



**Solicitation Information
December 4, 2018**

RFI# 7597670

TITLE: Professional Learning Providers for the Educator Course Network

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: January 7, 2019 at 2:00 PM (ET)

Questions concerning this solicitation must be received by the Division of Purchases at gail.walsh@purchasing.ri.gov no later than **Monday, December 17, 2018 at 5:00 PM (ET)**. Questions should be submitted in a *Microsoft Word attachment*. Please reference the **RFI#** on all correspondence. Questions received, if any, will be posted on the Division of Purchases' website as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information.

**GAIL WALSH
CHIEF BUYER**

Applicants must register on-line at the State Purchasing Website at www.purchasing.ri.gov

Note to Applicants:

Responses received without a completed RIVIP Bidder Certification Cover Form attached may result in disqualification.

THIS PAGE IS NOT A BIDDER CERTIFICATION COVER FORM

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SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

The Rhode Island Department of Administration/Division of Purchases, on behalf of the RI Department of Education (RIDE), is soliciting informational responses from qualified firms to provide professional learning services, in accordance with the terms of this Request for Information and the State's General Conditions of Purchase, which may be obtained at the Rhode Island Division of Purchases' website at www.purchasing.ri.gov.

Instructions and Notifications to Offerors:

1. Potential vendors are advised to review all sections of this RFI carefully and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejection of the response.
2. The State invites comments, suggestions and recommendations from potential vendors and other interested parties on any questions or issues raised in this RFI. Please note it is not a requirement to answer all questions.
3. Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this RFI are solicited.
4. This is a Request for Information ("RFI"), and as such no award will be made as a result of this solicitation.
5. All costs associated with attending the pre-solicitation conference and/or developing or submitting responses to this RFI, or providing oral or written clarification of the content of a response shall be borne by vendors. The State assumes no responsibility for any costs.
6. Responses misdirected to other locations, or which are otherwise not present in the Division of Purchases at the above stated date/time of opening for any cause will be determined to be late and shall not be considered. For the purposes of this requirement, the official time and date shall be that of the time clock in the reception area of the Division of Purchases.
7. Vendors are advised that all materials submitted to the State for consideration in response to this RFI shall not be considered to be public records as defined in Title 38, Chapter 2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island unless and until there is a contract award through a subsequent, related procurement.
8. Interested parties are instructed to monitor the Division of Purchases website on a regular basis, as additional information relating to this solicitation may be released as addenda.

SECTION 2. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

This RFI outlines the type of information being solicited and response structure requested from potential respondents.

A. Background

The State is considering issuance of a Request for Proposals (“RFP”) from qualified vendors to establish an Educator Course Network. Some of the goals of the upcoming RFP will be to:

RIDE is interested in creating a listing of professional learning providers that quickly and clearly conveys important information about potential partners for districts that are seeking third-party support in meeting their professional learning needs. Providers will be vetted for their alignment with key aspects of the Rhode Island Professional Learning Standards, including evidence of their ability to positively impact educator and student outcomes. RIDE intends to call this listing the Educator Course Network (ECN), and anticipates that its creation will significantly ease the burden of locating effective third-party professional learning providers for districts and schools while also allowing vendors to easily share information about their services with a wide audience.

In issuing this RFI, RIDE is seeking to understand how applicants will respond to potential questions designed to determine entry into the ECN. Seeing the responses from potential providers will allow RIDE to ensure the questions posed are surfacing the information RIDE is seeking. Responses to the RFI will also allow RIDE to ensure the final application for the ECN does not systematically exclude providers based on characteristics other than what RIDE is intentionally setting forth as criteria for entry to the network.

This RFI is designed to elicit responses from multiple types of organizations and individuals that can provide professional learning aligned to the [Rhode Island Professional Learning Standards](#) (RIPLS) and have a demonstrated record of successfully improving educator and student outcomes. RIDE anticipates both professional learning vendors and districts/schools will benefit from the creation of a centralized listing of providers that meet these criteria. Vendors will have the opportunity to share information about their offerings through the Educator Course Network (ECN), and districts/schools will have access to a substantial list of potential providers as well as key information about those providers that will help them to make wise choices with their limited financial resources.

RIDE anticipates the ECN as an online platform, consisting of two levels of information. Users (districts and schools) encounter a searchable menu of providers organized by content and type of professional learning. A user can click on any provider name for additional details. Details include: a description of the organization, a description of professional learning services, the evidence of impact, cost structures, and contact information for the organization.

In order to participate in the ECN, providers will meet certain criteria set by RIDE, based directly on the RIPLS. It is possible that an organization may provide some services that are in alignment with these criteria and others that are not. Only services meeting the criteria set forth may be listed on the ECN.

Professional learning providers will be asked to provide evidence to establish that their services:

- A. Are sustained over time (RIPLS 3.2)
- B. Are relevant to participants' professional context and day to day practice (RIPLS 6.1)
- C. Provide opportunities for practice, feedback, and reflection (RIPLS 6.2)
- D. Incorporate strategies for the active engagement of learners (RIPLS 7.2)
- E. Are led by facilitators with relevant expertise and skill (RIPLS 8.1)

In addition to the requirements listed above, RIDE will seek additional information in three areas. This information is being gathered to help districts and schools when they are making decisions about which providers they may wish to pursue partnerships with.

- F. Evidence of Impact (RIPLS 4): providers will be asked to provide evidence of the impact of their professional learning services on past participants. This evidence must include measures for participating educators and/or their students. The focus of evidence (i.e. student or teacher) and the overall strength of evidence (i.e. satisfaction surveys vs. changes in student outcomes) may be included in the initial menu of providers districts/schools see, as well as the detailed provider pages.

If a provider does not have evidence of past impact, they will be required to explain how they are going to obtain this evidence moving forward and will be asked to report collected evidence over time to maintain listing in the ECN.

Evidence will be categorized into the four levels below (drawing from Gusky's (2002) Five Levels of Professional Development Evaluation):

- a. Evidence of participant reactions or self-perceptions of skill (e.g. satisfaction surveys)
- b. Evidence of participants' learning (e.g. demonstration of new skill)
- c. Evidence of change in teacher practice (e.g. walkthrough data)
- d. Evidence of impact on student learning (e.g. student assessment data)

- G. Alignment with High Quality Curriculum (RIPLS 6.3): Finally, RIDE may give priority to providers whose professional learning offerings are explicitly linked to the curriculum educators are using in their instruction of students. RIDE is particularly interested in providers that can facilitate job-embedded professional learning (such as coaching or PLCs) focused on the implementation of high-quality curriculum materials. This priority

status will likely take the form of a special indicator on the initial menu of providers. Please note, only professional learning targeting ELA or math curriculum that is highly rated via EdReports may be eligible for this priority status. As trusted third-party reviews of other content become available, professional learning linked to curricula in those content areas will also be eligible for priority status.

As stated above, RIDE is issuing this RFI to better understand how potential providers will respond to the content and form of the questions it intends to ask in order to establish membership in the Educator Course Network. Answering the prompts below as completely as possible will help RIDE to ensure it is getting the information needed to appropriately determine who may participate in the ECN while also making sure we are not unintentionally excluding providers based on unanticipated characteristics.

The State requests that respondents provide information related to the following:

1. [Description of Provider and Qualifications of Facilitators](#)

Provide a brief (200 words) description of the provider, including the focus area(s) of the professional learning services you provide (e.g. math, ELA, school climate, personalized learning, supporting ELL students, etc.). Provide resumes or curriculum vitae (two-page limit) for staff responsible for overseeing and providing proposed professional learning.

2. [Types and Frequency of Professional Learning](#)

Use the table below to outline the types of learning support you provide and the typical frequency of this support.

Type of Professional Learning (i.e. coaching, workshops, consulting, etc.)?	How frequently do you typically provide this support (i.e. daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)?	Who is the intended audience for this support (i.e. district staff, coaches, teachers, etc.)?	When do you typically provide this support (i.e. summers, PD days, during school day, etc.)?

3. Alignment with RIPLS

Briefly (500 word limit) describe how you accomplish (or will accomplish) the following with regard to your professional learning offerings:

- a. How you ensure offerings are relevant to participants' context(s) and day to day practices.
- b. How you provide opportunities for practice, feedback, and reflection.
- c. How you ensure the active engagement of adult learners.
- d. How you ensure learning is sustained over time.

4. Evidence of Impact

Provide evidence of the impact of past professional learning your organization has conducted. Evidence will be categorized according to the levels described above. Providing evidence only at lower levels will not exclude organizations from the ECN, but this information will be available to potential client districts/schools.

NOTE: Providers that do not have evidence of past impact should instead specify how they will gather this evidence moving forward.

5. Alignment to High Quality Curriculum

If you are focusing your professional learning on Math or ELA, is your professional learning explicitly linked to a curriculum that is highly rated (i.e. green) via EdReports? If so, which? If no, are you able to explicitly link your professional learning to such a curriculum and how would you accomplish this? 200 words or fewer.

B. RFI Response

The following outline is intended to standardize and structure responses for ease of analysis. *Do NOT include a cost proposal with the RFI response as cost shall not be considered with this RFI.*

- Response to the requirements outlined in Section 2.A.

SECTION 3. QUESTIONS

Questions concerning this solicitation must be e-mailed to the Division of Purchases at gail.walsh@purchasing.ri.gov no later than the date and time indicated on page one of this solicitation. No other contact with State parties is permitted. Please reference **RFI# 7597670** on all correspondence. Questions should be submitted in writing in a Microsoft Word attachment in a narrative format with no tables. Answers to questions received, if any, shall be posted on the Division of Purchases' website as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all

interested parties to monitor the Division of Purchases website for any procurement related postings such as addenda. If technical assistance is required, call the Help Desk at (401) 574-8100.

SECTION 4. RESPONSE CONTENTS

A. Responses shall include the following:

1. One completed and signed RIVIP Bidder Certification Cover Form (included in the original copy only) downloaded from the Division of Purchases website at www.purchasing.ri.gov. *Do not include any copies in the response.*
2. Response - describing the requirements and concept for this potential project, and all information described earlier in this solicitation. The response is limited to ten (10) pages.
 - a. One (1) Electronic copy on a CD-R, marked “Response - Original”.
 - b. One (1) printed paper copy, marked “Response -Original” and signed.
 - c. Four (4) printed paper copies

B. Formatting of proposal response contents shall be as follows:

1. Formatting of CD-Rs – Separate CD-Rs are required for the technical proposal and cost proposal. All CD-Rs submitted must be labeled with:
 - a. Vendor’s name
 - b. RFI #
 - c. RFI Title
 - d. If file sizes require more than one CD-R, multiple CD-Rs are acceptable. Each CD-R must include the above labeling and additional labeling of how many CD-Rs should be accounted for (e.g., 3 CD-Rs are submitted for a technical proposal and each CD-R should have additional label of ‘1 of 3’ on first CD-R, ‘2 of 3’ on second CD-R, ‘3 of 3’ on third CD-R).

Vendors are responsible for testing their CD-Rs before submission as the Division of Purchase’s inability to open or read a CD-R may be grounds for rejection of a Vendor’s proposal. All files must be readable and readily accessible on the CD-Rs submitted with no instructions to download files from any external resource(s). If a file is partial, corrupt or unreadable, the Division of Purchases may consider it “non-responsive”. USB drives or other forms of electronic media shall not be accepted. Please note that vendor CD-Rs shall not be returned.

2. Formatting of written documents and printed copies:
 - a. For clarity, the response shall be typed. These documents shall be single-spaced with 1” margins on white 8.5”x 11” paper using a font of 12 point Calibri or 12 point Times New Roman.
 - b. All pages on the response are to be sequentially numbered in the footer, starting with number 1 on the first page of the narrative (this does not include the cover

page or table of contents) through to the end, including all forms and attachments. The Vendor's name should appear on every page, including attachments. Each attachment should be referenced appropriately within the response section and the attachment title should reference the response section it is applicable to.

- c. Printed copies are to be only bound with removable binder clips.

SECTION 5. RESPONSE SUBMISSION

Interested vendors must submit responses to provide information covered by this RFI on or before the date and time listed on the cover page of this solicitation. Responses received after this date and time, as registered by the official time clock in the reception area of the Division of Purchases, shall not be accepted.

Responses should be mailed or hand-delivered in a sealed envelope marked “**RFI# 7597670 Professional Learning Providers for Educator Course Network**” to:

RI Dept. of Administration
Division of Purchases, 2nd floor
One Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02908-5855

SECTION 6. DISCLAIMER

This Request for Information is solely for information and planning purposes and does not constitute a request for proposal or an invitation to bid. All information received in response to the RFI and marked as “Proprietary” shall be deemed to be confidential but may still be subject to disclosure pursuant to the Rhode Island “Access to Public Records Act, R. I. Gen. Laws § 38-2-1, *et seq.* . Responses to the RFI will not be returned.

END