

Questions Due: 07/09/26

Answers Due: 07/13/26

Proposal Responses Due: 07/20/26

| Vendor Question                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Answer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| 1 Has WCC been in contact with another search vendor prior to this RFP where they committed to purchasing them, but had to release this RFP for state compliance reasons?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | WCC has not formally committed to any service or vendor; no work is authorized without a valid signed PO and contract                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 2 Is there an incumbent vendor or preferred solution currently being considered for this initiative?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | The preferred solution is outlined in the RFP specifications; all responses will be considered                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 3 Is this RFP intended to validate a preferred solution, or is the organization open to evaluating a range of search platforms and approaches?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | WCC hopes to implement a robust search platform that enhances content discoverability, addresses user needs, delivers relevant results, and elevates users' digital experience within the institution's digital ecosystem; all responses will be considered and scored in accordance with section 1 criteria |
| 4 Has budget already been approved for this initiative, and is there an expected pricing range or commercial structure vendors should align to?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | This information is not available                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 5 The RFP references implementing a robust search platform with AI, semantic search, vector search, NLP, machine learning, and minimal manual engineering. Could WCC please clarify whether it is seeking a commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) cloud-based SaaS search platform, or whether custom-built search solutions using technologies such as Elasticsearch, Solr, OpenSearch, or similar platforms will also be considered? | WCC's preference is for a commercial, cloud-based SaaS search platform that minimizes implementation complexity and ongoing operational overhead. WCC will consider all proposals that satisfy the functional, technical, and support requirements outlined in the RFP                                       |
| 6 Does WCC have any preferred search platforms or existing technology standards that vendors should consider when proposing a solution?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Any preferences or tech standards are outlined in this RFP                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 7 The RFP mentions that the search solution will be implemented as part of a new Drupal website build. Could you please clarify the current status of the Drupal website redesign/refresh project? Has development started, and who is responsible for designing and developing the new Drupal website?                                                                                                                          | Development has not started, anticipated go-live date of February 2027. Stamats was the awarded design and development partner                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 8 The RFP references delivering a customizable and WCAG-compliant search interface. Could WCC please clarify whether the selected vendor is expected to provide the user-facing search interface (search box, results page, filters, etc.), or whether the Drupal development team will build the interface using APIs/components provided by the selected search platform?                                                      | Anticipate the selected vendor will design the interface                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 9 Will the required search experience be embedded directly within the new Drupal website, or will WCC require a separate hosted search experience accessible from multiple web properties?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | The search experience will be embedded within the new Drupal website                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

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| 10 | What Drupal version and hosting environment will be used for the new website?                                                                                                                                                 | Drupal 11 and hosting environment is to be determined                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 11 | Could you provide the expected timeline for completion of the Drupal website refresh and the desired timeline/go-live date for implementing the new search solution?                                                          | We anticipate launching the new site in February 2027; the search solution should follow the same schedule                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 12 | Could you provide a list of all websites, subdomains, and digital properties that need to be included in the search solution, including the academic catalog and any other content sources?                                   | We only anticipate including the content within wccnet.edu                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 13 | About how many pages, documents (PDFs, Word documents, etc.), and other content items need to be indexed by the search platform?                                                                                              | Approximately 10,000                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 14 | What platform is currently being used for the academic catalog, and how is the catalog content managed or accessed (API, XML feed, database connection, or other method)?                                                     | We're using CourseLeaf and it will continue to be a separate property with some data pulled in via XML                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 15 | What search solution is currently being used on the WCC website, and what are the primary challenges or limitations with the current search experience?                                                                       | Current search lacks smart or AI-driven functionality and requires manual tweaking to perform desired search performance                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 16 | Does WCC expect the selected vendor to migrate existing search configurations, such as synonyms, promoted results, relevance rules, or search analytics, from the current solution?                                           | No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 17 | The RFP references AI, semantic search, vector search, NLP, machine learning, and generative AI capabilities. Could you clarify which AI capabilities are required for the initial implementation versus future enhancements? | At a minimum, we'd anticipate exact, autocomplete/semantic queries with spelling error tolerance                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 18 | Does WCC have any specific requirements regarding the use, storage, or protection of institutional content processed through AI capabilities?                                                                                 | WCC expects vendors to implement industry-standard safeguards for the use, storage, and protection of institutional content processed through AI-enabled features. Vendors should describe how institutional data is protected, whether customer content is used to train public or shared AI models, applicable data retention practices, and the administrative controls available to manage AI functionality. Vendors should also identify any applicable privacy and security standards supported by their solution. |
| 19 | Are there specific search features or user experience requirements expected, such as autocomplete, filters, facets, sorting, search suggestions, promoted results, or content recommendations?                                | In addition to answers listed in question 17, there are no specific requirements around filters, facets, promoted results, etc., but these are desired functions of our new search feature                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 20 | How many WCC staff members are expected to manage and maintain the search platform after implementation, and what level of training or documentation is required?                                                             | Approximately 5 staff members. Level of training or documentation depends on the complexity of the solution implemented                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 21 | The RFP requires WCAG-compliant search functionality. Could you clarify the required accessibility standard (WCAG 2.1 AA, WCAG 2.2 AA, or another standard) and whether accessibility testing documentation is required?      | The proposed solution should support WCAG 2.2 Level AA compliance, or the most current applicable WCAG AA standard at the time of implementation. Vendors should describe their accessibility approach and provide any available accessibility documentation or conformance reports (such as a VPAT) with their proposal                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

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| 22 | Does WCC have any specific requirements related to data residency, hosting location, backup retention, disaster recovery, or encryption of search data?                                                                                                                                                                           | WCC expects vendors to follow industry-standard security and operational practices. Proposals should describe the solution's hosting architecture, data residency, encryption (both in transit and at rest), backup and disaster recovery capabilities, and any applicable security certifications. WCC will evaluate these capabilities as part of the overall proposal |
| 23 | What are the expected search usage volumes, including estimated monthly search queries or peak usage periods, to help determine the appropriate solution tier?                                                                                                                                                                    | Approximately 45,000 site searches at peak use times, down to about 20,000 for less active months                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 24 | Are there any additional systems or platforms beyond the website and academic catalog that WCC expects to integrate with the search solution?                                                                                                                                                                                     | Not at this time                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 25 | Should vendors provide pricing based on a complete solution model, including search platform licensing, implementation/integration services, configuration, training, and ongoing support? What factors should vendors use for pricing estimates (number of pages, documents, search queries, domains, users, or other criteria)? | Yes, please provide comprehensive pricing in your own format; vendors may use the statistics in answer 23 if needed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 26 | What are the mandatory compliance certifications needed to win this business? Is SOC 2 mandatory?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | WCC does not require a specific certification as a mandatory condition of award. However, vendors should identify all relevant security certifications and independent assessments (such as SOC 2 Type II, ISO 27001, or equivalent) and describe their information security program. Security capabilities will be evaluated as part of the overall proposal            |