

DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

Facility Operations

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Facilities Services Partnership

Lincoln Park Campus • Loop Campus • Chicago, Illinois

RFQ Issue Date	July 6, 2026
SOQ Submission Deadline	July 27, 2026, 5:00 p.m. Central Time
Submission Format	Single PDF submitted by email
University Contact	Rich Wiltse, Vice President for Facility Operations, rwiltse@depaul.edu

I. SUMMARY

DePaul University (the University), through its Facility Operations department, invites qualified firms to submit a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) in response to this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for selected facilities services across the University's Lincoln Park and Loop Campuses in Chicago, Illinois.

The University's current agreements for select facilities services are set to expire June 30, 2027. Rather than treating that expiration as a routine rebid, the University is using this moment to evaluate its long-term facilities service strategy, identify the most qualified and mission-aligned partners, and seek relationships that create lasting institutional value and improve service delivery over time. The University is interested in partners who think beyond standard vendor contracting.

The University seeks to establish a long-term strategic partnership to provide a portfolio of services under the direction of Facility Operations management. Selected firms will be expected to provide appropriate supervision, account coordination, safety oversight, training, and internal administrative support for their own personnel and assigned work. The allocation of responsibilities between DePaul and any selected firm, including work order routing, prioritization, approval authority, procurement oversight, budget control, reporting, and field coordination, will be developed in later stages of the process and reflected in any resulting agreement.

The purpose of this RFQ is to identify firms with the experience, scale, senior-level interest, and strategic orientation to participate in confidential follow-up discussions with DePaul. This RFQ is the first step in a process the University anticipates may include interviews, additional information requests, a subsequent request for proposals, direct negotiations, or other follow-up discussions with selected firms. The University is not requesting priced bids at this stage.

Respondents should submit one consolidated SOQ and identify whether they wish to discuss one, more than one, or all three of the primary service areas described in Section IV, a combination of those areas, or a broader facilities-related partnership concept for later confidential discussion. Participation in this RFQ does not guarantee advancement, award of work, or compensation. No services shall commence until a contract is fully executed with DePaul University.

II. DEPAUL UNIVERSITY AND FACILITY OPERATIONS BACKGROUND

DePaul University is a private, nonprofit, Catholic university founded in 1898 by the Congregation of the Mission (the Vincentians) and named for the 17th-century French priest Saint Vincent de Paul. It is the nation's largest Catholic university by enrollment. The University is grounded in a Vincentian mission of service, with a special commitment to access, diversity, and the dignity of all persons. Firms that contract with the University are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with this mission.

The University operates two principal urban campuses in Chicago, located in the 60614 and 60604 Zip codes:

Lincoln Park Campus

Approximately 3 million gross square feet. This residential campus on Chicago's north side occupies approximately 36 acres and includes academic and administrative buildings, residence halls, athletic and recreational facilities, a library, a student center, and landscaped grounds.

Loop Campus

Approximately 1.7 million gross square feet. The downtown campus in Chicago's central business district primarily consists of commercial and high-rise academic and administrative buildings in a dense urban setting.

Facility Operations

Facility Operations ensures the safe, effective operation and maintenance of the University's buildings and campus grounds across both campuses, currently through a combination of in-house staff and contracted service providers. DePaul operates a full-service internal facilities organization. Internal Facility Operations leadership retains responsibility for department management, finance and budgeting, project and capital management, real estate management, and related administrative functions. This procurement is for defined outsourced service delivery and related support; it is not intended to result in a transfer of management authority.

Union Labor

While not every service performed on campus is subject to union labor requirements, current commercial union relationships relevant to this scope include the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 399 (stationary and operating engineers) and SEIU Local 1 (janitorial), among others. Selected firms may be asked in later stages to address their experience working in Chicago union environments, where applicable.

III. PARTNERSHIP VISION AND TERM

3.1 A Mission-Aligned Partnership

The University seeks a partner or partners that will work closely with the University, aligning their people, technology, capital, and expertise with the University's mission and institutional priorities. The University's Vincentian mission emphasizes service to others, the dignity of work and workers, care for the whole person, and responsible stewardship of resources. The University expects selected partners to share and advance these values, including through fair treatment of the workforce, support for surrounding communities, and a demonstrated commitment to sustainability and responsible stewardship of University assets.

The University invites responding firms to consider the full value they can bring to DePaul over the life of the partnership, including operational excellence, service quality, capital and technology support, workforce development, and institutional engagement.

3.2 Long-Term Intent

The University is interested in a long-term strategic partnership and may consider term structures that support continuity, investment, and long-term value for the University. Firms are invited to describe their experience with and philosophy regarding long-term service partnerships. The University has not predetermined the term structure, and detailed term

scenarios, commercial structures, and pricing may be addressed in later stages of the process with selected firms.

IV. SCOPE OF SERVICES

This section identifies the primary service areas for which DePaul is seeking qualifications. The RFQ is intentionally general at this stage. DePaul may provide additional information later as needed and appropriate, depending on the firms selected for further discussion and the direction of any subsequent RFP, negotiation, or other follow-up process.

DePaul reserves the right to modify the structure, scope, sequencing, or content of any later solicitation or negotiation process in the University's best interest.

4.1 Retained Management Structure

DePaul is not contemplating outsourcing its Facility Operations management functions in whole. DePaul will retain internal department leadership, finance and budgeting, project and capital management, real estate management, and related administrative functions. The procurement is for defined outsourced service delivery and related support.

4.2 Service Provider Supervision and Coordination

While DePaul will retain its internal Facility Operations management function, selected firms will be expected to provide appropriate supervision, account coordination, safety oversight, training, and internal administrative support for their own personnel and assigned work. The allocation of responsibilities between DePaul and any selected firm, including work order routing, prioritization, approval authority, procurement oversight, budget control, reporting, and field coordination, will be developed in later stages of the process and reflected in any resulting agreement.

4.3 Planon — Institutional System of Record

Planon is DePaul's institutional facilities system of record. Firms selected under this solicitation are expected to use Planon as the institutional platform of record for applicable facilities service activity, work-order documentation, service reporting, and related operational records. Firms should not propose a replacement CMMS, IWMS, work-order platform, custodial inspection system, asset system, or parallel reporting platform as a substitute for Planon.

Respondents should identify within their consolidated SOQ whether they wish to discuss one, more than one, or all three of the following primary service areas, or any combination of them.

4.4 Operating Engineering

Operating engineering services support the safe, reliable, and efficient operation of campus buildings and building systems. Respondents should describe their experience with building operations, preventive maintenance, corrective response, systems monitoring, service documentation, transition planning, and coordination with an owner-directed Facility Operations team.

DePaul's building systems environment includes Schneider Electric Continuum and Tridium Niagara building automation platforms. Respondents should describe relevant experience coordinating with owner-retained systems, specialty contractors, and capital project teams.

4.5 Custodial Services

Custodial services are central to the daily campus experience. Respondents should describe their experience with higher education, institutional, or comparable multi-building cleaning programs; routine and periodic cleaning; restroom, classroom, office, public area, and student-facing space cleaning; staffing; supervision; training; quality assurance; service documentation; reporting; and responsiveness to academic calendars and changing campus activity.

4.6 Landscaping and Grounds

The University seeks qualified firms to maintain the exterior campus environment at both campuses. Respondents should describe their experience with campus grounds care, landscaped areas, planting and seasonal landscape planning, exterior campus appearance, staffing, supervision, quality control, sustainable landscape practices, and coordination with owner-directed Facility Operations teams.

4.7 Broader Facilities Opportunities

DePaul operates a full-service internal facilities organization supported by a mix of in-house staff, outsourced service providers, and specialty contractors. The primary focus of this RFQ is the service areas identified above. However, the University is open to discussing whether selected firms could create greater overall value through a broader bundled service relationship or other facilities-related partnership structure in later stages of the process, after appropriate confidentiality protections are in place. If DePaul elects to pursue that approach, any broader service bundle would be developed through a later-stage scope development, bidding, negotiation, or other process determined by the University. Any such discussions would be exploratory and would not imply that any specific additional service or scope is included in this RFQ.

V. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AND INSTITUTIONAL INVESTMENT

Beyond service delivery, the University values relationships with companies that aspire to be long-term institutional partners. DePaul invites responding firms to consider the full range of value they can bring to the University over the life of the relationship, not only through excellent service delivery but through broader engagement with the University's mission and institutional priorities.

Respondents may describe whether their firm has the capacity or interest to discuss potential financial, philanthropic, sponsorship, or institutional value concepts as part of a broader long-term strategic partnership. This may include, at a high level, concepts related to capital investment, transition support, technology support, workforce development, student engagement, sponsorship, programmatic support, or other forms of institutional value. Any concepts described at this stage are non-binding; detailed terms would be developed in later stages with selected firms.

DePaul also values relationships with companies that support its most significant institutional initiatives across a wide range of areas, including academics, athletics, and philanthropy. Working together, DePaul and its partners develop programs that achieve shared objectives and deliver long-term value to the University and to the communities it serves throughout Chicagoland and beyond.

This broader partnership program is administered through the University's Office of Advancement, led by Katie Fraumann, Senior Vice President and Chief Advancement Officer, and supported by Fred Fried, Principal of Team Services, LLC. Respondents should include any high-level partnership, sponsorship, philanthropic, or institutional value concepts in their SOQ. DePaul may coordinate follow-up conversations with selected firms involving Facility Operations, Advancement, and Fred Fried in later stages of the process.

VI. QUALIFICATIONS AND ELIGIBILITY

This RFQ is intended to identify firms that may be appropriate for confidential follow-up discussions with DePaul. At this stage, the University is seeking general qualifications rather than a complete prequalification package.

Respondents should be able to demonstrate, through the materials requested in Section VII, that they have relevant experience, organizational scale, senior-level interest, and a credible basis for discussing one or more of the primary service areas or broader facilities-related partnership concepts with DePaul.

DePaul may request additional information from selected firms later in the process, including financial capacity, insurance, staffing, safety, labor relations, references, illustrative contract terms, and other due diligence matters.

VII. STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

Respondents should submit one consolidated, concise Statement of Qualifications organized in the order listed below. The purpose of the SOQ is to provide general company qualifications, identify the service area or areas the firm wishes to discuss, and support DePaul's determination of which firms should be invited into confidential follow-up discussions. Respondents should not submit separate SOQ packages for each service area.

Suggested response length: 25 pages or fewer, excluding the completed and signed DePaul NDA form.

1. **Cover Letter.** A brief signed letter introducing the firm and confirming interest in the RFQ.
2. **Company Overview.** Legal name, business structure, ownership, year established, headquarters, local office locations, size, and any parent, subsidiary, or affiliate relationships.
3. **Service Area / Partnership Interest.** A clear statement identifying the primary service area or areas the firm wishes to discuss: operating engineering, custodial services, landscaping and grounds services, any combination of those areas, or a broader facilities-related partnership concept for later confidential discussion.
4. **Senior Executive Contact.** Identification of one senior executive who will serve as the firm's primary senior-level contact for this RFQ and any related strategic partnership discussions. This individual should have sufficient organizational authority and visibility to align appropriate firm personnel for interviews or follow-up conversations, facilitate meaningful discussions beyond routine sales or account management, and support

decisions regarding strategic partnership opportunities, institutional value, and long-term relationship structure.

5. **Day-to-Day Contact.** Identification of the day-to-day contact who will coordinate RFQ communications, response materials, scheduling, and logistics on behalf of the firm. Firms may identify a separate working contact for administrative and coordination purposes.
6. **Brief Strategic Partnership Statement.** A concise statement, preferably no more than two to three pages, describing why the firm is interested in a long-term partnership with DePaul and how it might bring broader financial, philanthropic, sponsorship, or institutional value to the relationship. The statement may include illustrative examples of comparable partnership structures the firm has developed with other institutions or clients.
7. **Representative Client Examples.** Brief examples of comparable institutional, campus, higher education, healthcare, corporate, municipal, or similarly complex client relationships, particularly where the firm has supported long-term service delivery, multi-service coordination, or broader partnership value.
8. **Completed and Signed NDA.** The completed and signed DePaul NDA form (Appendix A) must be submitted with the Statement of Qualifications as part of the single PDF response package. DePaul may countersign the NDA for firms selected to participate in later-stage confidential discussions or information exchanges.

VIII. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND FORMAT

Format	Letter-size pages (8.5 x 11 inches), minimum 11-point font, sections labeled to match Section VII.
Page Limit	Suggested response length: 25 pages or fewer, excluding the completed and signed DePaul NDA form.
File Type	One electronic copy in PDF format.
Submit To	Rich Wiltse, Vice President for Facility Operations, DePaul University, rwiltse@depaul.edu
Deadline	July 27, 2026, 5:00 p.m. Central Time. Late submissions will not be considered.

Each SOQ should be complete and organized to match the requirements in Section VII. DePaul may, at its discretion, request clarification or additional information from respondents.

IX. PROCUREMENT PROCESS AND TIMELINE

9.1 Process Overview

This RFQ is the first step in a multi-stage procurement. The University may use responses to establish a shortlist of qualified firms, conduct interviews, and engage in a structured process to explore service structures, pricing frameworks, and agreement terms. The University has not predetermined the number of firms it will advance or the structure of later-stage solicitations.

9.2 Anticipated Timeline (Subject to Revision)

Phase	Anticipated Timing	Purpose
RFQ Issued	July 6, 2026	Begin qualifications process
SOQs Due	July 27, 2026, 5:00 p.m. CT	Receive qualifications
Initial Evaluation	August 2026	Review responses and determine shortlisted firms
Interviews with Shortlisted Firms	September 2026	Understand capabilities, approach, and partnership potential
Follow-Up, Data Exchange, and Scope Development	October – December 2026	Share relevant operational data with selected firms, determine service structures and assumptions, and develop next-stage documents
Pricing / RFP Process	January – February 2027	Request pricing from selected firms
Proposal Review and Negotiation	March – May 2027	Evaluate proposals, negotiate terms, and identify preferred firm or firms
Final Approval and Transition Planning	June 2027	Complete contract(s) and implementation planning
New / Renewed Service Arrangement Begins	July 1, 2027	Contract(s) commencement

The schedule is intended to allow time after interviews for data exchange, meaningful scope development, and later-stage negotiation.

9.3 Communications Protocol

All communications regarding this RFQ must be directed in writing to the University contact listed on the cover page. Respondents must not contact other University personnel regarding this RFQ; such contact may result in disqualification. Questions must be submitted in writing. Responses and any changes will be issued as written addenda, and only written addenda issued by the University contact are binding.

X. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND PROCESS

10.1 Qualifications-Based Evaluation

This is a qualifications-based evaluation. DePaul will review SOQs for general responsiveness and assess them against the following considerations:

Evaluation Considerations
Relevant institutional, campus, or comparable multi-building experience
Fit with one or more of the primary service areas
Strategic partnership potential and long-term orientation
Senior-level engagement and organizational authority
Understanding of DePaul's retained Facility Operations management structure
Ability to work within Planon as DePaul's institutional facilities system of record
Representative client experience
Potential institutional value, sponsorship, or philanthropic partnership
Overall fit with DePaul's operating environment, mission, and long-term needs

10.2 Shortlisting and Next Steps

Based on the evaluation, DePaul will identify firms for further discussion and may establish a shortlist by service area, service combination, broader partnership concept, or other structure determined by the University. The University may, at its discretion, request interviews, presentations, or additional information from any respondent. Selected firms will be invited to participate in subsequent stages of the process, which may include site visits, scope development, a request for proposals, or direct negotiation.

XI. TERMS, CONDITIONS, AND RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

11.1 Non-Binding Nature

This RFQ does not constitute an offer or a commitment to enter into a contract and does not obligate the University to issue a subsequent solicitation or to select any firm. No contract or commitment arises unless and until the University and a selected firm execute a definitive written agreement. The University may, at its sole discretion, amend, suspend, or cancel this RFQ at any time.

11.2 Reservation of Rights

The University reserves the right to accept or reject any or all SOQs; waive informalities or irregularities; request clarifications or additional information; shortlist any number of firms; modify the structure, scope, sequencing, or content of any later solicitation or negotiation process; select the structure it determines to be in its best interest; and take any other action it determines to be in its best interest. All costs associated with preparing and submitting an SOQ, participating in interviews or follow-up discussions, and preparing any subsequent materials are the sole responsibility of the respondent.

11.3 Treatment of Submissions

DePaul University is a private institution and is not subject to public records or freedom of information laws in the manner of public universities. The University will use reasonable efforts to treat materials clearly marked as confidential or proprietary accordingly, consistent with its evaluation needs; however, the University does not guarantee confidentiality. SOQs become the property of the University upon submission and may be retained and used for evaluation and procurement purposes.

11.4 No Guarantee of Volume or Value

Nothing in this RFQ guarantees any specific scope, volume, revenue, or value to any firm, and any estimates provided by the University are for planning purposes only.

XII. SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

Each SOQ submitted in response to this RFQ should include the following items:

1. Signed cover letter.
2. Company overview.
3. Service area/partnership interest statement.
4. Senior executive contact: name, title, and contact information.
5. Day-to-day contact: name, title, and contact information.
6. Brief strategic partnership statement.
7. Representative client examples.
8. Completed and signed DePaul NDA form.

End of Request for Qualifications Instructions

APPENDIX A: NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT FORM

A copy of DePaul's standard Non-Disclosure Agreement form is included on the following pages as Appendix A to this RFQ. Each respondent should complete and sign the NDA and include it with their SOQ response. DePaul may countersign the NDA for firms selected to participate in later-stage confidential discussions or information exchanges. DePaul does not intend to provide detailed confidential University information to any respondent unless and until an NDA has been fully executed by both parties.

NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

This Non-Disclosure Agreement (“Agreement”) is made between (“Vendor”) and DePaul University, an Illinois not-for-profit corporation (“DePaul”) and is effective as of the latest date signed below (“Effective Date”).

- 1) **Purpose.** The parties may, but are not required to, disclose or receive Confidential Information for the purposes of evaluating the other party’s products or services or exploring potential vendor, customer, strategic, or other business relationship(s) and, if applicable, performing those business relationship(s) in accordance with any separate agreement signed by both parties (the “Purpose”).
- 2) **Definitions.** “Confidential Information” means all information disclosed by or on behalf of either party (“Disclosing Party”) to the other party (“Receiving Party”) that is marked as confidential or proprietary or that by its nature or context constitutes information that a reasonable business person would treat as proprietary, confidential, or private, even if not so marked. Confidential Information includes, but is not limited to, a party’s financial, business, technical, marketing, sales, customer, product, pricing, strategy, student, personnel, software, systems, methods, processes, practices, services, intellectual property, trade secrets, data, contract terms or other business information. “Affiliate” means any person or entity directly or indirectly controlled by, controlling or under common control of a party.
- 3) **Exclusions.** Confidential Information does not include information which (a) is or becomes generally known through no fault of the Receiving Party; (b) is known to the Receiving Party at the time of disclosure, as evidenced by its records; (c) is hereafter furnished to the Receiving Party by a third party as a matter of right and without restriction on disclosure; or (d) is independently developed by the Receiving Party without any breach of this Agreement.
- 4) **Use, Disclosure, and Protection.** The Receiving Party and its employees, Affiliates, agents and contractors shall (a) use the Confidential Information only for the Purpose; (b) disclose the Confidential Information only to its employees, Affiliates, agents and contractors who have a need to know to accomplish the Purpose; (c) use the same standard of care to protect the Disclosing Party’s Confidential Information as the Receiving Party uses to protect its own similar confidential or proprietary information, but not less than reasonable care appropriate to the type of information; and (d) reproduce the Disclosing Party’s confidentiality or proprietary notices, legends or markings on all copies or extracts of Confidential Information. If required to disclose any Confidential Information by law or court order, the Receiving Party will promptly notify the Disclosing Party (unless prohibited by law) so that the Disclosing Party may seek protective measures. The Receiving Party is responsible for compliance with this Agreement by its employees, Affiliates, agents and contractors.
- 5) **Term, Survival, Return or Destruction.** This Agreement will remain in full force and effect for three years after the Purpose has concluded. Upon request of the Disclosing Party and at the conclusion of the Purpose, the Receiving Party shall promptly return or destroy all Confidential Information received from the Disclosing Party, including copies. Should the Receiving Party choose to destroy such Confidential Information, it must certify its destruction in writing at the request of the Disclosing Party.

- 6) **No License or Further Obligations.** No commitment, contract, exclusivity or obligation for any business dealings or relationship is created under this Agreement. Each party may procure, market, or independently develop similar products or services or pursue discussions or business relationships with others, provided it does not violate this Agreement. The Disclosing Party retains all right, title and interest to its Confidential Information. No patent, copyright, trademark or other proprietary right or license is granted or implied under this Agreement. Neither party will use the other party's name or marks in any press release, advertisement, promotion, speech or publicity without the other party's prior written consent. The relationship between the parties shall, at all times, remain that of an independent contractor.
- 7) **Legal Authority.** Vendor represents and warrants that it has the legal authority to enter into this Agreement and that it has taken all actions required by its procedures, bylaws, and/or applicable law to execute this contract and to bind the Vendor to its terms. The person executing this Agreement on behalf of the Vendor warrants that he or she has full authorization to do so.
- 8) **Assignment.** Neither party may assign, sublicense or otherwise transfer or delegate any right or obligation in this Agreement without the written consent of the other party.
- 9) **No Waiver.** No failure or delay by either party in exercising any right, power or remedy will operate as a waiver of such right, power or remedy, and no waiver will be effective unless it is in writing and signed by the party to be charged thereby.
- 10) **Severability.** If any term, clause or provision of this Agreement is held to be illegal, invalid or unenforceable, or the application thereof to any person or circumstance shall to any extent be illegal, invalid or unenforceable under present or future laws effective during the term hereof or of any provisions hereof which survive termination, then and in any such event, it is the express intention of the parties that the remainder of this Agreement, or the application of such term, clause or provision other than to those as to which it is held illegal, invalid or unenforceable, shall not be affected thereby, and each term, clause or provision of this Agreement and the application thereof shall be legal, valid and enforceable to the fullest extent permitted by law.
- 11) **Governing Law.** This Agreement shall be governed in all respects by the laws of the State of Illinois. The parties agree to use the courts of the State of Illinois for jurisdiction and Cook County, Illinois for venue to resolve any disputes between the parties arising out of this Agreement. Each party agrees that any violation of this Agreement will cause irreparable injury to the other party, entitling the other party to injunctive relief, specific performance, as well as such further relief as may be granted by an appropriate court.
- 12) **Modifications and Final Agreement.** No revision or modification hereof shall be effective unless it is in writing and signed by both parties. This Agreement constitutes the entire and complete agreement between DePaul and Vendor with respect to the subject engagement and supersedes all other oral and written representation, understanding or agreements relating to the subject engagement.
- 13) **Form of Signature.** This Agreement may be executed by the parties manually or by PDF and in one or more counterparts, each of which will be deemed to be an original, and all of which, when taken together, shall constitute one and the same instrument. Any copy of this Agreement bearing a signature of a party to this Agreement and sent by PDF to any other party or parties shall be deemed a manually executed original of this Agreement and is sufficient to bind such signing party.

AGREED TO AND ACCEPTED:

FOR VENDOR

Signature

Print or type name

Title

Date

Main Address:

Remit to Address: ☐ Same as **MAIN ADDRESS**

Phone number

Email

FOR DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

Signature

Print or type name

Title

Date