ASSOCIATED STUDENTS, INCORPORATED AT
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY
San Luis Obispo

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

INDEPENDENT AUDIT SERVICE

1. INTRODUCTION

Associated Students, Incorporated (ASI) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) auxiliary organization of California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly), with operations at both the San Luis Obispo and Maritime campuses. Effective July 1, 2026, the Associated Students of the California Maritime Academy (ASCMA) integrated into ASI as part of the broader Cal Poly campus integration. ASI operates a variety of student programs, services, and facilities, including the University Union, Recreation Center, Sports Complex, and Children's Center at the San Luis Obispo campus, as well as the Physical Education and Aquatics Center (PEAC), Morrow Cove, and other recreational facilities at the Maritime campus. ASI also provides student government and club financial services supporting students across both campuses.

The total operating budget for the 2026-27 fiscal year is approximately $25.8M. ASI operates the campus student union, recreation center, sports complex and childcare center. When fully staffed, ASI employs approximately eighty (80) full-time staff and six hundred (660) part-time student and intermittent staff.

Cal Poly students are assessed separate ASI and University Union fees on a semester basis. Use of the fee revenue from each source is accounted for separately. Monthly financial statements are produced for both entities. ASI contracts with the Cal Poly Corporation for business services processing (AP, AR, Payroll processing, etc.). The Corporation provides "back-end" processing and technological support, but ASI Management is completely responsible for day-to-day operational oversight, maintenance of internal controls, and contracting for the annual independent audit.

The intended audience of the Audit Report is the student Board of Directors (a representative governing board elected by the student body), ASI Management, the Cal Poly Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance, the University President, and the California State University.

2. PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

Through this Request for Proposal (RFP), the Associated Students, Incorporated is seeking external financial statement audit services from one of the California State University's list of Approved External Auditors (Qualified Firm). Auditing services will begin with the 2026-27 fiscal year (ending June 30th).

ASI invites experienced and qualified, independent certified public accountants licensed in the State of California to submit proposals to perform specific financial and compliance auditing functions in accordance with the following specifications listed below.

3. RFP SCHEDULE

RFP Issuance Date:	November 19, 2026
Deadline for Questions:	December 4, 2026
Addendum Issued (if questions are received):	December 11, 2026 (estimated)
Proposal Due Date:	December 16, 2026; 2:00 PM (PT)
Finalist Interviews (if necessary):	Week of January 11, 2027 (estimated)
Notice of Intent to Award:	January 15, 2027 (estimated)

The RFP Schedule (above) may be modified at the option of ASI; however, should the deadline for questions/clarifications or receipt of proposals change, an Addendum to the RFP will be provided.

4. SCOPE OF SERVICE

4.1. EXAMINATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The audit shall encompass all Associated Students, Inc. (ASI) operations, funds, and financial activities across both the San Luis Obispo and Maritime campuses, including activities integrated into ASI effective July 1, 2026.

The audit shall be conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS), as established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA). The financial statements shall be prepared in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP), as established by the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB).

The examination shall also comply with applicable California laws, CSU executive orders, and audit and reporting requirements established by the University and CSU Chancellor's Office.

4.2. REQUIRED REPORTS

4.2.1. Financial Statements - The selected firm shall perform an annual independent audit of ASI's financial statements and prepare the financial statements, accompanying notes, supplementary information, and related independent auditor's report in accordance with applicable professional standards and reporting requirements established by ASI, Cal Poly, and the CSU.

ASI management shall retain responsibility for the financial statements and underlying financial records, consistent with applicable auditor independence requirements.

The auditor shall provide electronic copies of the completed reports and any additional copies requested by ASI.

4.2.2. Management Letter - A management letter will be required which may include findings, observations, opinions, comments, or recommendations with regard to systems of internal control, accounting systems, compliance with laws, rules and regulations, or any other material information that is discovered during the course of the audit.

Findings and recommendations shall be limited to matters arising from the normal course of the audit and shall not constitute a separate operational or internal control consulting engagement.

4.2.3. Supplementary Information - The auditor shall prepare or examine, as applicable, supplementary financial schedules and reports required by ASI, Cal Poly, and the CSU Chancellor's Office.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Supplementary financial information required for CSU systemwide financial reporting.
- Financial schedules and information related to ASI's Children's Center.
- Other schedules or disclosures required under applicable CSU auxiliary organization reporting requirements.

Samples of prior-year audited financial statements and supplementary reports can be viewed within the bid package for reference.

4.2.4. Children's Center Financial Statements and Compliance Reporting - The selected firm shall perform an annual audit of ASI's Children's Center financial statements and prepare a separate report in accordance with applicable generally accepted auditing standards (GAAS), Government Auditing Standards, and the reporting requirements established by the California Departments of Education and Social Services.

The report shall include the Children's Center financial statements and accompanying notes, independent auditor's report, required supplemental financial schedules, audited attendance and fiscal reporting forms, and applicable internal control and compliance reporting, including schedules of findings and questioned costs.

The audit shall comply with the applicable Audit Guide for Audits of Child Development and Nutrition Programs and any additional reporting requirements established by the relevant state agencies.

All services associated with the Children's Center audit and preparation of the separate report shall be included in the firm's proposed all-inclusive annual audit fee.

The selected firm shall coordinate the audit schedule and required reporting deadlines with ASI management.

Samples of prior-year report can be viewed within the bid package for reference.

4.2.5. Federal Compliance Audit - If applicable, the selected firm shall perform any required federal compliance audit in accordance with the Single Audit Act, Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F), and other applicable federal requirements.

The need for a federal Single Audit will be determined annually based on ASI's federal expenditures and applicable audit thresholds.

Proposals should identify the firm's experience performing Single Audits and its proposed approach and fees should such an audit be required.

4.3. SCHEDULE OF REPORTS

The auditor shall submit the completed audited financial statements, supplementary schedules, and management letter by the deadline established annually by the CSU system or within 65 days following the June 30 fiscal year-end, whichever occurs first.

The selected firm shall coordinate with ASI management to establish an annual audit schedule that accommodates required fieldwork, financial reporting deadlines, management review, and presentation of audit results.

The firm shall promptly communicate any circumstances that could affect the established audit schedule or reporting deadlines.

4.4. MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Meetings may be conducted in person or virtually, as determined by ASI. Proposals shall include all costs associated with required meetings and presentations, regardless of format.

4.4.1. Pre-Audit Conference - A pre-audit conference with ASI management staff will be held to set the audit schedule and review the scope of the audit. The auditor may commence examination on June l of the year being audited or at an earlier date mutually agreeable with ASI.

4.4.2. Audit Entrance Meeting - A formal audit entrance meeting with ASI officers, management, and university officials will be held after the pre-audit conference. The schedule and the scope of the audit will be reviewed at this meeting.

4.4.3. Exit Meeting - A formal audit exit meeting will be held with ASI officers, management, and university officials to report the audit results, findings, and recommendations. Draft copies of the audit report and management letter will be provided at this meeting

4.4.4. Board of Directors Workshop - An informal Board of Directors workshop will be held to review the purpose and scope of the audit. The workshop is intended to be an educational session to assist board members in understanding the audit process. Additionally, results, findings and recommendations will be shared. The workshop will be held no later than October 15th for each year the auditor is under contract with ASI.

4.4.5. Board of Directors Meeting – If requested, the final audit presentation will be made, in person, at a regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting no later than the established timelines set forth by ASI each year that the auditor is under contract with ASI; typically, early September.

4.5. TAX PREPARATION AND OTHER SPECIAL SERVICES

ASI is a nonprofit organization required to file applicable federal and state tax returns and regulatory reports.

The selected firm shall provide tax preparation services for required filings with the Internal Revenue Service, California Franchise Tax Board, and California Attorney General's Registry of Charities and Fundraisers, as applicable.

Proposals shall describe the firm's experience providing tax services to nonprofit organizations and CSU auxiliaries and identify the proposed fees for these services separately from the annual financial statement audit.

The selected firm shall also identify its availability to provide tax-related guidance regarding matters arising during the normal course of ASI operations, subject to applicable auditor independence requirements.

4.6. ADDITIONAL SERVICES SOUGHT

4.6.1. Extraordinary Events - Proposals shall identify the firm's fee structure for extraordinary circumstances requiring additional audit procedures or services beyond the agreed-upon engagement scope, including applicable hourly rates by staff classification.

If extraordinary circumstances arise during the engagement, the selected firm shall notify ASI management before performing additional work. The notification shall include a description of the circumstances, proposed services, estimated fees, and any anticipated impact on the audit schedule. All additional services shall require prior authorization by ASI.

4.6.2. Other General Accounting Matters - During the normal course of operations, ASI may periodically request professional guidance regarding accounting, financial reporting, or regulatory matters that fall outside the annual audit engagement.

Proposals shall describe the firm's availability to provide such services, including technical accounting consultations, and provide the applicable hourly fee schedule.

Any additional services shall be subject to applicable professional independence requirements and separately authorized by ASI.

5. TERM

The initial audit term will cover the audits of fiscal years 2026-27 through 2028-29 with an option to renew for two additional fiscal years at the sole discretion of the auxiliary governing board.

Continued engagement of the ASI audit beyond the first fiscal year engagement is based on satisfactory performance of services as determined by ASI, and will be subject to review and adjustment of audit scope as needed to comply with requirements established by the University CFO or designee. ASI reserves the sole option to terminate any agreement if the prior years' service is deemed unacceptable.

The audit firm selected shall commit the terms and conditions of the mutually approved audit engagement to a formal Letter of Engagement to be executed by the firm and ASI no later than April 9, 2027.

6. METHOD AND BASE OF COMPENSATION

Proposals shall provide an all-inclusive, not-to-exceed annual fee for each fiscal year of the proposed engagement. The annual audit fee shall include all services outlined in Section 4, including:

- Audit of ASI's organizational financial statements, including all ASI and University Union funds and operations across both campuses.
- Preparation of the audited financial statements, accompanying notes, and required supplementary schedules.
- Separate Children's Center financial statement audit, including required state compliance reporting and preparation of the related audit report.
- Preparation of management letters and other required audit deliverables.
- Attendance at all required meetings and presentations, whether conducted in person or virtually.
- All associated administrative, travel, and out-of-pocket expenses.

Proposals shall separately identify the proposed fees for the following services:

- Tax Preparation: Not-to-exceed fees for required federal and state tax filings for each fiscal year of the engagement.
- Federal Single Audit: Proposed fees should a federal Single Audit be required in any year of the engagement.
- Extraordinary or Additional Services: Hourly rates by staff classification for services outside the standard engagement scope, including technical accounting consultations and extraordinary audit procedures.

Proposals shall clearly identify the annual fees for each year of the engagement, including any anticipated increases and the basis for those adjustments.

Any services or fees beyond the agreed-upon engagement scope must be approved by ASI in advance.

7. INSTRUCTIONS TO THE BIDDER

Proposals shall be submitted electronically via email to Heather Zacker, Director – Finance, at hzacker@calpoly.edu, no later than December 16, 2026; 2:00 PM (PT).

Proposals must be submitted in PDF format, including all required documentation and attachments. The email subject line should read "ASI Independent Audit Services RFP – [Firm Name]."

It shall be the sole responsibility of the bidder to ensure that the proposal is received by the established deadline. Proposals received after the deadline may not be considered.

Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing via email to hzacker@calpoly.edu no later than December 4, 2026.

ASI may modify this RFP, its key dates, or attachments prior to the proposal submission deadline through issuance of a written addendum posted on the ASI website at https://www.asi.calpoly.edu/discover-asi/public-documents/.

Proposals shall follow the format and include all information specified in this RFP. Proposals that do not meet the stated requirements may be deemed nonresponsive. All proposals must be signed by an individual authorized to bind the proposing firm.

Any information considered proprietary or confidential must be clearly identified as such within the proposal.

ASI reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part; waive minor irregularities; withhold an award; or accept the proposal determined to be in ASI's best interest. ASI may retain proposals for up to 120 days following the submission deadline.

All costs incurred in preparing and submitting proposals shall be the sole responsibility of the bidder and will not be reimbursed by ASI.

8. PROPOSAL CONTENT AND FORMAT

Proposals shall include the following information listed below. Failure to provide the required information may result in a proposal being deemed nonresponsive and disqualified from further consideration.

8.1. Affirmative Statements - Provide affirmative statements confirming that:

- All elements of the RFP have been read and understood.
- The firm understands the scope of services and requirements outlined in this RFP.
- Individual signing and submitting the proposal is authorized to extend the proposal and contractually bind the proposing firm. Provide individual's name and title.

8.2. Audit Approach and Methodology - Describe the firm's proposed audit approach, including key procedures, processes, and methodologies. Address the firm's approach to auditing a nonprofit CSU auxiliary organization operating across multiple campuses, including consideration of internal controls, financial systems, and applicable CSU reporting requirements.

8.3. Proposed Audit Timeline - Provide a proposed annual audit timeline, including anticipated planning activities, fieldwork dates, draft report delivery, and final completion dates. The timeline should demonstrate the firm's ability to meet ASI's established reporting deadlines.

8.4. Assigned Personnel and Qualifications - Identify the key personnel who will be assigned to the engagement, including the engagement partner, manager, and other principal staff. Provide biographies outlining relevant experience in:

- Auditing nonprofit organizations reporting under FASB standards.
- Auditing CSU auxiliary organizations or similar higher education entities.
- Performing audits subject to Government Auditing Standards and applicable state compliance requirements.
- Preparing nonprofit federal and state tax returns.

Describe the firm's approach to staffing continuity throughout the engagement.

8.5. Children's Center Audit Experience - Describe the firm's experience performing audits of childcare or child development programs, including familiarity with the California Departments of Education and Social Services audit and reporting requirements.

Address the firm's approach to preparing the separate Children's Center financial statements, supplemental schedules, attendance and fiscal reporting forms, and related compliance reports.

8.6. Peer Review - Provide a copy of the firm's most recent peer review report, any related letter of comments, and the firm's response to identified findings or recommendations, if applicable.

8.7. References - Provide three references from organizations for which the firm has performed comparable audit services. At least one reference must be from a CSU auxiliary organization, preferably one reporting under FASB standards.

For each reference, include the organization's name, campus (if applicable), primary contact name and title, telephone number, email address, and the period during which services were provided.

8.8. Proposed Fees - Provide a detailed fee proposal consistent with Section 6 – Method and Base of Compensation, including:

- All-inclusive, not-to-exceed annual audit fees for each year of the proposed engagement, including the separate Children's Center audit and all required meetings and presentations.
- Separate annual fees for federal and state tax preparation services.
- Proposed fees for a federal Single Audit, if required.
- Hourly rates by staff classification for extraordinary services and general accounting consultations.
- Any anticipated annual fee increases and the basis for those adjustments.

All proposed fees shall include applicable administrative, travel, and out-of-pocket expenses unless otherwise specifically identified.

9. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by an ASI evaluation committee. Firms with demonstrated experience auditing nonprofit organizations, CSU auxiliaries, and other higher education entities are encouraged to respond.

Responsive proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria, not listed in order of importance:

- **Quality and Completeness of Proposal:** Professionalism, clarity, responsiveness to RFP requirements, and attention to detail.
- **Audit Approach and Methodology:** Proposed audit procedures, understanding of ASI's organizational structure and operations across both campuses, ability to meet reporting deadlines, and approach to identifying and resolving audit issues.
- **Relevant Firm Experience:** Demonstrated experience auditing nonprofit organizations reporting under FASB standards, CSU auxiliaries, and programs subject to specialized state and federal reporting requirements, including childcare programs.
- **Qualifications of Assigned Personnel:** Experience and qualifications of the proposed engagement team, staffing continuity, and relevant technical expertise.
- **Peer Review:** Results of the firm's most recent peer review and any related findings or corrective actions.
- **Customer Service and Communication:** Responsiveness, accessibility, proactive communication, and quality of service, as demonstrated through references and the firm's proposed approach to client relationships.
- **Cost:** Competitiveness, transparency, and overall value of the proposed fees, including the annual audit, Children's Center reporting, tax preparation, and additional services.

ASI reserves the right to conduct interviews or request presentations from finalist firms as part of the evaluation process.

10. DOCUMENTS AND ATTACHMENTS

Below are links to the following information that could be helpful for proposal preparation.

10.1. The Associated Students, Inc. Fiscal Policy including policy statement on external audit engagement: https://www.asi.calpoly.edu/discover-asi/public-documents/forms-policies/asi-governing-documents-forms-policies/

10.2. The Associated Students, Inc. financial data including prior year audited financial statements and IRS form 990: https://www.asi.calpoly.edu/discover-asi/public-documents/forms-policies/financial-forms-policies/

10.3. ASI Mission Statement and Values: https://www.asi.calpoly.edu/discover-asi/about-asi/

10.4. ASI Organizational Chart: https://www.asi.calpoly.edu/discover-asi/public-documents/forms-policies/human-resources-forms-policies/#sts=ASI%20Organizational%20Chart

10.5. ASI Request for Proposals for Independent Audit Services, including Addendums (if necessary): https://www.asi.calpoly.edu/discover-asi/public-documents/forms-policies/asi-requests-for-proposals-forms-policies/