

State of Nebraska
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

RETURN TO:

Nebraska Department of Education
500 S. 84th Street
2nd Floor
Lincoln, NE 68510-2295
Phone: (402) 471-2295

SOLICITATION NUMBER	RELEASE DATE
NDERFI2210	September 1, 2022
OPENING DATE AND TIME	PROCUREMENT CONTACT
October 31, 2022, 2:00 p.m. Central Time November 14, 2022, 2:00 p.m. Central Time	Jill Aurand

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!

SCOPE OF SERVICE

The State of Nebraska, Department of Education (NDE), is issuing this Request for Information (NDERFI2210) for the purpose of gathering responses from qualified vendors to purchase a product & service implementation towards accessing and managing data in multiple accounts/applications/systems of a cross-agency and provide grant access permissions (Multi account users with single sign on) from centralized application.

Written questions are due no later than September 15, 2022, and should be submitted via e-mail to nde.accsmgmt@nebraska.gov. Email is to be titled: ""NDERFI2210". Written questions may also be sent by email to: nde.accsmgmt@nebraska.gov

Vendor should electronically submit one (1) original of the entire proposal (in PDF format) to nde.accsmgmt@nebraska.gov. RFI responses should be submitted by the proposal due date and time.

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SCOPE OF THE REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

The State of Nebraska, Department of Education (NDE), is issuing this Request for Information RFI NDERFI2210 for the purpose of gathering responses from qualified vendors to purchase a product & service implementation towards accessing and managing data in multiple accounts/applications/systems of a cross-agency and provide grant access permissions (Multi account users with single sign on) from centralized application.

ALL INFORMATION PERTINENT TO THIS REQUEST FOR INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND ON THE INTERNET AT: <https://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/bidopps.html>

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	9/01/2022
2	Last day to submit written questions	9/15/2022
3	State responds to written questions through Request for Information "Addendum" and/or "Amendment" to be posted to the internet at: https://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/bidopps.html	9/29/2022
4	RFI opening Location: Responses will be opened by NDE RFI evaluation committee members virtually via Zoom or Teams.	10/31/2022 11/14/2022 2:00 PM Central Time
5	Conduct oral interviews/presentations and/or demonstrations (if required)	To Be Determined

RFI RESPONSE PROCEDURES

OFFICE AND CONTACT PERSON

Responsibilities related to this Request for Information reside with the Nebraska department of Education (NDE). The point of contact for the RFI is as follows:

Name: Jill Aurand
Agency: Nebraska Department of Education
Address: 500 S. 84th Street
2nd Floor
Lincoln, NE 68510-2611
Telephone: (402) 471-2295
E-Mail: nde.accsmgmt@nebraska.gov

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 NDE 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 NDE in developing the Request for Proposal. This RFI does not obligate the State NDE to reply to the RFI responses, to issue an RFP, or to include any RFI provisions or responses provided by vendors in any RFP.

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 NDE should be 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. The 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 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 Evaluation 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.

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 Nebraska department of Education and clearly marked "NDERFI2210; (information requesting) Questions". It is preferred that questions be sent via e-mail to nde.accsmgmt@nebraska.gov

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

<u>Question Number</u>	<u>RFI Section Reference</u>	<u>RFI Page Number</u>	<u>Question</u>

Written answers will be provided through an addendum to be posted on the Internet at <https://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/bidopps.html> on or before the date shown in the Schedule of Events.

ORAL INTERVIEWS/PRESENTATIONS AND/OR DEMONSTRATIONS

The NDE RFI Evaluation Committee 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.

Any cost incidental to the oral interviews/presentations and/or demonstrations shall be borne entirely by the vendor and will not be compensated by the State

SUBMISSION OF RESPONSE

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

To facilitate the response evaluation process, one (1) original of the entire RFI response should be submitted to nde.accsmgmt@nebraska.gov. RFI responses should 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. The Request for Information number must be included in all correspondence.

The Technical and Cost Proposals should be presented in separate sections. Pages may be consecutively numbered for the entire response or may be numbered consecutively within sections. Figures and tables must be numbered consecutively and referenced in the text by that number. They should be placed as close as possible to the referencing text.

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.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION OPENING

The sealed responses will be virtually 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.

LATE REQUEST FOR INFORMATION OF RESPONSES

Responses received after the time and date of the RFI responses opening will be considered late Responses. The State is not responsible for responses that are late or lost due to technical difficulties.

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

The responses will first be examined to determine if all mandatory requirements listed below have been addressed to warrant further evaluation. Responses not meeting mandatory requirements will be excluded from further evaluation. The mandatory requirement items are as follows:

1. Signed Request for Information form
2. Executive Summary
3. Corporate Overview
4. Technical Proposal
5. Cost Proposal

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND SCOPE OF WORK

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) portal was established in 2010 acting as a gateway to educational reports and research. It was built to allow authentication and basic authorization, and at that time the portal fulfilled the agency's needs. The portal is showing its age using outdated practices and visuals. NDE is looking to innovate the portal to an Access Management interface to provide improved security and functionality.

SCOPE OF WORK

Scope of Work outlines project tasks, activities, and deliverables to be completed and delivered by the vendor during the life of the project. As part of the response, the vendor must provide a proposed preliminary project plan with milestone and schedule. The vendor must reflect a recommended implementation approach and strategy for accomplishing the tasks, activities, and deliverables identified throughout the RFI.

Major work tasks and project deliverables to be completed and produced by the vendor include:

1. Project Planning and Management; Project timeline
2. Product/Service purchase and installation
3. Initial setups/administration
4. System Environment and Cloud Configuration
5. System Requirements Refinement
6. System Design, Development and Configuration
7. Test Plan and User Acceptance Testing
8. Operations and Support Documentation
9. Training
10. Implementation
11. Post implementation and Maintenance Support.
12. Ongoing patches/upgrades, license requirements, vendor helpdesk service level agreement (SLA) & Product/service cost associated for next 3 to 5 years
13. Optional features, functionalities, and services

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Vendors must describe how their proposed solution aligns and physically implements the functionality as identified within the RFI. Where appropriate, vendors are encouraged to describe how their proposed solution provides added value to the requirements.

1. COMPUTING AND HOSTING PLATFORM

- a. The proposed solution must be able to interface or be run on a Microsoft .NET/.NET Core and C# centric environment. The proposed solution should target a .NET Core/Angular technology stack with SQL data storage running entirely in the Microsoft Azure cloud environment.

2. SYSTEM/APPLICATION SECURITY

- a. Authentication
 - i. The proposed solution must support multiple authentication directories.
 - ii. The proposed solution must include a form of Multi Factor Authentication (MFA).
 - iii. The proposed solution must use OAuth standards.
 - iv. The proposed solution must have robust logging capabilities for auditing
- b. Authorization
 - i. The proposed solution must support role-based and/or attribute-based access with flexibility of permissions.

- ii. The proposed solution must support multiple organizations with their own permission management.

VENDOR EXPECTATIONS

1. SYSTEM SOFTWARE

- a. The vendor must include within their cost proposal all required system operations, database, security, and virtualization software, functional and interface software and all other third party and vendor software products required to properly design, develop, test, train, implement, interface, maintain, tune, and operate the proposed solution and fully satisfy the State's requirements.
- b. Software releases and versions must be the most current required to operate the vendor's proposed solution correctly and properly.
- c. Any other software used within the system, for which the State would need to obtain licenses, must be defined by the vendor. While the State requires each vendor to include their costs for all third-party software and associated licenses, Project Costs, the State, at its sole option, reserves the right to procure any or all of the software and associated licenses from another source.
- d. The state reserves the right to purchase third party software through the vendor as part of the contract and/or through other available resources approved by the state.
- e. If the vendor's proposed solution requires desktop and/or other peripheral related software not already described in the State's current configurations, then the vendor must include costs in their cost proposal for all necessary desktop and peripheral software required to properly operate the proposed solution.
- f. If the application software is not public domain, a licensing strategy must be described to support the pre-production environment. Within the licensing strategy, describe how the State will defer paying for licenses until they are required and/or in full use.

2. SYSTEM HARDWARE

- a. The vendor must include within their proposal all server, data storage, virtualization, cables, cards, connectors and other hosting, imaging, and server related equipment information necessary to fully satisfy the State's RFI requirements and properly operate the vendor's proposed solution. This includes equipment necessary for proof-of-concept, development, test, user acceptance/training, and final production processing environments. Equipment proposed by the vendor must be all mainstream computing equipment offered by leading computing equipment manufacturers.
- b. The State envisions using pre-production environments to facilitate test, user acceptance, and training project tasks. Each environment, either physical or virtual, must use mainstream industry-standard hardware, software, and relational database management products. While the State requires each vendor to include their costs for all base components and third-party equipment, Project Costs, the State, at its sole option, reserves the right to procure any or all of the required components and equipment from another source, based upon specifications provided by the successful vendor. Vendors must provide a comprehensive equipment list including equipment make, model and primary configuration.

3. SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE

- a. Vendors must describe the system architecture degree of "openness" and adherence to industry standard hardware, software, security, and communications protocols.
- b. Vendors must describe the hosting environment options.
- c. Vendors must describe how components of the proposed architecture will remain current and supported to avoid becoming obsolete.
- d. Vendors must provide an overview of how major hardware and software components are layered and used within the architecture.
- e. Vendors must identify and describe the primary underlying development programming language(s), integrated development environment (IDE), and component server environment used to produce tailored or customized components of the proposed solution.

4. SYSTEM PERFORMANCE, CAPACITY, AND SCALABILITY

- a. The proposed system must provide the necessary capacity to handle the storing, initial loading, and ongoing processing of the data, and be capable of scaling in size and performance. Describe system performance and capacity features of the proposed solution and how the proposed solution can scale up to meet increase in load and demand.

5. SYSTEM AVAILABILITY, RELIABILITY, AND MAINTAINABILITY

- a. The solution must be accurate and reliable. Another objective of the implementation is to ensure that system components are maintainable.
- b. Describe how the proposed solution will meet system operational requirements.
- c. The proposed solution must reliably produce accurate, timely and consistent results when matching the data and/or generating reports.
- d. Describe how the vendor's solution achieves these requirements.
- e. Describe features and designs of the proposed solution that ensure component maintainability and ease of modification.

6. STATEWIDE SYSTEM SECURITY REQUIREMENTS

- a. All information technology services and systems developed or acquired by Nebraska State agencies shall have documented security specifications that include an analysis of security risks and recommended controls.
- b. Security requirements and evaluation/test procedures shall be included in all solicitation documents and/or acquisition specifications.
- c. Security considerations must be included in each phase of system development.
- d. Systems developed by either internal State or contracted system developers shall not include back doors, or other code that would cause or allow unauthorized access or manipulation of code or data.
- e. All approved information technology services and systems must address the security implications of any changes made to a particular service or system.
- f. The agencies responsible must authorize all changes.
- g. Application systems and information that become obsolete and no longer used must be disposed of by appropriate procedures. The application and associated information must be preserved, discarded, or destroyed.
- h. Provide security standards or policies inherent or currently contained within the proposed solution.
- i. Explain how security roles are used to define application access and what capability exists for copying, modifying, and managing roles and assigned users or groups.
- j. Provide how, when and what audit trail information is captured and what features are available to facilitate monitoring, reviewing, and reporting.
- k. Provide when and where proposed data encryption of information occurs. For example, is transmitted data encrypted?
- l. Provide proposed techniques for managing and monitoring information and application access.

7. DISASTER RECOVERY AND SYSTEM INTEGRITY

- a. The vendor must describe how their solution ensures system integrity and recovery. Include information regarding fault tolerance capability, if any, backup schedules and approach, data and system recovery.
- b. The vendor must include within their cost proposal all required system operations, database, security, and virtualization software, functional and interface software and all other third party and vendor software products required to properly design, develop, test, train, implement, interface, maintain, tune, and operate the proposed solution and fully satisfy the State's requirements.
- c. Software releases and versions must be the most current required to operate the vendor's proposed solution correctly and properly.
- d. Any other software used within the system, for which the State would need to obtain licenses, must be defined by the vendor. While the State requires each vendor to include their costs for all third-party software and associated licenses, Project Costs, the State, at its sole option,

reserves the right to procure any or all of the software and associated licenses from another source.

- e. The State reserves the right to purchase third party software through the vendor as part of the contract and/or through other available resources approved by the State.
- f. If the vendor's proposed solution requires desktop and/or other peripheral related software not already described in the State's current configurations, then the vendor must include costs in their cost proposal for all necessary desktop and peripheral software required to properly operate the proposed solution.
- g. If the application software is not public domain, a licensing strategy must be described to support the pre-production environment. Within the licensing strategy, describe how the State will defer paying for licenses until they are required and/or in full use.
- h. The vendor must include within their proposal all server, data storage, virtualization, cables, cards, connectors and other hosting, imaging, and server related equipment information necessary to fully satisfy the State's RFI requirements and properly operate the vendor's proposed solution. This includes equipment necessary for proof-of-concept, development, test, user acceptance/training, and final production processing environments. Equipment proposed by the vendor must be all mainstream computing equipment offered by leading computing equipment manufacturers.

FORM A Vendor Contact Sheet

Request for Information Number NDERFI2210

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:	