State of Nebraska

## REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FORM

RETURN TO:

Shane Rhian

Financial Services Director

Nebraska Department of Education

301 Centennial Mall South

PO Box 94987

Lincoln, NE 68509-4987

Phone: (402) 471-4313

Fax: (402) 742-1146

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| SOLICITATION NUMBER | RELEASE DATE |
| RFI NDE-GMS-2017 | June 9, 2017 |
| OPENING DATE AND TIME | PROCUREMENT CONTACT |
| July 28, 2017 2:00 p.m. Central Time | Shane Rhian |

This form is part of the specification package and must be signed in ink and returned, along with information documents, by the opening date and time specified.

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!

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| --- |
| SCOPE OF SERVICE |

The State of Nebraska, Department of Education, is issuing this Request for Information, RFI NDE-GMS-2017 for the purpose of gathering information to review the availability and functionality of web-based systems for State Education Agency (SEA) management of federal and state grant programs for local education agencies (LEAs).

Written questions are due no later than June 23, 2017, and should be submitted via e-mail to shane.rhian@nebraska.gov. Written questions may also be sent by facsimile to (402) 742-1146.

Sealed information must be received in the Department of Education on or before July 28, 2017, 2:00 p.m. Central Time, at which time information will be publicly opened.

Bidder should submit five (5) originals of the entire RFI response. RFI responses should be submitted by the information due date and time.

Sealed RFI response must be received by the date and time of RFI opening indicated above. No late information will be accepted.

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1. SCOPE OF THE REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

The State of Nebraska, Department of Education, is issuing this Request for Information, RFI NDE-GMS-2017 for the purpose of gathering information to review the availability and functionality of web-based systems for State Education Agency (SEA) management of federal and state grant programs for local education agencies (LEAs).

**ALL INFORMATION PERTINENT TO THIS REQUEST FOR INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND ON THE INTERNET AT:** www.education.ne.gov/gms2/index.html

* 1. SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

The State expects to adhere to the tentative procurement schedule shown below. It should be noted, however, that some dates are approximate and subject to change.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ACTIVITY** | | DATE/TIME |
| 1 | Release Request for Information | June 9, 2017 |
| 2 | Last day to submit written questions | June 23, 2017 |
| 3 | State responds to written questions through Request for Information “Addendum” and/or “Amendment” to be posted to the internet at:  www.education.ne.gov/gms2/index.html | July 7, 2017 |
| 4 | RFI Opening  Location: Department of Education  State Board Room  301 Centennial Mall South  Lincoln, NE 68509 | July 28, 2017  2:00 p.m.  Central Time |

1. RFI RESPONSE PROCEDURES
   1. OFFICE AND CONTACT PERSON

Responsibilities related to this Request for Information reside with the Nebraska Department of Education. The point of contact for the procurement is as follows:

Name: Shane Rhian

Agency: Nebraska Department of Education

Address: 301 Centennial Mall South

Lincoln, NE 68509

OR

Address: PO Box 94987

Lincoln, NE 68509-4987

Telephone: (402) 471-4313

Facsimile: (402) 742-1146

E-Mail: [shane.rhian](mailto:matpurc@notes.state.ne.us)@nebraska.gov

* 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

A subsequent Request for Proposal (RFP) may not be issued as a result of this RFI. There will not be a contract as a result of this RFI and the State is not liable for any cost incurred by vendors in replying to this RFI. If an RFP is issued, the information provided will assist the State of Nebraska in developing the Request for Proposal. This RFI does not obligate the State to reply to the RFI responses, to issue an RFP, or to include any RFI provisions or responses provided by vendors in any RFP.

* 1. COMMUNICATION WITH STATE STAFF

From the date the Request for Information is issued and until RFI opening (as shown in the Schedule of Events), contact regarding this RFI between potential vendors and individuals employed by the State is restricted to written communication with the staff designated above as the point of contact for this Request for Information.

The following exceptions to these restrictions are permitted:

* + 1. Written communication with the person(s) designated as the point(s) of contact for this Request for Information;
    2. Contacts made pursuant to any pre-existing contracts or obligations; and
    3. State-requested presentations, key personnel interviews, clarification sessions or discussions.

Violations of these conditions may be considered sufficient cause to reject a vendor’s response to the RFI. No individual member of the State, employee of the State, or member of the Interview Committee is empowered to make binding statements regarding this RFI. The State of Nebraska will issue any clarifications or opinions regarding this RFI in writing.

* 1. WRITTEN QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Any explanation desired by a vendor regarding the meaning or interpretation of any Request for Information provision should be submitted in writing to the “Agency” and clearly marked “RFI Number NDE-GMS-2017; Web-Based Grants Management Questions”. It is preferred that questions be sent via e-mail to [shane.rhian@nebraska.gov](mailto:shane.rhian@nebraska.gov). Questions may also be sent by facsimile to (402) 742-1146, but should include a cover sheet clearly indicating that the transmission is to the attention of Shane Rhian, showing the total number of pages transmitted, and clearly marked “RFI Number NDE-GMS-2017; Web-Based Grants Management Questions”.

It is recommended that Bidders submit questions sequentially numbered, include the RFI reference and page number using the following format.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Question Number | RFI Section Reference | RFI Page Number | Question |
|  |  |  |  |

Written answers will be provided through an addendum to be posted on the Internet at www.education.ne.gov/gms2/index.html on or before the date shown in the Schedule of Events.

* 1. ORAL INTERVIEWS/PRESENTATIONS AND/OR DEMONSTRATIONS

The Review Committee(s) may conclude that oral interviews/presentations and/or demonstrations are required. All vendors may not have an opportunity to interview/present and/or give demonstrations. The presentation process will allow the vendors to demonstrate their RFI offering, explaining and/or clarifying any unusual or significant elements related to their response.

* 1. SUBMISSION OF RESPONSE

The following describes the requirements related to the RFI submission, handling and review by the State.

To facilitate the response review process, five (5) originals of the entire RFI response should be submitted. RFI responses must be submitted by the RFI due date and time.

**A separate sheet must be provided that clearly states which sections have been submitted as proprietary or have copyrighted materials.**  RFI responses should reference the request for information number and be sent to the specified address. Please note that the address label should appear as specified on the face of each container. If a recipient phone number is required for delivery purposes, (402) 471-4313 should be used. The Request for Information number must be included in all correspondence.

* 1. PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

Data contained in the response and all documentation provided therein, become the property of the State of Nebraska and the data become public information upon opening the response. If the vendor wishes to have any information withheld from the public, such information must fall within the definition of proprietary information contained within Nebraska’s public record statutes. All proprietary information the vendor wishes the state to withhold must be submitted in a sealed package, which is separate from the remainder of the response. The separate package must be clearly marked PROPRIETARY on the outside of the package. Vendor may not mark their entire Request for Information as proprietary. Failure of the vendor to follow the instructions for submitting proprietary and copyrighted information may result in the information being viewed by other vendors and the public. Proprietary information is defined as trade secrets, academic and scientific research work which is in progress and unpublished, and other information which if released would give advantage to business competitors and serve no public purpose (see Neb. Rev. Stat. §84-712.05(3)). In accordance with Attorney General Opinions 92068 and 97033, vendors submitting information as proprietary may be required to prove specific, named competitor(s) who would be advantaged by release of the information and the specific advantage the competitor(s) would receive. Although every effort will be made to withhold information that is properly submitted as proprietary and meets the State’s definition of proprietary information, the State is under no obligation to maintain the confidentiality of proprietary information and accepts no liability for the release of such information.

* 1. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION OPENING

The sealed responses will be publicly opened and the responding entities announced on the date, time, and location shown in the Schedule of Events. Responses will be available for viewing by those present after the opening. Vendors may also contact the state to schedule an appointment for viewing RFI responses.

1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND SCOPE OF WORK

The bidder should provide the following information in response to this Request for Information.

* 1. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The Nebraska Department of Education (Department) has contracted for a web-based grants management system provided by MTW Solutions, LLC since 2004. The Department is requesting information regarding current availability of similar systems in the marketplace. This information will be used to review whether the Department should undertake a new procurement action and issue a Request For Proposals (RFP) for a new or updated grants management system.

The current system used by the Department manages the application, review, award, amendment, and payment processes for 3,611 total applications for 24 separate grant programs, including 13 grant programs combined into two consolidated applications, totaling almost $175 million of state and federal funds annually. The current annual contract amount is $227,000 and includes licensing, change request modifications, hourly support, site hosting, and data warehouse.

* 1. INFORMATION REQUESTED

1. Describe the entire life cycle of both a competitive and formula grant program within your system.

2. Describe the process of developing and implementing a new grant program within your system.

3. Describe the process of updating an existing grant program within your system.

4. Describe how the SEA would authorize access of LEAs to certain programs.

5. Describe the process of LEAs completing and submitting an application for both competitive and formula grant programs within your system.

6. Describe the process of SEA reviewing and awarding an application for both competitive and formula grant programs within you system. This should also describe how an application is returned to the LEA for changes and then resubmitted.

7. Describe the process of LEAs amending their applications based on adjustments to their allocations or budgets.

8. Describe how your system handles grant funds that can be carried over to a subsequent grant period.

9. Describe how your system handles transfers of funds between grant programs.

10. Describe how your system handles multiple LEAs pooling their funds into a consortium with a single fiscal agent.

11. Describe how the payment process works in your system.

12. Describe how the grant program closeout process works.

13. Describe any grant monitoring or audit tools that come standard with your system.

14. Describe the communications tools between the SEA and LEAs in your system.

15. Describe the reports that come standard with your system and the ability to generate custom reports.

16. Describe how user security works in your system to ensure appropriate access by users to SEA, LEA, and grant program level information.

17. Describe the default user roles for SEA staff, LEA staff, and other roles as provided by your system.

18. Describe how SEAs add and maintain LEAs in your system.

19. Describe how you would provide a vendor-hosted solution for the system.

20. Describe how you work with your current clients on resolving issues with your system at the SEA and LEA level.

21. Provide a description of your organization and its experience in providing grants management solutions for SEAs.

22. Provide a list of SEAs that you currently work with, how long you have worked with them, and example of programs (i.e. NCLB/ESSA, IDEA, ect.).

# Form AVendor Contact Sheet

Request for Information Number NDE-GMS-2017

Form A should be completed and submitted with each response to this solicitation document. This is intended to provide the State with information on the vendor’s name and address, and the specific persons who are responsible for preparation of the vendor’s response.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Preparation of Response Contact Information | |
| Vendor Name: |  |
| Vendor Address: |  |
| Contact Person & Title: |  |
| E-mail Address: |  |
| Telephone Number (Office): |  |
| Telephone Number (Cellular): |  |
| Fax Number: |  |

Each vendor shall also designate a specific contact person who will be responsible for responding to the State if any clarifications of the vendor’s response should become necessary. This will also be the person who the State contacts to set up a presentation/demonstration, if required.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Communication with the State Contact Information | |
| Vendor Name: |  |
| Vendor Address: |  |
| Contact Person & Title: |  |
| E-mail Address: |  |
| Telephone Number (Office): |  |
| Telephone Number (Cellular): |  |
| Fax Number: |  |