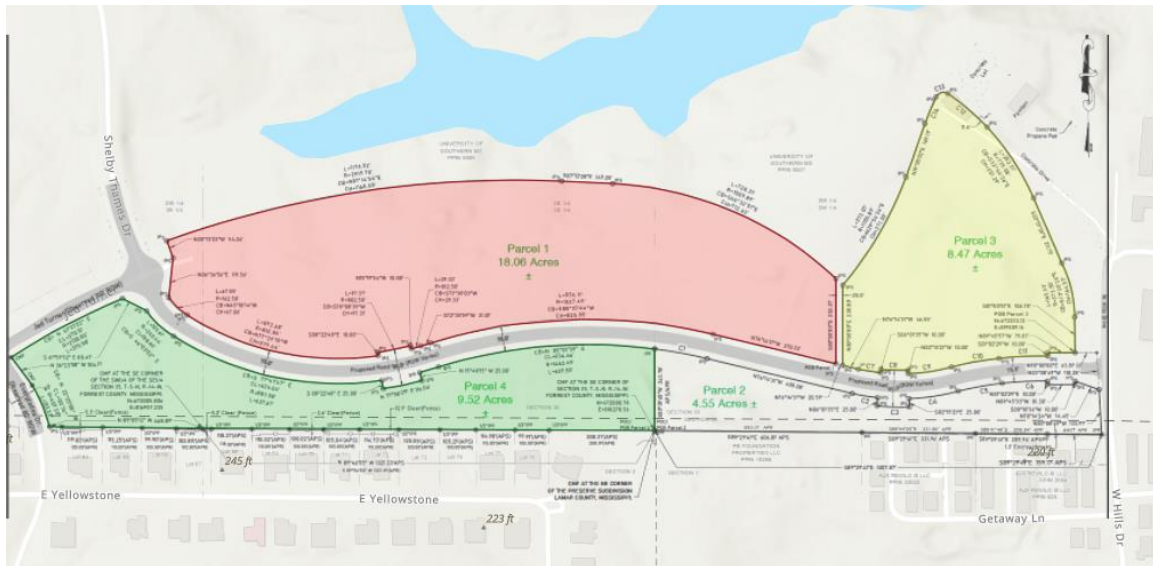


Figure 3. Highlighted RFP Parcels 1, 3, and 4, south of Lake Sehoy

SITE-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

The site is currently zoned Planned Multi-Use (PMU), which allows advanced light industrial, Office, R&D, multi-use, residential, recreational, and green space. Any development will have to appeal to the city council for approval of the appropriate zone in the PMU.

Municipal water, sewer, electrical, gas, telecommunications and storm drain connections are available at the Site but could likely need enhancement to accommodate a specific project's needs.

The Developer will be responsible for all Site preparation, including road access and is expected to use sustainable site design standards to minimize erosion and the need for built infrastructure.

Mississippi Power is in the planning stage of providing three phase electricity along the future east-west access road for the proposed parcel. Map included in support documentation.

Cooperative Energy intends to acquire property rights and intends to construct a new 69 kV transmission line in the vicinity of the site in accordance with Docket No. 25-UA-67, *In re: Petition of Cooperative Energy For Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity Authorizing them to Acquire, Construct, Own and Operate Electrical Transmission Line Facilities in Lamar and Forrest Counties, Mississippi (West Hattiesburg Loop Project Line-126)*, Before the Public Service Commission of the State of Mississippi.

Within proximity to the RFP parcel, the Lake Sehoy dam has a “High Hazard” classification by the MS Department of Environmental Quality and is required to have an emergency action plan as well as annual maintenance. An impact zone map can be found within the supplemental documentation.

Due to the criticality of perpetual design and environmental needs of the university, deeds of conveyance from the University will contain language requiring grantees to 1) endeavor to situate buildings and other improvements in ways that preserve and protect undeveloped land, including native flora, fauna, and drainage patterns, and 2) utilize sustainable construction practices in order to protect biodiversity during construction and minimize impacts of construction on nature.

DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

The Site is owned by the State of Mississippi. The University proposes to sell or lease the Site to the Developer. The sale or lease is subject to the approval of the Mississippi Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning, the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration, and the Public Procurement Review Board. Due to the proximity of the property to the University, the University reserves the right to approve or disapprove of any and all protective covenants.

Preference will be given for proposals which contain the following:

- A. Best utilization of land that provides maximum economic gain to The University and the City of Hattiesburg. This includes purchasing and developing the full +/- 36 acres of property.

- B. Multi-use components which add value, utility, and convenience to the neighborhood.
- C. Ability to incorporate a select-service lodge and cabins into the overall development plan, even if on an adjoining parcel.
- D. Experience and demonstrated track record in developing, owning and operating multi-use developments.
- E. Demonstrated ability to arrange financing (equity and debt) within 180 days of execution of a Purchase and Sale Agreement.
- F. Lowest financial and completion risk to the University.
- G. Ability to begin development within 300 days.
- H. Quality of response, including clarity and completeness.

INCENTIVES

The University, City of Hattiesburg, and Forrest and Lamar Counties are committed to bringing this development to fruition. Incentives may be available to help offset the development costs. These could include:

- 1) The University prefers to sell the property but will consider leasing the Site to the Lessee.
- 2) University officials will work in conjunction with the chosen company and the Area Development Partnership (ADP) staff in pursuing applicable city, county, and state financial incentives that could aid in bringing the multi-use Development to the Site.

Local incentives currently include Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Standard Property Tax Exemption- for projects with a capital investment of less than \$60 million, Fee in Lieu of Taxes- for projects with a capital investment of \$60 million or more, and Freeport Warehouse Exemption

State incentives include MFLEX Tax Incentive, Economic Development Highway (EDH), Development Infrastructure Program (DIP), and New Market Tax Credits. Innovation related incentives include the Research and Development Skills Income Tax Credit, Headquarters Tax Credit, Skills Training Tax Credit, and the SMART Business Rebate, among others.

Federal incentives include Federal Incentives, New Market Tax Credits, and Opportunity Zone tax benefits.

III — RFP SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Request for Proposal (RFP) 26-40 is a solicitation process, which is expected to culminate in a negotiated agreement between The University and a qualified Developer/Company. To expedite the evaluation process and allow for the best and most fair evaluation of each proposal, all RFP responses should attempt to follow a consistent format. Proposals should include as much of the requested information as possible and be organized according to the project proposal requirements. Information should be as specific as possible. Bullet-points, graphs, charts, and/or pictures will assist university reviewers.

An interactive version of this document as well as supporting documentation is available online at <https://www.thepolymerinstitute.com/rfp1>. Please view this document to fully access links to the referenced background materials and source documents.

To ensure all interested proposers receive any addenda that may be issued, proposers must email their **Intent to Propose** to the contact below 10 days after the Request for Proposals is issued.

Proposers must submit one (1) original, six (6) copies and one (1) electronic version (USB drive or shared cloud drive) of the proposal which must then be submitted in a sealed envelope bearing the name and address of the proposer. The proposal should be addressed to:

Michael McCullum
USM RFP 26-40 ICP Development Project/Property Sale
USM Facilities Planning & Management
Physical Plant 3105 West 4th Street
Hattiesburg, MS 39406

SCHEDULE

The schedule for this RFP is as follows:

ACTION	MILESTONE DATE
Release of Request for Proposals (RFP)	Day 1: April 6, 2026
Deadline for Intent to Propose	Day 10: April 16, 2026
Deadline for submitting questions	Day 15: April 21, 2026
Proposal Submission Deadline	Day 30: May 6, 2026

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. Transmittal Letter

- A. A signed Declaration (Addendum A)
- B. In at least one copy, an original signature of a partner, principal or officer of the Proposer with a statement that the signatory is authorized to submit the proposal.
- C. A statement that the proposal is valid for a minimum of 180 days.
- D. A signed acknowledgement indicating the proposer's awareness and agreement to comply with the terms of this RFP.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

2. Development Team Qualifications

- A. Legal name and officers, directors or partners of each member of the Development Team, at minimum, including the developer, architect, construction manager or general contractor, hotel/lodge operator, if applicable, and all other known team members.
- B. Identification of the respondent's firm, its ownership, officers, legal counsel, directors or partners, as well as a single contact person for all correspondence and notification.
- C. A summary of qualifications, relevant experience and references for each Development Team member, specifically addressing matters related to the objectives expressed in this RFP.
- D. A description of other projects most similar in scope to this multi-use project.
- E. A description of the type of entity that will develop and operate the Project (e.g. corporation, LLC, joint venture, etc.) and a list of other owners of interest that may provide equity to the ownership entity and the estimated percentage of ownership of each. The University expects competent efficient management to operate and market the Project.
- F. Non-exclusivity - The University encourages the best combination of potential participants. With this objective in mind, all members of a

responding team, except for the lead member, may be listed as members on more than one but no more than three different proposals. A member of one team may submit as a supporting member to another team but will not be considered for multiple lead-Developer submittals.

3. Multi Use Development Plan

- A. An overall conceptual plan for the optimization of multi-use development which fulfills the intent of the ICP Strategic Plan.
- B. Quality architectural design with sustainable build principles that comply, to the extent possible, with the Form Based Code along with all City building and construction requirements.
- C. Overall site plan that identifies all types of multi-uses intended. Include gross building area, footprint and number of stories.
- D. If applicable, breakdown of the Lodge room mix, the size of the rooms by category, meeting space, food and beverage space (if any), and description of amenities.
- E. A set of concept sketches and schematic renderings of the proposed Project showing the principal elevations, massing, entry features and landscape plans.

4. Lodge and Cabin Operational Plan

- A. An outline of proposed lease terms and how site preparation costs will be handled.
- B. A brief description of the Lodge management company and its advantages in being the operator (e.g. training, marketing, regional sales staff, etc.)
- C. A brief description of the recommended brand and the benefits this flag can deliver in the market.

5. Project Financing

- A. Proposer shall complete a Financial Questionnaire (Attachment B).
- B. Proposer shall provide a detailed pro forma including development budget, estimates of pre-construction costs, construction costs, furniture, fixtures, and equipment, projected revenue, net operating income, projected rate of return, and any incentive gap required to generate the Proposer's Return on Investment.
- C. Proposer shall provide a statement of net operating income for the proposed value-added components (lodge, cabins, café, retail, etc.), assuming completion of phase I construction in first quarter of 2028.
- D. Proposer shall provide a plan and demonstrate an ability to obtain both equity capital and, as required, debt financing necessary to undertake the development, including the rate of return these sources are likely to require.
- E. Proposer shall present evidence of equity capital and debt financing, including initial interest from financial institutions, partners, and other resources, as part of this response.
- F. If possible, Proposer should outline initial interest from national retailers, restaurants, and/or hotel/lodge chains including prior work with these prospects.

III — AWARD PROCEDURES

SELECTION PROCESS

The committee will evaluate all proposals received in response to this RFP. The University shall make its selection based on its evaluation of the proposer's adherence to the goals, objectives, and evaluation criteria outlined in this RFP. All RFP submissions must be received by **2pm Central Standard Time on May 6, 2026.**

The selected Proposer must conform to zoning ordinances, subdivision requirements and other applicable codes and ordinances of the City of Hattiesburg, Forrest County and applicable Mississippi statutes. The University will reasonably assist in obtaining all necessary permits and land use approval.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The University will rank the proposing firms and their submittals based on the following criteria and weighting.

- 1) 20% Fits our Quality Work, Live, Play Strategy with best utilization of land that provides maximum economic gain to The University and the City of Hattiesburg. This includes leasing or purchasing and developing the full +/- 36 acres of property.
 - a) Multi-use components which add value, utility, and convenience to the neighborhood and benefits to the community.
 - b) Maintains Park-like environment
 - c) Coveted place to be
 - d) Enriches scientific footprint
 - e) Maintains a relationship with university and/or students
 - f) Vision, Creativity, Innovation
 - g) Sustainability and Social Responsibility
 - h) Average salaries well above the state average
 - i) Sustainable design principles
- 2) 10% Ability to incorporate a select-service lodge and cabins into the overall development plan, even if on an adjoining parcel.
- 3) 20% Experience and demonstrated track record in developing, owning and operating multi-use developments.
 - a) Market Knowledge
 - b) Network & Relationships
 - c) Legal & Regulatory Track Record
 - d) References & Reputation
 - e) Communication & Transparency
- 4) 20% Demonstrated ability to arrange financing (equity and debt) within 180 days of execution of a Purchase and Sale Agreement.
- 5) 20% Lowest financial and completion risk to the University.
 - a) Financial Stability
 - b) Project History
 - c) Ability to begin construction within 12 months.
- 6) 10% Quality of response, including clarity, completeness, and value.

SPECIAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Proposer Responsibilities

All facts and opinions stated herein and in any additional information, whether written or oral, provided by the University and/or its representatives are based on available information and believed to be accurate. The information in this document is intended to help prospective Proposer create viable responses. Neither the University nor any of its officers, agents, consultants or employees shall be responsible for the accuracy of any information provided as part of this RFP. All Proposers are encouraged to independently verify the accuracy of any information provided.

Reservation of Right by the University

The University has sole discretion and reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received in response to this RFP and to cancel the RFP at any time prior to entering into a formal agreement. The University reserves the right to reasonably request additional information or clarification of information provided in the proposal without changing the terms of the RFP.

The RFP does not commit the University to procure or award a contract for the scope of work described herein. The University also reserves the right to waive any technicalities or irregularities in any proposal.

Proposers acknowledge and agree that the University shall not be liable for any costs, expenses, losses, damages or liabilities incurred by the proposers or any member thereof as a result of, or arising out of, a proposal submittal.

All information submitted in response to this RFP shall become the property of the University, and as such, may be used by the University in any manner.

Confidential Information

Information requested in the RFP and deemed by the Proposer to be privileged and confidential may be submitted in a separate envelope marked "Privileged and Confidential Information." The University will use reasonable efforts to protect such information from disclosure to the extent allowable by law.

Submittal Rejection / Right to Disqualify

Submittal of terms, conditions and/or agreements may result in rejection if such terms, conditions or agreements are deemed unacceptable by the University in its sole discretion. The University reserves the right to disqualify any team who fails to provide information or data specifically requested herein or who provides materially inaccurate or misleading information or data or who attempt to influence the selection process outside the procures established herein. The University also reserves the right to disqualify any team on the basis of any real or apparent conflict of interest at the sole discretion of the University.

Insurance Requirements

Commercial General Liability, Business Automobile Liability, Workers Compensation and Professional Liability Insurance are requested from firms that enter into a professional services contract with the University. This information is being provided for informational purposes only. Insurance converges and limits will be determined, and an actual insurance attachment prepared based on the proposed services submitted by the chosen development team.

ATTACHMENT A: DECLARATION

The undersigned, as Proposer, declares that the only persons interested in this Proposal are those named herein, that no other person has any interest in this Proposal or in the agreement of development to which this Proposal pertains, that this Proposal is made without connection or arrangement with any other person and that this Proposal is in every aspect fair, in good faith and without collusion or fraud.

The Proposer further declares that they have complied in every respect with all of the instructions to the Proposers, that they have read all addenda and that they have satisfied themselves fully relative to all matters and conditions with respect to the project to which the Proposal pertains.

The Proposer agrees, if this Proposal is accepted, to execute appropriate Agreements for the purpose of establishing a formal contractual relationship between the Proposer and the University for the performance of all requirements to which the Proposal pertains.

The Proposer states that this Proposal is based upon the Request for Proposal documents and addenda.

Firm/Corporation

Address

Name of Representative

Signature of Representative

Title

Submittal Date

ATTACHMENT B: FINANCIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Proposer, owner, corporation of Proposer and any person or business entity guaranteeing the performance of the Proposer as well as the construction management firm or contractor and hotel/lodge management company each must attach a complete report, prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, reflecting current financial condition. The report must include a balance sheet and an annual income statement. The person or entity covered by the statement must be prepared to substantiate all information shown.

Each firm reporting financial information must answer the following:

Surety Information

Has any surety or bonding company ever been required to perform upon your default?

Yes No

If yes, attach a statement naming the surety or bonding company, date, amount of bond and the circumstances surrounding said default and performance.

Are you overdue on any city, state or local taxes, as applicable?

Yes No

If yes, attach a statement indicating the amount and type of overdue taxes and reason(s) for being overdue.

Bankruptcy Information

Have you declared bankruptcy?

Yes No

If yes, attach a statement indicating the date, court of jurisdiction, amount of liabilities, and amount of assets.

Pending Litigation

Provide information regarding litigation, liens, or claims involving any participant for whom financial data is presented in the Proposal.

Fraud / Theft / Felony Information

Have any of the principals of the companies on the development team ever been convicted of fraud, theft or a felony?

Yes No

If yes, attach a statement indicating date, court of jurisdiction, and particulars.