



SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY
Request for Proposal
SSU 2026-03

Athletic Uniforms, Apparel and Supplies

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1. Background

Salem State University (SSU), established in 1854, is a comprehensive, public institution of higher learning located approximately 15 miles north of Boston, Massachusetts. One of the largest state universities in the Commonwealth, Salem State, enrolls about 7,000 undergraduate and graduate students. It offers 32 undergraduate programs and graduate programs that offer degrees in 24 fields. The university also has a continuing education division that offers both credit and non-credit programs. Salem State proudly participates in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement and has shown a student voting rate above the national average, earning it a Silver Seal from the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge. In 2020, Salem State received Carnegie Community Engagement Classification. The university is designated a Best for Vets College by Military Times. Visit www.salemstate.edu.

2. Description and Purpose

Salem State University is requesting written proposals from qualified vendors for a Volume Purchase Agreement for athletic uniforms, apparel and supplies.

3. Anticipated Duration of Contract

This is a Request for Proposal for a five (5) year contract with the possibility of two (2) one-year extensions. The one year extensions will be by mutual agreement of the parties based on an annual review of the contract.

4. Deadline for Responses and Procurement Calendar

Please note this is an anticipated calendar and may be subject to change.

Release of RFP	Thursday, September 30, 2025	
Bidder's submission of questions or requests for clarification due	Monday, October 13, 2025, 12:00 pm EST	Email to r.amos@saemstate.edu
Addendum issued in response to questions and clarifications	Thursday, October 16, 2025	
Bid Submission deadline	Monday, October 20, 2025, 12:00 pm EST	Email to r.amos@saemstate.edu
Presentations by vendors,	Week of October 27, 2025	Via Zoom
Notification to bidders of award	Week of November 3, 2025	
Contract signing and start of contract	November 2025	

5. Payments

In accordance with 815 CMR 4.00, section 4.03, payments shall be made for goods and/or services only after such goods have been delivered in full (and/or services have been rendered in full) and accepted by the University. Payments shall be made only in arrears. No advance payments shall be made to vendors. The University's standard payment terms are Net 30 days upon receipt of invoice.

Expenses related to the bidder's submission of any response to this RFP shall be the entire responsibility of the Bidder and shall not be chargeable to the University. All supporting documentation and manuals submitted with this proposal will become the property of the University unless requested by the Bidder, in writing, at the time of the submission, and agreed to, in writing, by the University.

6. Taxes, Fees, Assessments, etc.

Vendors must pay all taxes, fees, and assessments associated with furnishing the products as part of the contract. Salem State University is exempt from federal excise tax and Massachusetts sales tax. A tax exemption certificate will be provided upon request.

7. Contract Specifications

The University seeks pricing in the form of a percentage-off discount for name-brand apparel, supplies, accessories, and footwear. Items purchased from the awarded vendors shall include, but are not limited to:

- **Supplies** – stopwatches, whistles, lanyards, mesh pennies, cones, air horns, equipment bags, jump ropes, basketballs, nets, etc.
- **Clothing, Accessories, & Footwear** – sweatshirts, rain jackets, turtlenecks, fleece pullovers, t-shirts, caps, visors, etc.

Brands requested by the University are listed on the bid response sheet (Attachment C). All team uniforms must be Nike branded. Non-team specific items, including merchandise, supplies, and accessories, may utilize other brands.

Vendors must adhere to the following requirements for products delivered under this contract:

1. All vendors must have the capability of rendering screen printing and embroidery services. All embellishments must be proofed and approved with no additional charge for reproofs.
2. The maximum turnaround on all embellished apparel (screen printed, embroidered, heat transfer) shall be three (3) weeks.
3. Vendors must guarantee all product purchases with zero-cost replacements for defective items.
4. The University may order any single uniform or replacement at original cost.
5. Vendors must possess the ability to assist in the creation, maintenance, and supply of individual athletic team web stores.
6. Vendors must be able to package teams' individual orders by student-athletes and ship directly to student-athletes' home address upon the University's request.
7. Vendors must be able to accept payment by either credit card or purchase order, at the University's discretion. SSU processes payment via ACH.
8. All orders must be quoted prior to the confirmation of the order. Quotes and invoices must be itemized, including shipping.
9. All vendors must make a representative available to meet with university staff and student-athletes on-site, bring samples, and assist with orders as required.

The proposal accepted will be based on quality, cost and the ability to provide goods and services as required by SSU. Proposals will not be awarded solely based on price but on what is the best overall value to the University.

The successful vendor must be able to fill all orders for uniforms, apparel and supplies as needed throughout the life of the contract. The University defines uniforms, apparel and supplies as follows:

- Uniforms: Official game clothing
- Apparel: Sweatshirts, shorts, jackets, hats, practice gear, etc.
- Supplies: Knee pads, socks, sports bras, game day equipment, etc.
- Services: Screen printing, embroidery, etc.

The vendor must assign a customer service representative to the University who has a strong history of good customer service and sufficient staffing to ensure the provision of goods and services outlined in this RFP throughout the life of the contract. The proposed representative's name and direct phone number must be provided. Vendors must be able to provide samples and meet with a representative of the University during the proposal evaluation period to discuss ordering needs and concerns.

The vendor must be able to package and ship in quantities specified on a timely basis. Merchandise in each shipment must be pre-sorted and packaged by the vendor for distribution to team members. The vendor must guarantee that packaging and shipping shall provide adequate protection against damage and deterioration. All quotations must be FOB destination, freight prepaid. Inside delivery is required. Inspection of goods and services will be conducted by a member of the University's athletic staff at point of delivery. Material not in accordance with specifications will be returned at the vendor's expense. The preferred vendor must be able to deliver all standard products (unless printed) to the University's athletic equipment room not more than ten days from the date of order. Vendors must provide a proof of screen printing or embroidery to the Salem State representative prior to printing. Vendors must use the Salem State Athletic font, colors and logos for all printed goods. The trademarked logo's cannot be altered, reproduced, or used outside of Salem State University.

8. Anticipated Compensation Structure

The proposal should include: significant discount off retail price and multiple options for uniforms, apparel and supplies; a product credit based on quantity purchased; an initial lump sum product credit at contract signing; and product credit for accomplishments such as teams entering an NCAA Tournament and achievement of Coach of the Year designation. Vendor must provide information regarding what fundraising support they would provide for the University's athletic department.

As additional quantities of uniforms, apparel or supplies may be needed over the course of a season, prices should hold firm within each year throughout the duration of the contract. A price adjustment will be considered one year after the initial signing of the contract and every year thereafter for the duration of the contract only if an escalation in cost to the vendor can be documented. The escalation in cost should be a component of the CPI or other documented evidence of increased costs to the vendor to provide the products.

During the term of the contract, each sport's new purchases (including coaches, staff and student-athletes) shall be for the awarded vendor's products where appropriate on a phased-in basis. Salem State University replaces uniforms for its sports over a four-year period with one fourth being purchased each year. The following sports teams are included within the scope of this RFP: Field Hockey, Men's Soccer, Women's Soccer, Men's Basketball, Women's Basketball, Volleyball, Men Ice Hockey, Women's Ice Hockey, Baseball, Softball, Men's Golf, Women's Lacrosse, Men's Lacrosse, Men's Tennis, and Women's Tennis. While the University does not typically provide footwear to student athletes, the awarded vendor may make a footwear offer available directly to students.

Bidders must be able to provide catalogs, websites, or other information that profiles the products offered and prices.

9. Request for a Single or Multiple Awards

This will be a single vendor award. Salem State University will reserve the right to purchase outside the contract from additional vendors for unique items.

The award of this RFP will be for Salem State University only. Other Massachusetts state institutions have the option to utilize this competitive bid to execute their own contract with the vendor selected. Salem State University will have no responsibility for other agency agreements or payments.

10. Selection Criteria

The University will select a vendor on the basis of information provided in response to this RFP and shall select the vendor that best serves the interests of the University. Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- a. Quality of products and services offered. We are looking for a name brand product with international recognition as a standard of quality.
- b. Pricing structure for the products and services outlined in the RFP.
- c. Bidder's experience with providing products and services to institutions of higher education similar in size and nature to Salem State University.
- d. Quality of references from the bidder's existing customers, including but not limited to the quality of the product, the timeliness of services and production and the level of customer service provided to the University.
- e. Turnaround time to provide products and services outlined in this RFP.
- f. Value of product credits and fundraising support offered.
- g. Financial incentives offered

9. Instructions for Submittal

Submittals should include:

- a. A cover letter clearly addressing any concerns taken to the terms and conditions contained within this RFP.
- b. List of colleges or universities currently being supplied.
- c. Names and qualifications of officers and key personnel of bidder, including customer service representative to be assigned to the University's account.
- d. List of any subcontractors utilized.
- e. Completed Respondent Questionnaire.

SSU will select the bidder who in the judgment of the University offers the best value response to the goals and performance requirements outlined in the RFP. Award of this contract is expected to be made no later than thirty (30) calendar days after the proposal opening date.

The University reserves the right to reject any or all proposals if it is in the best interest of the Commonwealth to do so. The University reserves the right to cancel and terminate the contract with 30 days' written notice in the event that the services provided by the contractor prove to be unsatisfactory.

Proprietary names are used in this RFP for information purposes only and not to limit competition. If a bid is based on similar products, the bidder must provide full information in the proposal or in an attached letter establishing the equivalency of the proposed product to the quality standard required by the RFP. The University reserves the right to accept the proposal deemed best for Salem State University.

10. Contract Termination

The contract shall terminate on the date specified in the contract, unless this date is properly amended in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations prior to this date, or unless terminated or suspended under this section upon prior written notice to the vendor. The University may terminate a contract without cause and without penalty; it may also terminate or suspend the contract if the vendor breaches any material term or condition or fails to perform or fulfill any material obligation required by the contract, or in the event of an elimination of an appropriation or availability of sufficient funds for the purposes of the contract, or in the event of an unforeseen public emergency mandating immediate department action. Upon immediate notification to the other party, neither the University nor the vendor shall be deemed to be in breach for failure or delay in performance due to the acts of God or other causes factually beyond their control and without their fault or negligence. Subcontractor failure to perform or price increases due to market fluctuation or product availability will not be deemed beyond the vendor's control.

Any notice shall be deemed delivered and received when submitted in writing in person or when delivered by any other appropriate method evidencing actual receipt by the University or the vendor. Any written notice of termination or suspension delivered to the vendor shall state the effective date and period of the notice, the reasons for the termination or suspension, if applicable, any alleged breach or failure to perform, a reasonable period to cure any alleged breach or failure to perform, if applicable, and any instructions or restrictions concerning allowable activities, costs or expenditures by the vendor during the notice period.

11. Inquiries

Bidders must submit any questions or requests for clarification regarding this RFP in writing by no later than 12:00pm EST on Monday, October 13, 2025, via email to rmos@saemstate.edu

Inquiries, questions or requests for clarification may be addressed to:

Reynaldo Ramos
Assistant Vice President, Purchasing & Auxiliary Services
Salem State University
352 Lafayette Street
Salem, MA 01970
rmos@saemstate.edu

Bidders are prohibited from communicating directly with any employee of the procuring department or any member of the University regarding this RFP except as specified in this RFP, and no other individual University employee or representative is authorized to provide any information or respond to any question or inquiry concerning this RFP. Bidders may contact the contact person using the information provided.

12. Confidentiality

From the date of issuance of the RFB until the opening date, the Bidder must not make available or discuss its proposal, or any part thereof, with any employee or agent of the University. The Bidder is hereby warned that any part of its proposal or any other material marked as confidential, proprietary, or trade secret, can only be protected to the extent permitted by Commonwealth of Massachusetts laws.

13. Massachusetts Public Records Law

Access to University records is made in accordance with the Massachusetts Public Records Law, M.G.L. c. 66, s. 10. All Responses received are subject to M.G.L. c. 4, s. 7, ss. 26, and M.G.L. c. 66, s. 10 regarding public access to such documents. Statements or endorsements inconsistent with those statutes will be disregarded. The University will withhold the Responses or sections of Responses until such time that they have been opened. The University will make available the documents within those Responses only upon the finalization of those records.

14. Standard Contract

The selected vendor will be required to sign a Commonwealth of Massachusetts Standard Contract and T&Cs (Attachment A). All terms of the Massachusetts Standard Contract shall apply, whether they are reflected in this RFP or not. In instances where there is inconsistency between the Massachusetts Standard Contract and the specifications of this RFP, the Massachusetts Standard Contract shall prevail.

Salem State University reserves the right to waive informalities and to reject any and all bids; or to accept the bid deemed best overall value. Any objections to the above conditions must be clearly indicated in the bid.

15. Respondent Questionnaire

The respondent recognizes that in selecting a provider of the requested services and items, Salem State University will rely on the answers provided in response to this section. Accordingly, respondent warrants to the best of its knowledge that all responses are true, correct and complete. Salem State University reserves the right to confirm the information provided.

- a. Company profile
 - Number of years in business.
 - Type of operation: Individual, partnership, corporation, government
 - Number of employees.
 - Annual sales volume.
 - Are you a minority, women-owned or small business?
 - Is your company currently in default on any loan agreement or financing agreement with any bank, financial institution, or other entity?
 - Provide a customer reference list of at least (5) references for higher education institutions, preferably similar in size and nature to SSU, for whom vendor has provided products and services similar to those indicated in the RFP. For each reference please include the following information:
 - Name of customer
 - Customer contact information
 - Date of work performed and length of business relationship
 - Brief description of work performed
- b. Warranty and ordering requirements
 - Describe the warranty provided on the products.
 - Do you have a minimum order requirement? If so, please describe?
 - Do you offer discounted terms if invoices are paid within 10 days? If so, please describe,
 - Do you accept credit cards?

c. Please check all brands that your company can supply:

Anaconda	_____		
Turfer	_____		
Badger	_____	Rawlings	_____
Adidas	_____	Holloway	_____
Charles River	_____	Majestic	_____
Warrior	_____	Wilson	_____
Nike	_____	Kaepa	_____
Dodger	_____	Gildan	_____
Spalding	_____		
Mizuno	_____	Champion	_____
Asics	_____	Hanes	_____
DeLong	_____	Jerzees	_____
Anvil	_____	Other (specify)	_____

16. Responses Required

Please provide on a separate document responses to the following questions:

- List any other labels/brands your company offers.
- Indicated proposed discount off catalog prices.
- Provide catalogs of products offered, including catalog prices. Complete the following product sample listing to illustrate the proposed pricing method. If an alternative approach to pricing is proposed, describe in detail on an attached sheet.

<u>Sample Item</u>	<u>Catalog Price</u>	<u>% Discount</u>	<u>Final Cost to SSU</u>
8 oz. Dri Fit T-shirt	_____	_____	_____
12 oz Grey Hooded Sweatshirt	_____	_____	_____
Navy Blue Baseball Game Jersey	_____	_____	_____
Orange Basketball Shorts	_____	_____	_____
White Soccer Shorts	_____	_____	_____
Orange Hockey Jersey	_____	_____	_____

- How often do prices change and on what basis?
- Indicate proposed amount of product credit based on quantity purchased.
- Indicate proposed amount of product credit available at contract signing.
- Indicate proposed amount of product credit for accomplishments such as teams entering the NCAA Tournament, Coach of the Year Awards, etc.
- Indicate what fundraising support you would provide to the university's athletic department regarding the purchase of athletic apparel.

- i. Indicate cost per item for screen printing. Describe any set-up charges or quantity discounts.

Cost per Item

One color: _____

Two color: _____

Three color: _____

- j. Indicate cost per item for embroidery (stitch count and cost). Describe any set-up charges or quantity discounts.

Stitch Count

Cost per Item

Stitch count: _____

Stitch count: _____

Stitch count: _____

- k. **Describe any other programs/incentives that your company offers.**

- l. Indicate the turnaround time to provide products and services outlined in this RFP from time of order to delivery to the university.
- m. Describe the shipping method or methods you propose to use to provide product to the university and the estimated time of delivery after order placement.
- n. Describe the adjustment process used to correct errors in shipments, defective goods, etc.
- o. Provide the name of the customer service representative who will be assigned to the university's account and describe the person's background and experience, the number of years with the company, similar accounts served and the person's email and direct telephone number.

17. Athletics Team Roster Sizes and Replacement Dates

Sport	Roster Size	Anticipated Uniform Replacement*
Men's Soccer	30	2027-28
Women's Soccer	30	2027-28
Field Hockey	30	2026-27
Volleyball	25	2028-29
Women's Tennis	12	2028-29
Men's Basketball	20	2026-27
Women's Basketball	20	2027-28
Men's Ice Hockey	32	2027-28
Women's Ice Hockey	32	2026-27
Golf	10	
Men's Lacrosse	37	2028-29
Women's Lacrosse	33	2028-29
Softball	25	2028-29
Baseball	32	2028-29
Men's Tennis	12	2028-29
Total	380	

* The anticipated uniform replacement schedule is subject to adjustment at the University's discretion based on budget or other factors

VENDOR IDENTIFICATION

COMPANY

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

TELEPHONE

EMAIL

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

NAME

TITLE

FEDERAL EMPLOYER'S ID CODE 9 DIGITS

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The Contractor agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, sex, color, religious creed, national origin, and/or ancestry. The contractor agrees to post in conspicuous places notices to be provided by the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination with respect to the Fair Employment Practice laws of the Commonwealth which are herein made part of this contract reference.