



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

FOR A

Unified Communications System

Issued by the

Community College System of New Hampshire

RFP #SYS25-05

Date of Issue: April 15, 2025

Proposals must be received no later than
2:00 PM on May 13, 2025

All questions related to the RFP should be submitted via e-mail to:

Sean Fitzpatrick, System Office Procurement at sfitzpatrick@ccsnh.edu

The full content of this Request for Proposals, Attachments, Appendices, Response to Questions and all Addenda via CCSNH website located at:

<https://www.ccsnh.edu/about-ccsnh/bidding-rfp/>

The RFP contains specific protocols relating to discussion and other communications regarding this RFP. Any violations of these provisions may result in immediate disqualification of a firm's submission.

Prospective firms are encouraged to promptly notify CCSNH of any apparent inconsistencies, problems, or ambiguities in the RFP.

Purpose: The Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH) invites proposals for a technical needs assessment, implementation, configuration, and support of a unified communications system with seamless integration into Microsoft Teams, or full Teams implementation. CCSNH is a public community college system with seven locations and five satellites across New Hampshire, with its central office in Concord. CCSNH serves approximately 9,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) students, ranging from 4,000 FTEs at the largest college to 1,000 FTEs at the smallest.

The CCSNH Systems Office provides centralized resources, services, and applications supporting the seven campuses, including:

- SCT Banner (ERP system)
- Microsoft M365
- The Wide Area Network (WAN), connecting all campuses to the Systems Office in a hub-and-spoke configuration, currently handling inter-campus VoIP traffic

CCSNH seeks a highly qualified vendor to deliver a cost-effective, comprehensive solution. This turnkey solution must include procurement, deployment, porting, configuration, and ongoing maintenance and co-management, with an on-site implementation component covering physical hardware deployment, cabling, and wiring for seamless integration. The vendor must ensure scalability and service enhancements balancing benefits and costs for CCSNH.

Background Information: To enhance communication, collaboration, and efficiency, CCSNH aims to implement a Unified Communications platform integrated with Microsoft Teams. The current NEC phone system is nearing end-of-life and is challenging to support, necessitating a modern, scalable, and manageable solution aligned with strategic technology goals.

Microsoft Teams integration offers a familiar interface, reducing training time and accelerating adoption among faculty and staff already using it for collaboration. The cloud-based architecture supports CCSNH's hybrid work policies, connecting users on-campus, at academic centers, or remotely. This telephony solution will modernize infrastructure, streamline multi-location communication, and provide advanced call management, enterprise-grade security, and Microsoft 365 integration for a seamless, scalable experience.

This RFP invites qualified vendors to propose deployment, implementation, and support for a Microsoft Teams-integrated unified communications system, ensuring a future-proof communication framework for CCSNH's campuses and centers. Subsequent sections detail the RFP process, current and future communications environments, proposal requirements, and evaluation terms.

About CCSNH: The Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH) is a public system of higher education consisting of seven colleges located across NH. All colleges in CCSNH are accredited by the New England Commission on Higher Education and serve over 22,000 learners annually with 200 associate degree and certificate programs, aligned with career opportunities and transfer pathways at affordable rates of tuition. The System Office provides central support to the colleges and is located in Concord, New Hampshire's capital city.

CCSNH is dedicated to providing accessible, affordable, and high-quality education to the diverse communities across the state. Comprised of seven community colleges, each with its unique strengths and focus areas, CCSNH plays a pivotal role in empowering students to achieve their academic and career goals.

Established with a commitment to fostering regional economic development and meeting the evolving needs of both traditional and non-traditional learners, CCSNH has become a cornerstone of education in New Hampshire. The community colleges within the system serve as hubs for innovation, collaboration, and the cultivation of a skilled workforce.

Requirements of Bidders

The successful firm will:

- o Be authorized to do business in the State of New Hampshire.
- o Comply with all federal and New Hampshire state laws and regulations, statutes and policies.
- o Maintain adequate insurance coverage.

Proposal Instructions

At a minimum, each proposal must include:

- Fully completed Exhibit A – Bidder Response Workbook
 - o Bidder Qualifications
 - o General Telephony Communications Requirements
 - o Solution Proposal- based on preliminary campus telephony estimates provided in Exhibit B
 - o A detailed plan for conducting the Technical Assessment Requirement, including methodology, timeline, and cost breakdown, as specified in Exhibit A sections 11.7.19 and 12.1.5.
- Bidder's W9
- Bidder's Certificate of Insurance

All submissions from interested firms should be sent electronically via email to Sean Fitzpatrick, System Office Procurement Manager at purchasing@ccsnh.edu. Each proposal shall be clearly labeled: "CHA25-05 Proposal for UNIFIED COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM"

Schedule Of Key Events

Request for Proposal issued	Tuesday, April 15, 2025
Proposal Due Date & Time	Tuesday, May 13, 2025 @ 3:00 P.M.
RFP Response Review and Demonstrations	May 14–23, 2025
Award and Notification to Successful Contractor, no later than	Friday, May 23, 2025
Contract Date & Commencement of Services	Late Spring/Early Summer 2025 (in conjunction with campus schedules)

Proposal Inquires

All inquiries concerning this request for proposal shall be made via email to: Sean Fitzpatrick, System Office Procurement Manager, at sfitzpatrick@ccsnh.edu. Answers to all inquiries will be posted publicly to the CCSNH website <https://www.ccsnh.edu/about-ccsnh/bidding-rfp/>

Contract Term

The term of any awarded contract will be for three (3) or five (5) years. At the conclusion of the initial term, the agreement may be renewed for an additional three (3) year term if mutually agreed upon by both parties.

Evaluation of Proposals

Proposals will be reviewed by a CCSNH review committee. CCSNH may require presentations and demonstrations from top-ranked bidders, scheduled after the RFP due date. CCSNH will select the proposal that best suits the needs of CCSNH and offers the best overall value. No single factor will determine the final award decision. CCSNH will negotiate with the successful institution to determine final price and contract form.

Proposals will be scored on the following criteria:

Category	Max Points Attainable
Company Stability	50
Experience and Reputation	25
Compliance with CCSNH Requirements- 100 points will be allocated to the technical assessment plan's quality and feasibility	250
Scope of Product and Services	100
Client References from Former and Current	75
Value Added / Optional Services	50
Initial and Ongoing Costs	150
Total	700

CCSNH reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or any part thereof, to waive any formality, informality, information or errors in the proposal, to accept the proposal considered to be in the best interests of the CCSNH, or to purchase on the open market if it is considered in the best interest of CCSNH to do so. Failure to submit all information called for and/or submission of an unbalanced proposal are sufficient reasons to declare a proposal as non-responsive and subject to disqualification. Statements, which do not incorporate our requested format will not be considered.

All proposals received shall be considered confidential and not available for public review until after a Bidder has been selected.

This Request for Proposal (RFP) does not commit CCSNH to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this request, or to procure or contract for services or supplies.

AWARD OF CONTRACT:

Any contract entered into by CCSNH shall be in response to the proposal and subsequent discussions. It is the policy of CCSNH that contracts are awarded only to responsive and responsible Bidders. In order to qualify as responsive and responsible, a prospective Bidder must meet the following standards as they relate to this request:

- Have adequate financial resources for performance or have the ability to obtain such resources as required during

performance;

- Have the necessary experience, organization, technical and professional qualifications, skills and facilities;
- Be able to comply with the proposed or required time of completion or performance schedule; and
- Have a demonstrated satisfactory record of performance;
- Adhere to the specifications of this proposal and provide all documentation required of this proposal

The contract will be awarded to a responsive and responsible Bidder based on the qualifications and experience of the Bidder, the Bidder's ability to provide ongoing technical support, the Bidder's timeframe for providing the requested service and the Bidder's price proposal. The Bidder selected will be the most qualified and not necessarily the Bidder with the lowest price.

Proposals must be submitted as best and final offers, including all requirements, terms, and conditions, without assuming post-submission additions. Unacceptable responses may lead to awarding another bidder.

SCOPE OF SERVICES:

CCSNH IT and Telephony Context:

A. Support and Administration

1. CCSNH is supported by a centralized IT department managing institution-wide initiatives. Each campus has on-site IT staff for end-user laptop and workstation support, escalating network, application, and non-workstation issues to the central team.
2. CCSNH outsources maintenance and support for the NEC phone system.

B. IT Environment Context

- CCSNH uses WAN and Internet services from NetworkNH (University System of New Hampshire), operating the IBEAM fiber network across 70 sites in all 10 New Hampshire counties.
- Each campus has at least 1 Gbps private WAN access and 650 Mbps to 1 Gbps Internet access.
- The IT environment includes an on-premises Microsoft server setup with M365 for collaboration, messaging, and Office suites. Virtual servers (file, print, database, reporting, domain controller) are housed in a Durham, NH, data center.
- Staff use Windows 10 or 11 laptops and workstations.
- Most staff have Microsoft 365 A3 for Education licenses; adjunct professors have A1 licenses.

C. Telephony Context

- NEC 3300 PBX, gateway, and servers are distributed across campuses.
- SIP trunks from the local LEC terminate at NEC gateways per campus.
- End-user devices include NEC handsets, softphones, and personal cell phones under a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy.
- MS Teams is installed on all laptops, primarily for internal voice, instant messaging and video calls.
- Calls are answered via auto attendant during business hours, routed to appropriate extensions.

Project Scope

CCSNH seeks to replace its NEC PBX system with a Microsoft Teams-integrated telephony solution. Vendors are invited to propose implementation and ongoing support for this integrated solution, enhancing communication and collaboration by combining Teams' features with robust telephony and UCaaS capabilities.

The platform should integrate cloud telephony with Microsoft Teams, enabling calls, SMS, and call queue management within the Teams interface. Users will leverage enterprise-grade voice features (e.g., call routing, IVR, analytics) alongside Teams for messaging and meetings, using Operator Connect, Direct Routing, or an embedded dialer.

CCSNH requires a turnkey solution with joint operational responsibility for service dependencies (e.g., network, workstations, support processes, Microsoft Teams integration- including assistance with Microsoft Teams configurations). In-scope requirements are detailed below; out-of-scope elements follow.

Technical Assessment Requirement

Due to the Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH) historically outsourcing the configuration, implementation, and maintenance of its telephony system to a third-party vendor, CCSNH lacks precise data on licensing, hardware, and infrastructure requirements for the proposed unified communications system. To address this, the successful vendor shall conduct a comprehensive technical assessment as an initial project phase to define these requirements across all seven campuses and five satellite locations. This assessment will inform the final scope, including license counts, hardware needs, and infrastructure upgrades, ensuring alignment with CCSNH's operational and strategic goals.

The technical assessment shall encompass the following:

1. Campus-Specific Needs Assessment:

- Engage with CCSNH's centralized IT department and on-site IT staff at each campus to document current telephony usage, user requirements, and workflows.
- Conduct stakeholder meetings with administrative staff, faculty, and IT personnel to capture detailed communication needs.

2. Site Surveys:

- Perform physical site surveys at all seven colleges and five satellite locations to assess:
 - Existing phone counts and device types (e.g., NEC handsets, softphones).
 - Wiring and cabling infrastructure, identifying upgrade or replacement needs.
 - Paging systems and other ancillary communication devices, including integration requirements.
- Evaluate network readiness (e.g., LAN/WAN capacity, QoS) for Microsoft Teams telephony.

3. Inventory and Analysis:

- Document existing telephony assets (e.g., handsets, gateways, PBX components) and assess compatibility or replacement needs.
- Analyze call volume, auto attendant configurations, and routing patterns to guide system design.

4. Scalability and Future Needs:

- Identify potential growth areas (e.g., additional users, new sites) and propose scalable solutions.
- Assess hybrid work requirements, including remote access and BYOD support.

5. Deliverables:

- Submit a Technical Assessment Report within 30 days of contract award, including:

- Recommended license counts (e.g., Microsoft Teams Phone licenses, Operator Connect/Direct Routing).
 - Hardware requirements (e.g., handsets, headsets, conference devices).
 - Infrastructure upgrades (e.g., wiring, network enhancements).
 - Paging and ancillary system integration plans.
 - Provide a revised project timeline and cost estimate based on findings, subject to CCSNH approval.
- 6. Coordination and Reporting:**
- Coordinate with CCSNH's Systems Office IT team to minimize operational disruption.
 - Deliver weekly progress updates during the assessment phase.
- 7. Phone Bill Analysis for Service Porting and Disconnection:**
- Review CCSNH's current phone bills from the existing NEC phone system provider across all seven campuses and five satellite locations to identify active services, usage patterns, and associated costs.
 - Determine which services (e.g., phone numbers, toll-free lines, fax lines, SIP trunks) should be ported to the new Microsoft Teams-integrated unified communications platform to maintain operational continuity.
 - Identify services that are obsolete, underutilized, or unnecessary (e.g., unused lines, redundant features) and recommend their disconnection to optimize costs and streamline the transition.
 - Include findings in the Technical Assessment Report, specifying porting recommendations, disconnection candidates, and any potential cost savings or service adjustments.

The technical assessment is a prerequisite for finalizing equipment, licensing, and implementation plans detailed in Exhibit A (e.g., sections 11.7 and 12.1). Bidders must include their assessment methodology, timeline, and costs in their proposal, itemizing assessment costs separately from implementation and support expenses. CCSNH reserves the right to approve the Technical Assessment Report before proceeding with subsequent phases.

In-Scope Requirements

CCSNH's requirements for a Microsoft Teams Voice solution include:

- 11.1 General Telephony Communication
- 11.2 Physical Handsets and Devices
- 11.3 System Administration
- 11.4 Phone Number Porting
- 11.5 Licensing Provisioning
- 11.6 Survivability
- 11.7 Implementation, Administration, and Support Services
- 11.8 Optional Areas of Interest

Project Milestone Schedule

CCSNH aims to replace its NEC phone system by August 31, 2025. Vendors must provide a proposed implementation schedule with key milestones (e.g., discovery, design, configuration, training, change management, line porting, documentation, transition to operations).

Value Added Features or Components

CCSNH seeks to understand vendor solutions beyond the current scope. Describe additional capabilities, their benefits, costs, and implementation timelines.

MODIFICATIONS AFTER AWARD:

CCSNH reserves the right to incorporate minor modifications, which may be required by it. The Bidder will incorporate these changes at no additional cost but may protest such action and not be bound by any such request if it can prove that the timing or extent of the modifications implies a major effort on its part.

CANCELLATION OF AWARD:

CCSNH reserves the right to cancel the award without liability to the bidder at any time before a contract has been fully executed by all parties and is approved by the CCSNH.

CONTRACT:

Any Contract between CCSNH and the Bidder shall consist of (1) CCSNH's standard contract for services, (2) the Request for Proposal (RFP) and any amendments thereto and (3) the Bidder's proposal in response to this RFP. In the event of a conflict in language between documents (2) and (3) referenced above, the provisions and requirements set forth and referenced in the RFP shall govern. However, CCSNH reserves the right to clarify any contractual relationship in writing with the concurrence of the Bidder, and such written clarification shall govern in case of conflict with the applicable requirements contained in the RFP and the Bidder's proposal. In all other matters, not affected by written clarification, if any, the RFP shall govern. The submitter is cautioned that their proposal shall be subject to acceptance without further clarification.

EXECUTION OF AGREEMENT:

The successful Bidder shall sign (execute) the necessary agreements for entering into the contract and return such signed agreements to CCSNH, along with applicable insurance certificates, within ten (10) calendar days from the date emailed or otherwise delivered to the successful bidder.

APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT:

Upon receipt of the agreement that has been fully executed by the successful Bidder, CCSNH shall complete the execution of the agreement in accordance with local laws or ordinances and return the fully executed agreement to the Bidder. Delivery of the fully executed agreement to the Bidder shall constitute the CCSNH's approval to be bound by the successful Bidder's proposal and the terms and conditions of the agreement.

FAILURE TO EXECUTE AGREEMENT:

Failure of the successful Bidder to execute the agreement within ten (10) calendar days from the date emailed or otherwise delivered to the successful Bidder shall be just cause for cancellation of the award.

DISQUALIFICATION:

Awards will not be made to any person, firm or company in default of a contract with the CCSNH, the State of New Hampshire or the Federal Government.

ADDENDUM:

In the event it becomes necessary to add to or revise any part of this RFP prior to the scheduled submittal date, the addendum will be posted to the CCSNH website at <https://www.ccsnh.edu/about-ccsnh/bidding-rfp/>. Any addendum to the RFP must be included by the Contractor in their proposal. Proposals that do not include addendums may be rejected. Before your submission, always check the website for any addenda that may have been issued which would affect the

RFP.

Any change, correction or deviation to this RFP must be addressed in a written addendum. Verbal changes will not be allowed.

BID RESULTS:

Bid results may be viewed when available, once the award has been made, on our web site at:

<https://www.ccsnh.edu/about-ccsnh/bidding-rfp/>

ADDITIONAL TERMS & CONDITIONS:

By submitting a proposal, bidder agrees to the following terms:

Rate Stabilization- It is the intent of the parties that the monthly recurring charges stated in the rate schedule portion of the agreement will not change during the initial term. For the Services (if any) still subject to tariff filing requirement by the appropriate state or federal regulatory agency, in the event that company changes its tariff and as a result there are material and adverse impacts on the rates charged to the customer, then customer may terminate the agreement upon thirty (30) day written notice without further liability, other than to pay for services rendered up to the effective date of termination.

Non-Auto Renew- The Agreement is effective on the date identified on the proposal and will continue for the term set forth in the proposal from the date that the Services are installed until either terminated pursuant to the provisions below or replaced with a new agreement. Upon expiration of the term, this agreement will renew on a month to month basis, priced at the existing monthly rates

Portability- During a service term, customer shall have the right to terminate a service provided without incurring early termination charges provided that the customer orders a replacement service provided entirely by Provider to a location served by the provider network with equal or great monthly recurring charges for an equal to the remaining service term as the initial service.

Business Downturn- For purposes of this agreement, the term "Business Downturn" is hereby defined to mean an unplanned material adverse change in Customer's business that had not been caused by any neglect or wrongdoing of customer that materially negatively affects customer's need for the level of services provided pursuant to an applicable service order. Provider and customer will cooperate in efforts to develop a mutually agreeable alternative proposal that will address the reduced needs of customer for level of services. Customer shall promptly provide written notification as soon as it has knowledge of a confirmed service location(s) closure and provide notification of its intent to terminate the services to the affected service location(s) in which it may do so without further obligation, to include termination charges. The effect of termination of any service location(s)/sales order hereunder will be to discharge provider and the customer from future performance of such service location(s)/sales order.

Technology migration- Company acknowledges Customer's substantial interest in newer technologies that offer improved performance and more efficient ways to meet Customer's telecommunication requirements. Company and Customer hereby agree that Customer shall have the option of converting services to another Company product or technology, provided the Customer agrees to enter into a new agreement for a new term equal or greater than the original term.

Chronic Outages/Issues- Customer has the right to receive credit and/or terminate service without early termination liability for sites that are deemed to have chronic service outages or chronic service issues. Chronic would be defined as six (6) service outages or service issues over a twelve (12) month period. Customer understands that service outages or service issues related to force majeure as outlined in Company service level agreement would not be defined as chronic.

Early Termination Fee- If service is canceled or terminated by the customer prior to the expiration of the initial term, the customer must pay 100% of recurring charges if services are canceled or terminated in months 1 to 12. Customer must pay 75% of recurring charges if services are canceled or terminated in months 13 to 24. Customer must pay 50% of recurring charges if services are canceled or terminated in months 25 to 36.