



**Solicitation Information  
March 3, 2015**

**RFP #7549366**

**TITLE: ARRA – SUPPORTING EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS TO USE TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE ASSESSMENT PRACTICES**

**Submission Deadline: Tuesday, March 31, 2015 at 2:00 PM (Eastern Time)**

Questions concerning this solicitation must be received by the Division of Purchases at [gail.walsh@purchasing.ri.gov](mailto:gail.walsh@purchasing.ri.gov) no later than **Friday, March 13, 2015 at 5:00 PM (ET)**. Questions should be submitted in a Microsoft Word attachment. Please reference the RFP# on all correspondence. Questions received, if any, will be posted on the Internet as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information.

**SURETY REQUIRED: None**

**BOND REQUIRED: None**

**GAIL WALSH  
CHIEF BUYER**

Applicants must register on-line at the State Purchasing Website at [www.purchasing.ri.gov](http://www.purchasing.ri.gov)

**Note to Applicants:**

Offers received without the entire completed three-page RIVIP Generated Bidder Certification Form attached may result in disqualification.

**THIS PAGE IS NOT A BIDDER CERTIFICATION FORM**

***REQUEST for PROPOSALS***  
**Supporting Early Childhood Programs to use Technology to Enhance  
Assessment Practices**

The Rhode Island Department of Administration/Division of Purchases, on behalf of the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) is requesting proposals from qualified vendors to support early learning programs in evaluating their need for and applying for funds to purchase technology to support classroom assessment practices, in accordance with the terms of this solicitation.

This is a Request for Proposals, not an Invitation for Bid. Responses will be evaluated on the basis of the relative merits of the proposal, in addition to price; there will be no public opening and reading of responses received by the Division of Purchases pursuant to this Request, other than to name those offerors who have submitted proposals.

**INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS TO OFFERORS:**

Potential offerors are advised to review all sections of this solicitation carefully and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejection of the proposal.

Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this procurement are solicited. However, proposals which depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this Request will be rejected as being non-responsive.

All costs associated with developing or submitting a proposal in response to this Request, or to provide oral or written clarification of its content, shall be borne by the offeror. The State assumes no responsibility for these costs.

Proposals are considered to be irrevocable for a period of not less than sixty (60) days following the opening date, and may not be withdrawn, except with the express written permission of the State Purchasing Agent.

All pricing submitted will be considered to be firm and fixed unless otherwise indicated herein.

Proposals misdirected to other State locations or which are otherwise not present in the Division of Purchases at the time of opening for any cause will be determined to be late and may not be considered. PROPOSALS EMAILED OR FAXED TO THE DIVISION OF PURCHASES WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED. The "Official" time clock is in the reception area of the Division of Purchases.

It is intended that an award pursuant to this Request for Proposals will be made to prime contractor(s) who will assume responsibility for all aspects of the work. Joint ventures shall be considered, so long as the contractor's duties and responsibilities are

clearly articulated in such form as acceptable to the State. Subcontractors are permitted, provided their use is clearly indicated in the offeror's proposal and the subcontractor(s) to be used are identified in the proposal.

All proposals should include the vendor's FEIN or Social Security number as evidenced by a W9, downloadable from the Division's website at [www.purchasing.ri.gov](http://www.purchasing.ri.gov).

The purchase of services under an award made pursuant to this RFP will be contingent on the availability of funds.

In accordance with Title 7, Chapter 1.2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, no foreign corporation shall have the right to transact business in the state until it shall have procured a Certificate of Authority to do so from the Rhode Island Secretary of State (401-222-3040). *This will be a requirement only of the successful bidder (s).*

Offerors are advised that all materials submitted to the State of Rhode Island for consideration in response to this Request for Proposals will be considered to be public records, as defined in Title 38 Chapter 2 of the Rhode Island General Laws, without exception, and will be released for inspection immediately upon request, once an award has been made.

Also, Submitters should be aware of the State's MBE requirements, which addresses the State's goal of ten per cent (10%) participation by MBE's in all State procurements. For further information, contact the State MBE Administrator at (401) 574-8253 or [charles.newton@doa.ri.gov](mailto:charles.newton@doa.ri.gov). Visit the website <http://www.mbe.ri.gov>.

Interested parties are instructed to peruse the Division of Purchases web site on a regular basis, as additional information relating to this solicitation may be released in the form of an addendum to this RFP.

Equal Employment Opportunity (RIGL 28-5.1)

§ 28-5.1-1 Declaration of policy. – (a) Equal opportunity and affirmative action toward its achievement is the policy of all units of Rhode Island state government, including all public and quasi-public agencies, commissions, boards and authorities, and in the classified, unclassified, and non-classified services of state employment. This policy applies in all areas where the state dollar is spent, in employment, public service, grants and financial assistance, and in state licensing and regulation. For further information, contact the Rhode Island Equal Employment Opportunity Office, at 222-3090 or via email [raymond.lambert@doa.ri.gov](mailto:raymond.lambert@doa.ri.gov).

***REQUEST for PROPOSALS***  
**DEVELOPING & SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSESSMENT**

**BACKGROUND/OVERVIEW**

This solicitation requests proposals from qualified vendors to provide technological supports to early childhood programs, in order to facilitate seamless, effective child assessment data entry and allow programs to collect, enter, and use child assessment data without redundancy of effort.

In 2011, Rhode Island submitted a successful application for Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) funds. Rhode Island's RTT-ELC application includes a plan to support teachers and administrators who work with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in implementing high-quality assessment practices. New technology enables teachers to more effectively and efficiently collect, document, organize, and use assessment work with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) is poised to support key investments that will significantly increase the capacity of programs to document, understand, and communicate children's development and learning

The Workforce Knowledge and Competencies (WKC) Framework developed for Rhode Island Teacher and Teacher Assistants includes a domain focused on child assessment, "Assessment" The sub-categories included in this domain include:

- a. Knowledge of Early Childhood Assessment
- b. Implementing a Comprehensive Assessment Plan and Conducting Developmentally Appropriate Authentic Assessments
- c. Conducting Formal Assessments
- d. Practicing Responsible Assessment
- e. Collecting Assessment Data from Multiple Sources Using a Variety of Strategies
- f. Documenting and Organizing Assessment Data
- g. Using Assessment Data in Curriculum Planning
- h. Communicating Assessment Data to Others

The competencies E-H specifically address the methodologies for collecting, using, and communicating assessment data, all of which are simplified and made more effective through the use of technology.

RIDE is issuing this RFP to support programs in their use of high-quality assessment methods by purchasing technology built to support those efforts. RIDE expects that programs receiving and using technological supports will be better prepared to reliably implement high-quality assessment in the classroom, which will lead to planning effective curriculum, better methods of collecting and documenting evidence of learning, and increased ability to identify and close gaps, and additional strategies for involving children and families in the learning process.

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

### ***Tasks***

The organization which is awarded this contract will efficiently and effectively manage the resources necessary to achieve these assignments. This involves developing and communicating criteria for eligibility, providing technical assistance to programs to support them through the application process, creating and implementing an assessment plan based on the access to new technology, and assisting programs in purchasing new technology.

The selected vendor will work collaboratively with RIDE staff to manage the federal resources to ensure completion of the following tasks and deliverables:

#### Tasks:

1. Work with RIDE staff to develop eligibility criteria
2. Work with RIDE and BrightStars staff to identify and communicate with eligible programs regarding application process
3. Work with RIDE staff to review applications and determine grant awards
4. Develop a system for distributing, monitoring and reporting on grant awards
5. Provide technical assistance to programs in purchasing, installing, and planning training for use of new technology
6. Provide RIDE with required information through narrative and budget reports
7. Provide RIDE with summaries of work, including details regarding grant awardees, monitoring of grant awards, and programs' revised assessment plans.

### ***Deliverables***

<i>Task</i>	<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Projected Schedule</i>
<i>Task #1</i>	Work with RIDE staff to develop eligibility criteria	Immediately upon execution of contract
<i>Task #2</i>	Work with RIDE and BrightStars staff to identify and communicate with eligible programs regarding application process	Immediately upon execution of contract
<i>Task #3</i>	Work with RIDE staff to review applications and determine grant awards	7/1/2015 – 9/30/15
<i>Task #4</i>	Develop and implement system for distributing, monitoring and reporting on grant awards	7/1/2015 – 12/31/15
<i>Task #5</i>	Provide technical assistance to programs in purchasing, installing, and planning training for use of new technology	7/1/2015 – 12/31/15
<i>Task #7</i>	Provide RIDE with required information through narrative and budget reports submitted on a monthly and/or quarterly basis and other informational requests, as needed	Immediately upon execution of contract and ongoing through remainder of contract
<i>Task #8</i>	Provide RIDE with summaries of work, including details regarding grant awardees, monitoring of grant awards, and programs' revised assessment plans	Immediately upon start of training and ongoing through remainder of contract

## **TERMS OF THE CONTRACT**

The Contract will begin **upon issuance of state purchase order (estimated May 2015)** and end **December 31, 2015**. The scope of the work may be modified by RIDE prior to beginning work on a given task. Subsequent years' activities are dependent on the availability of funding and may be modified by mutual consent. RIDE retains the option of granting a time extension of up to **twelve months** with additional funding if available and if the level of work

is expanded by mutual written consent. If necessary, deficiencies in performance of services and/or failure to supply deliverables in a complete and timely manner will be documented in writing by RIDE. Should a pattern of substantial dissatisfaction become apparent, RIDE reserves the right to terminate the contract.

### **COST PROPOSAL/TERMS OF PAYMENT**

The contractor must prepare a cost proposal reflecting the hourly rate or other fee structure proposed for this scope of services using the Cost Proposal Forms contained in Appendix A.

The total cost of the contract is not to exceed **\$400,000**. It is expected that a significant portion of the funds (at least 75%) will be allocated for grants to eligible sites. The total for administrative costs may not exceed 10% of the total grant and applicants are encouraged to submit proposals which reflect competitive administrative rates. Please ensure the budget is presented by state fiscal year, which runs from July 1st through June 30th.

Please note that reimbursement for travel within the continental United States will be limited to the per diem rates established by the General Services Administration (GSA). Per diem rates are posted at [www.gsa.gov/perdiem](http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem).

### **PROPOSAL SUBMISSION**

Questions concerning this solicitation may be e-mailed to the Division of Purchases at the address on the cover sheet of this solicitation and no later than the date & time listed. **Send your questions in Microsoft Word format.** Please reference the RFP# on all correspondence. Questions received, if any, will be posted and answered on the Internet as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information. For computer technical assistance, call the help desk at (401) 222-3766 or [Lynda.moore@doit.ri.gov](mailto:Lynda.moore@doit.ri.gov).

Proposals (an original plus 4 copies) should include the following:

1. A completed and signed three-page RIVIP Bidder Certification Cover Form, available at [www.purchasing.ri.gov](http://www.purchasing.ri.gov).
2. A *separate sealed* Cost Proposal as described above.
3. A *separate* Technical Proposal (see below) describing the qualifications and background of the applicant and experience with similar programs, as well as the work plan or approach proposed for this requirement.
4. A completed and signed W-9 (taxpayer identification number and certification). Form is downloadable at [www.purchasing.ri.gov](http://www.purchasing.ri.gov). **Please include with original proposal only.**

Deliver to:

Department of Administration  
Office of Purchases  
One Capitol Hill  
Providence, Rhode Island 02908

Contractor assumes all responsibilities for proposals submitted by mail or commercial delivery service. Proposals misdirected to other state locations or which are otherwise not present in the Office of Purchases at the time of opening, for any cause, will be determined to be late and will not be considered. Faxed responses will not be considered.

### **TECHNICAL PROPOSAL REQUIRED ELEMENTS**

Assemble your technical proposal as outlined below. The technical proposal may be no longer than 15 single-spaced pages. Margins must be at least 1 inch on all sides.

#### *Grant development, awards and monitoring (30 Points)*

**Part 1.** RIDE expects the vendor to propose a plan for identifying recommended technological supports, along with pricing for hardware/software and any maintenance/insurance. The vendor will also work with RIDE staff to identify best practices in using technology to support assessment practices and develop grant application requirements, review process, and monitoring protocol.

The selected vendor will be responsible for reviewing and awarding Assessment Technology Grants (henceforth referred to as grants) to early learning programs. The amount of each grant will be dependent upon each program's demonstrated needs. This responsibility entails:

- i. Developing, in collaboration with the State, clear policies for reviewing applications, awarding money, and tracking grants.
- ii. Disseminating information to early learning programs about grant award policies and review processes, including collaborating with BrightStars and the CECE Program Regulations Specialist to ensure all eligible programs are knowledgeable about the grant process.
- iii. Awarding and tracking grants, based on established policies, in a timely manner to ensure programs are able to increase their quality based on goals in the program's quality improvement plan.
- iv. Evaluating the effectiveness of grants in improving assessment practices based on establish criteria.

Describe your ability to develop recommendations for technology, grant application requirements, and monitoring protocols. In addition, provide a timeline for researching best practice and recommending technology, developing a system for communicating with and supporting programs in applying for grants, and awarding and monitoring grants. Details should include, but are not limited to:

- Detailed plan for outreach to programs, including providing supports for grant writing
- Detailed plan for monitoring use of grant awards
- Plan for evaluating and reporting on the process, including feedback from programs and revisions to plans if needed.

**Part 2.** The first month of the contract will focus on researching and recommending technology to be made available via the grant process and collaborating with RIDE staff to develop grant applications and review protocols. The remaining time on the contract will be spent communicating with and supporting programs in writing grant applications, reviewing and awarding grants, monitoring awards, and providing TA to programs needing assistance in initial

use of new technology. A plan should be provided that details the development and implementation of the work.

*Experience and Capacity (30 Points)*

Describe your background and experience in grant management. Discuss your capacity to communicate with and support programs in understanding their technological needs and writing successful grant applications. Describe capacity to monitor and support use of awards, including providing technical assistance to programs needing it during the initial stages of implementation.

*Additional Competitive Factors (10 Points)*

Address any factors not already addressed which demonstrate the quality of your proposed plan and the ways in which the professional workforce will benefit from participation. Include your experience, if any, of working with early learning programs and/or the early learning workforce. Include your understanding, if any, of the capacity of technology to support assessment practices in early learning programs. Include your proven experience in grant management.

**TECHNICAL PROPOSAL REVIEW CRITERIA**

A technical review team convened by the Rhode Island Department of Education will review each complete application using these criteria:

- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <i>1. Grant development, awards and monitoring</i> | (30 points) |
| <i>2. Experience and Capacity</i>                  | (30 points) |
| <i>3. Additional Competitive Factors</i>           | (10 points) |
| <i>4. Cost Proposal</i>                            | (30 points) |

A Selection Committee will evaluate submitted proposals on the basis of the above criteria items. Consultant Teams may be invited to appear before the Committee for in-person presentations. The Committee will then make a qualifications based recommendation for final selection to the Rhode Island State Purchasing Agent, or her designee, who will make the final award decision.

To advance to the cost evaluation phase, the technical proposal must receive a minimum of 40 out of a maximum of 70 technical points. Any technical proposals scoring less than 40 points will not have the cost proposals opened and evaluated. The proposal will be dropped from further consideration.

Proposals scoring 40 technical points or higher will be evaluated for cost and assigned up to a maximum of 30 points in the cost category, bringing the potential maximum score to 100 points.

Notwithstanding the above, the State reserves the right not to award this contract or to award on the basis of cost alone, to accept or reject any or all responses, and to award in its best interest.

Responses found to be technically or substantially non-responsive at any point in the evaluation process will be rejected and not considered further. The State reserves the right to reject any or all responses submitted and to waive any informalities in any vendor's submission.

# **APPENDIX A**

## ***BUDGET Multi-Year Projects***

The Contractor estimates that its budget for work to be performed under this Agreement is as follows:

<u>Expense Category</u>	<u>Estimated Expenditures</u>	
	Year 1	Year 2
1. Employee Salary and Benefits	0	0
5. Purchased Services	0	0
3. Supplies and Materials	0	0
4. Travel	0	0
5. Printing	0	0
6. Office Expense	0	0
7. Other: <i>(describe)</i>	0	0
8.	0	0
Subtotal	0	0
Indirect Cost *	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	0	0

It is understood and agreed that the amounts indicated above for the several line items are estimates of expenditures to be incurred by the Contractor on behalf of this Agreement and to be claimed by the Contractor for reimbursement under this Agreement. It is further understood and agreed that actual expenditures may vary from the estimates set forth above and that such variations shall not in themselves be cause for disallowance of reimbursement by RIDE; provided, however, that the Contractor shall notify the contract officer of the variance and obtain pre-approval, in writing; and provided further that unless permission of the contract officer shall have been obtained in advance, no expenditure shall be claimed by the Contractor for reimbursement by RIDE under this Agreement if such expenditure shall have been incurred in a line item category not listed above. Transfer of funds between categories requires prior written approval by RIDE. In no event shall the total amount of reimbursement claimed by the vendor under this agreement exceed the total approved contract amount.

***\* Attach a copy of the approved indirect cost documentation***

BUDGET DETAIL SHEET \*  
 FISCAL YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

**EMPLOYEE SALARY AND BENEFIT DETAIL (TOTAL COMPENSATION)\*\***

NAME	POSITION TITLE	NUMBER OF HOURS	HOURLY RATE (including benefits)	SALARY and BENEFIT TOTAL \$
<b>TOTAL REQUEST</b>				

**PURCHASED SERVICES DETAIL**

NAME	POSITION TITLE	HOURS	HOURLY RATE \$	TOTAL \$
<b>TOTAL REQUEST</b>				\$

**OTHER EXPENDITURES DETAIL**

EXPENSE CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL
Supplies and Materials		
Travel ***		
Printing		
Office Expense		
Other: <i>(describe)</i>		
Indirect Cost		

Total \$

\* Please include a detail budget sheet for each state fiscal year (July 1<sup>st</sup> – June 30<sup>th</sup>)

\*\* Please round hourly rates to the nearest whole dollar and ensure there are no rounding differences with the extended totals.

\*\*\* Reimbursement for travel within the continental United States is limited to the per diem rates established by the General Services Administration (GSA). Per diem rates are posted at [www.gsa.gov/perdiem](http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem).