



The Golden L.E.A.F. (Long-term Economic Advancement Foundation), Inc. ("Golden LEAF" or the "Foundation") is requesting proposals from qualified IT service providers to provide managed IT services for the organization.

Questions regarding this RFP should be submitted using the form available on the website at: <https://goldenleaf.org/rfp/it-services/>. The primary contact for questions related to this Request for Proposals ("RFP") is Caty Gray Urquhart, Golden LEAF Operations Manager. Golden LEAF may not respond to all questions submitted but, if Golden LEAF does reply, it may make the question and Golden LEAF's response available to other potential respondents and the public.

Proposals must be submitted via the form on the website at: <https://goldenleaf.org/rfp/it-services/>

Interested parties may sign up to receive updates regarding this RFP, including Golden LEAF's responses to questions submitted at: <https://goldenleaf.org/rfp/it-services/>

**RESPONSES DUE
12:00 PM EST
JULY 11, 2025**

About Golden LEAF

Golden LEAF's mission is to increase economic opportunity in North Carolina's rural, tobacco-dependent, and economically distressed communities through leadership in grantmaking, collaboration, innovation, and stewardship as an independent and perpetual foundation.

The Golden LEAF Foundation is a nonprofit organization established in 1999 to receive a portion of North Carolina's funding from the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement with cigarette manufacturers. For 25 years, Golden LEAF has worked to increase economic opportunity in North Carolina's rural and tobacco-dependent communities through leadership in grantmaking, collaboration, innovation, and stewardship as an independent and perpetual foundation.

Golden LEAF has provided lasting impact to tobacco-dependent, economically distressed, and rural areas of the state by helping create 68,000 jobs, more than \$780 million in new payrolls, and more than 98,000 workers trained or retrained for higher wages.

Governed by a board of directors appointed by leaders of NC's legislative and executive branches, Golden LEAF has focused on critical issues facing North Carolina communities including bringing jobs and building industry by providing resources to communities, awarding scholarships to local students and administering the state's relief efforts following natural disasters.

Golden LEAF is a public records organization. Please see the information at the end of this RFP for details.

For more information about Golden LEAF, please visit our website at www.goldenleaf.org.

IT Environment Overview

The Golden LEAF Foundation has approximately 30 employees who work hybrid schedules, utilizing both the office in Rocky Mount, NC and remote work environments. The Golden LEAF network is server-based on-site, and employees use Windows based laptop computers equipped with Microsoft software applications and have remote network access via VPN. If additional context about the IT Environment would inform a proposal, please submit a question at <https://goldenleaf.org/rfp/it-services/>. For security reasons, Golden LEAF may limit the information that it shares about the IT Environment.

Scope of Services

Golden LEAF is seeking proposals from experienced and qualified IT service providers that can efficiently manage IT services in the following categories:

1. Help Desk Support
2. New Laptop Setup & Support
3. Software Licensing & Management
4. Email System Management
5. Patch Management Services & Preventative Maintenance
6. System & Network Monitoring & Reporting
7. Strategic Planning for Technology
8. Remote Access/VPN
9. Remote Backup
10. Network Security
11. Identity and Access Management
12. Endpoint Protection
13. Data Encryption
14. Security & Awareness Training
15. Incident Response

Golden LEAF reserves the right to select one or more Respondents to perform some or all of the services or to reject all submissions.

Proposal Contents

The proposal should be presented clearly and concisely, address all requirements, be in the prescribed format, and submitted following the prescribed process. Please provide direct responses to the items outlined below and do not submit pre-prepared marketing materials unless they are directly responsive to this RFP.

Include the following in the proposal:

- a. Cover letter: An overview of the proposal, signed by an authorized representative of the Respondent.
- b. Proposal body addressing the items below:
 1. Overview & Experience
 - a. Describe the Respondent firm and its interest in providing the scope of services; include how long the organization has been in this business; size, structure, and office location(s). Include details regarding the number of employees that provide direct services to Golden LEAF and their qualifications and experience including the experience and qualifications of the account manager who would be assigned to the account.
 - b. If there are any services in the scope of services that the Respondent will not provide, identify those services.
 - c. What are key characteristics of the firm that differentiate it from others?

2. Cost:
 - a. Based on the Scope of Services listed above, propose an estimated cost for services; assume 25 hours of Help Desk Services monthly
 - b. Include itemized one-time, setup costs and ongoing charges
 - c. Explain your rate structure, e.g., hourly, monthly retainer, one time, etc.
 - d. List all services, features and functionalities included in the proposed pricing, highlighting any key features that differentiate your offering from competitors.
 - e. What contractual term do you propose for these services?
3. Transition & Onboarding:
 - a. What is your onboarding process for new clients, and what timeline can we expect for onboarding?
 - b. What Golden LEAF Foundation staff resources are necessary for the transition?
 - c. How will you ensure a smooth transition to your IT services platform?
4. Collaboration & Communication:
 - a. What is your process and response time for support requests?
 - b. Do you conduct business reviews with customers? Focus on the objectives, frequency and content of these reviews.
 - c. How do you provide updates, track progress and ensure our success? Explain the mechanisms in place for providing regular reports, updates on the IT environment and a forecast for upcoming changes.
 - d. Do you offer user or technical training for clients? If so, please describe.
5. Clients & References:
 - a. Share your annual customer retention rate. Discuss any strategies or practices your company employs to maintain high retention rates.
 - b. Provide at least three references that will be able to provide information to help Golden LEAF assess Respondent's qualifications and performance. Include the name and contact information for a person associated with each of the references who is familiar with Respondent's performance.

Evaluation Procedure and Criteria

Golden LEAF staff will review proposals and may request clarifications or additional information from Respondents. Following review of the written proposals, Golden LEAF will schedule preliminary interviews on **July 21, 22, and 23, 2025** and select finalists for remote presentations on **August 11 and/or 12, 2025**. Golden LEAF may include additional steps in the selection process. Golden LEAF expects to make the selection by **August 22, 2025**.

Golden LEAF will make the final selection based on the Respondent that will deliver the highest quality services at the best value. Key areas of evaluation will include relevant expertise and experience, quality of service and support, ability to provide the services included in the scope of services, and pricing. The selection will be based on information in the proposal and information gathered by Golden LEAF, including during the presentation process.

Golden LEAF may waive any irregularity in any proposal that it believes does not prejudice other Respondents. Respondents may submit revised proposals until the deadline for submission. Golden LEAF reserves the right to negotiate with any Respondent.

Submission

All submissions will be made by uploading a proposal with the required elements following instructions at: <https://goldenleaf.org/rfp/it-services/>

Respondents should separately label each component of the proposal. All components of the proposal must be combined into a single .pdf for submission.

Respondents should use a common font of no less than 10 pt. The maximum file size that can be submitted is 5MB.

Inquiries

Potential Respondents may submit any questions regarding the RFP by **NOON, June 26, 2025**. All questions must be in writing and submitted via the form at this link: <https://goldenleaf.org/rfp/it-services/>. Golden LEAF may not respond to all questions submitted but, if Golden LEAF does reply, it may make the question and Golden LEAF's response available to other potential Respondents and the public.

Interested parties may sign up to receive updates regarding this RFP, including Golden LEAF's responses to questions submitted, <https://goldenleaf.org/rfp/it-services/>

Key Dates & Times

Inquiries Due - June 26, 2025 at 12:00 PM

Responses Due - July 11, 2025 at 12:00 PM

Preliminary Interviews with by invitation - July 21, 22 & 23, 2025

Remote Presentations by invitation - August 12 & 13, 2025

Selection - August 22, 2025

Additional Information

1. All costs incurred in responding to this RFP are the responsibility of the Respondent and will not be reimbursed by Golden LEAF.
2. Golden LEAF is subject to the North Carolina General Statutes regarding public records and open meetings. North Carolina's public records laws open to public inspection most of the records, including emails and other electronic communications, in Golden LEAF's possession. Information regarding certain exceptions to

required disclosure of public records applicable to Golden LEAF is [available at this link](#). To the extent consistent with the Public Records Act, Golden LEAF will withhold proprietary or confidential information that constitutes a trade secret under N.C.G.S. § 132-1.2 and the North Carolina Trade Secrets Protection Act, N.C.G.S. § 66-152, et seq. Respondent should clearly label each portion of the proposal containing a trade secret, as defined in N.C.G.S. § 132-1.2 and N.C.G.S. § 66-152, et seq. with the word "Proprietary" or "Confidential." To the extent practical, such information should be segregated from other sections of the proposal. If such designations are challenged, Respondent will be responsible for establishing to requestors that any information labeled as "Proprietary" or "Confidential" constitutes a trade secret under applicable law.

3. Golden LEAF reserves the right to postpone the RFP due date for any reason, including its own convenience, to cancel this RFP, to decline to select any of the Respondents to the RFP, and/or to re-issue this RFP.