

NEBRASKA STATE TREASURER

Request for Proposals

FINANCIAL LITERACY EDUCATION

Elementary School Financial Literacy Program

Middle/High School Financial Literacy Program

Adult Financial Literacy Program

September 11, 2019

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NEBRASKA STATE TREASURER
Request for Proposals

I. INTRODUCTION

The Nebraska State Treasurer (**Treasurer** or **Issuer**) requests sealed proposals (**Proposals**) from companies (**Providers, you** or **your**) who wish to provide educational training materials (**Programs**) and customer service and marketing services (**Services**).

With respect to all Proposals, please note the following:

- A. Providers are required to submit Proposals for the Services as one Proposal. Therefore, Providers who only provide part of the Services requested by this Request for Proposals (**RFP**) should seek to partner with other firms to submit one Proposal for the Program.
- B. The Issuer, however, will accept more than one Proposal per Provider if a Provider wishes to submit more than one Proposal and/or work with different partners. Each Proposal submitted, however, must be submitted for all of the Services requested in this RFP.
- C. Providers should consider their ability to provide domestic customer service via phone, email, and/or live chat.
- D. The Issuer requests that all Providers interested in offering the Services submit a response in the manner described in this RFP. Based upon the responses to this RFP and, if the Issuer determines that such responses indicate that the goals of the Treasurer can best be served by contracting with a Provider, the Issuer shall select a Provider who can best satisfy the needs of the Treasurer.

The issuance of the RFP or the receipt of any Proposals submitted pursuant hereto creates no obligation, expressed or implied, on the part of either the Issuer or the State of Nebraska (**State**). In addition, the State reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to change the deadline for the submission of questions or Proposals under this RFP.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The State Treasurer's Office is currently comprised of five divisions – Treasury Management, Unclaimed Property, the NEST College Savings Program, the ABLE Program, and the Nebraska Child Support Payment Center.

The State Treasurer's Office currently offers three interactive, web-based educational programs that bring critical financial literacy to Nebraska students and their families.

III. ANNOUNCEMENT

A. RESPONSE SUBMISSION

Providers who are interested in responding to this RFP shall submit an original and five (5) printed copies of their written responses and all attachments to:

Nebraska State Treasurer
Room 2005, State Capitol Bldg.
P.O. Box 94788
Lincoln, NE 68509-4788
Attention: Tyson Larson, Deputy State Treasurer
tyson.larson@nebraska.gov

A copy of each response should also be submitted electronically via email or other electronic media to Tyson Larson. Responses should be presented in accordance with the requirements of this RFP. The hard copies of each response must be received in the Treasurer's Office no later than 3:00 P.M. CT on October 23, 2019. Responses received after this time will not be considered.

The Issuer reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals, wholly or in part, waive any irregularities in the RFP process, and make selections which, in the opinion of the Issuer, are in the best interest of the Treasurer and the State. The Issuer reserves the right to enter into private negotiations with the selected vendor, even if those negotiations may result in changes to the Provider's Proposal.

The Issuer is not liable for any costs incurred by interested Providers in preparing or submitting Proposals or in satisfying any demonstration or interview requirements of this RFP.

As previously noted, the Issuer will accept more than one Proposal per Provider. However, the Provider should designate one person as the principal contact with respect to this RFP. All responses will be considered open offers for a period of 180 days following submission to the Issuer unless otherwise stated in your response.

B. CLARIFICATION OF INFORMATION

It is the responsibility of any prospective Provider to inquire about and clarify any aspect of the RFP. Each inquiry should include a specific reference to the question in the RFP for which clarification is sought. Questions for clarification must be submitted in writing no later than 4:00 P.M. CT on September 25, 2019, and emailed to:

Tyson Larson, Deputy State Treasurer
tyson.larson@nebraska.gov

Questions and answers submitted in writing will be available on the Treasurer's website at <https://treasurer.nebraska.gov/financial-scholars/> on a rolling basis, but no later than October 9, 2019. Providers shall have full responsibility for accessing the website.

C. CONFIDENTIALITY

This RFP contains proprietary and confidential information. Each recipient of this document is expected to use the information furnished herein solely for the purpose of submitting a Proposal and shall not distribute this document or disclose the information contained herein to third parties. Likewise, the Treasurer will consider any Proposal submitted to be confidential.

D. NO CONTACT

Any contact concerning this RFP should be limited (preferably in writing). Tyson Larson is designated as the sole point of contact. The Issuer specifically requests that no contact concerning this RFP be made with the Treasurer, or his other employees and advisors, during the selection process. Failure to honor this request may result in disqualification of the Provider.

IV. SCOPE OF WORK

The Provider will provide the Programs and Services to the Issuer. Providers should affirm that they will fully satisfy the following General Requirements or elaborate on any modification or exception to them. **A Proposal that takes exception to any portion of the Scope of Work may be rejected.**

A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS

- 1. Mandatory Contractual Terms.** By submitting an offer in response to this RFP, a Provider, if selected, will be deemed to have accepted the terms of this RFP. Any exceptions to this RFP must be clearly identified in the Proposal.
- 2. Agreement Duration.** If a Provider is selected pursuant to the RFP, the resulting Agreement will become effective upon execution and will remain effective for a period of five years (with the possibility of two renewal terms of one year each at the sole option of the Treasurer) from the Program Start Date indicated in Section IV. E.
- 3. Compensation and Payment.** The Provider will be compensated for the Services as agreed to under a subsequent Agreement.

The Provider will not receive additional compensation for miscellaneous charges including, but not limited to, printing, photocopying, postage, telephone, facsimile, shipping/handling, and courier/messenger costs between the Provider's location(s) and the Issuer's offices.

The Provider will not receive compensation for travel time or related expenses such as transportation, mileage, parking, etc., for meetings with the Treasurer or any vendors rendering Services to the Treasurer and/or the Program participants.

4. **Confidential Information.** The Provider must recognize that all information concerning Program users is the sole property of the State, is confidential, and is not to be used by the Provider for any other purpose. Other than in connection with the provision of the Services, Providers shall refrain from any direct communication with the participants in the Program, except as approved in advance by the Treasurer or his authorized representative.
5. **Plan Features.** Programs should be structured to allow for ease of access for participants, including the use of assistive technology and effective, person-first methods for communicating, and marketing to individuals with disabilities.

Educational training materials for the Programs should provide financial literacy training for three target audiences: elementary students, middle/high school students, and adults. Training materials are to be presented on an interactive, online platform. Each of the Programs must incorporate performance-based activities and assessments, including a pre- and post-lesson knowledge assessments.

1. **Elementary School Financial Literacy Program**

Educational training materials for the Elementary School Financial Literacy Program (**Elementary Program**) must be developed in alignment with relevant curriculum frameworks at both the state and national level. Elementary Program materials should be presented in an age-appropriate format, targeting those in fourth and fifth grade, and be available in English. If the Provider has materials in Spanish, or has plans to expand into languages other than English in the future, that should be noted in the RFP.

Proposals must include a summary of the Elementary Program curriculum and a description of the curriculum's goals and standards. The curriculum may be divided into multiple courses, to range from 15 to 35 minutes in length. If multiple courses are a component of the Elementary Program, the curriculum summary should reflect how topics are divided amongst the courses.

The Elementary Program should include, but need not be limited to, the following topics: financial decision making; employment and income; money management and investment; credit and borrowing; insurance and risk management; and savings and spending. More than one topic may be addressed in each course.

The platform for the Elementary Program should require separate profiles for each student and permit educators to access information relating to student progress and test results.

2. Middle/High School Financial Literacy Program

Educational training materials for the Middle/High School Financial Literacy Program (**Middle/High School Program**) must be developed in alignment with relevant curriculum frameworks at both the state and national level. Middle/High School Program materials should be presented in an age-appropriate format, targeting those in sixth through twelfth grade, and be available in English. If the Provider has materials in Spanish, or has plans to expand into languages other than English in the future, that should be noted in the RFP.

Proposals must include a summary of the Middle/High School Program curriculum and a description of the curriculum's goals and standards. The curriculum may be divided into multiple courses, to range from 15 to 35 minutes in length. If multiple courses are a component of the Middle/High School Program, the curriculum summary should reflect how topics are divided amongst the courses.

The Middle/High School Program should include, but need not be limited to, the following topics: financial decision making; employment and income; money management and investment; credit and borrowing; insurance and risk management; and savings and spending. More than one topic may be addressed in each course.

The platform for the Middle/High School Program should require separate profiles for each student and permit educators to access information relating to student progress and test results.

3. Adult Financial Literacy Program

Educational training materials for the Adult Financial Literacy Program (**Adult Program**) must focus on general finance principals. Adult Program materials should be presented in a format appropriate for the target audience and be available in English. If the Provider has materials in Spanish, or has plans to expand into languages other than English in the future, that should be noted in the RFP.

Proposals must include a summary of the Adult Program curriculum and a description of the curriculum's goals and standards. The curriculum may be divided into multiple courses, to range from 5 to 15 minutes in length. If multiple courses are a component of the Adult Program, the curriculum summary should reflect how topics are divided amongst the courses.

The Adult Program should include, but need not be limited to, the following topics: credit scores and credit reports; identity protection; monthly budgeting; and emergency savings.

B. MARKETING SERVICES

The Provider must possess the requisite knowledge and demonstrated experience in marketing educational training programs to assist people of all ages in developing financial literacy.

Marketing efforts include advertising, marketing materials (brochures), a website, and face-to-face marketing (group presentations, event marketing). Marketing should be conducted in-state year-round. The Provider should establish and maintain relationships with local educational institutions and work with Program schools to integrate the Programs into the school's curriculum and learning programs to ensure as broad adoption of the Programs as possible.

It is expected that marketing efforts on behalf of the Treasurer will be conducted on a joint basis between the Treasurer and the Provider. The Provider should include branding strategies as part of its Proposal. The Treasurer anticipates the potential need for the preparation of some marketing materials for non-educational assets such as certified public accountants and financial planners, or for outreach events like conferences or exhibitions. The Provider should expect that the Treasurer will have limited available funds to contribute to the marketing of the Program and that the costs for printed materials be included in, rather than in addition to, the costs for the Services requested herein.

General Requirements include:

1. The Provider will provide an annual strategic plan to the Treasurer no later than April 30th of each calendar year that includes details regarding school visits to existing Program schools, new Program schools, and prospective Program schools. In addition, the strategic plan should contemplate coordination with the Nebraska Department of Education, Educational Service Units, and other foreseeable private or public entities.
2. The Provider will work with the Treasurer or his authorized representative on all aspects of the marketing and public relations campaigns undertaken. The Treasurer will have final approval of the above strategic plan and all marketing and public relations decisions.
3. The Provider will work with the Treasurer or his authorized representative in hiring a government affairs specialist approved by the Treasurer or his authorized representative to promote issues related to "Financial Literacy".
4. The Treasurer's website will, at all times, be the sole source of detailed information available via the internet regarding the Programs. Any inquiries made on the Provider's website about the Programs must be linked directly to the Treasurer's website.

C. CUSTOMER SERVICE

The Provider must possess the requisite knowledge and demonstrated experience in providing customer service for participants in the Programs and maintain a policy for addressing customer service inquiries. Responding to inquiries requires interacting with Program school personnel by timely responding to any questions or addressing technical problems.

The RFP should include information regarding how participants can make customer service inquiries, how the Provider meets the customer service needs of participants, and how the Provider evaluates its customer service quality. At least one Provider representative should be available to

provide a timely response to inquiries about the Programs or provide technical assistance for school personnel Monday through Friday, except U.S. bank holidays.

D. REPORTS

The Provider will generate quarterly and annual reports to evaluate the effectiveness of all aspects of the Programs and Services. Such reports may be produced individually or combined and will be provided to the Treasurer, as applicable.

Reports will include, at a minimum, for each of the Programs:

- a. The number of schools that participate during the reporting period;
- b. The number of individuals that participate during the reporting period and over the course of the Provider's administration of the Programs;
- c. The number of hours of participant activity during the reporting period;
- d. The average score increase percentage on assessment tests during the reporting period; and
- e. Upcoming changes to the Programs and Services.

The Provider will provide such other information as the Treasurer or his authorized representative may request to monitor and control the Provider's compliance with the parties' Agreement.

E. PROGRAM START DATE AND PROJECT PLAN

If the Issuer awards a contract under this solicitation, the Provider will begin planning the Programs and Services outlined in this RFP with the Treasurer or his authorized representative by March 1, 2020, with a Programs implementation date of no later than August 1, 2020 (**Program Start Date**).

The Provider will submit a project plan describing all steps necessary to begin offering the Programs and Services as of the Program Start Date.

V. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A. PROPOSAL FORMAT

An original and five (5) copies of each Provider's Proposal are to be submitted along with an electronic version. Additional copies may be submitted by email, CD or other electronic media.

If the Provider is submitting an electronic version via email, this should be noted in the transmittal letter. If the Provider is submitting an electronic version via CD or other electronic media, this media should be included in the Proposal package.

All pages of each Proposal volume must be consecutively numbered from beginning to end and should follow the same format as this RFP.

B. GENERAL PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

The Provider's Proposal should address all points and questions outlined in this RFP. It should be clear and precise in response to the information, requirements, and format described in this RFP.

C. TRANSMITTAL LETTER

A transmittal letter must accompany the Proposal. The transmittal letter should be brief and signed by an individual who is authorized to commit the Provider to the Services and requirements as stated in this RFP. All Providers must acknowledge, in their transmittal letter, receipt of this RFP and any addenda to this RFP. The outside envelope should be sealed and clearly marked: "Response to Request for Proposals for the Nebraska Financial Literacy Education Program." All Proposals must be submitted to:

Nebraska State Treasurer
Room 2005, State Capitol Bldg.
PO Box 94788
Lincoln, NE 68509-4788
Attention: Tyson Larson, Deputy State Treasurer
tyson.larson@nebraska.gov

D. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

The Proposal must include a Table of Contents and a declaration of confidential sections of the Proposal (if any).

The Proposal must also include an Executive Summary. The Executive Summary should clearly demonstrate that the Provider has an understanding of the objectives and goals of the Issuer set forth in this RFP, and an understanding of the Scope of Work (Section IV). It should also contain a brief synopsis of the contents of the entire Proposal, as well as include an analysis of the effort and resources that will be needed to realize the objectives of this RFP. The Executive Summary will also identify any exceptions the Provider has taken to the requirements of this RFP. A Proposal that takes exception to the requirements of this RFP may be rejected.

Providers must include the following information:

1. General Information

- a) State the name, address, telephone number, website address, and state of incorporation of Provider. Include:

- i. The legal name of the Provider, any alternative names under which the Provider does business, any named subsidiaries; and
 - ii. The Provider’s organizational structure, including size and location(s).
- b) List programs or services similar to those requested by the Issuer (either currently, or within the last three years). Include the following information:
 - i. Types of programs or services you offer;
 - ii. Whether the Programs or Services described in this RFP can be provided in compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act or in other languages than those required herein, and any additional associated cost;
 - iii. States or school systems served currently or within the preceding 12 months of the Proposal submission date, including the:
 - A. Number of participating schools in each location, organized by student age (e.g. elementary, middle, secondary, K-12); and
 - B. Total number of participants;
- c) Provide a brief history of the Provider, including the length of time the Provider has been in business, ownership, current management, and any significant changes in the foregoing (i) during the last five years and/or (ii) expected or pending. Describe the Provider, including who holds controlling or significant interest(s) in the Provider.
- d) Names of the individual(s) who will be working with the Treasurer or Program participants and their areas of responsibility, both for the Provider and in relation to the requested Services; and
- e) Experience and qualification of the above-named individuals, highlighting their capacity to perform the related functions as outlined in this Proposal.

2. Program Development

This section will provide a detailed discussion of the Programs to be developed by the Provider in accordance with the RFP. The Program Development will fully explain how the proposed Programs will satisfy each requirement listed in this RFP (Scope of Work – Section IV). It should indicate all significant issues that will be examined to fulfill the Scope of Work.

3. Program Administration

This section will provide a detailed discussion of the Provider's marketing services and customer service capabilities demonstrating the Provider's ability to meet the requirements of this RFP. The Program Administration will fully explain how the proposed Services will satisfy each requirement listed in this RFP (Scope of Work – Section IV). It should indicate all significant capabilities or issues that will be examined to fulfill the Scope of Work.

Providers must also include a project plan to ensure the Program Start Date is achieved. The Program Administration information should be presented in the same numbered order in which the requirements appear herein.

The Provider must also propose a staffing plan to provide the Services required by this RFP in accordance with all required quality standards and will include resumes for those with principal responsibilities for managing the Provider's obligations, as well as for those with principal responsibilities for each functional area.

Each Provider should identify any subcontractors intended to be used in the performance of the Services, and the role each proposed subcontractor will perform. If the Provider will not use any subcontractors, so state.

VI. SUBMISSION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

A. AWARD OF CONTRACT

The Issuer reserves the right to reject any and all responses to this RFP. The Issuer may choose to appoint a selection committee to compile a list of finalists and either seek additional information from these Providers to clarify best and final offers and/or permit an oral presentation to the Treasurer. The Issuer will determine which Proposal offers the best means of servicing the interests of the State.

B. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Responses will be evaluated based on the following criteria, which is presented in no particular order:

1. Competitiveness of performance and product features;
2. Financial stability, competence, and strength of the Provider;
3. Marketing commitment to reach the potential customer base;
4. Customer service;
5. Administrative capacity and strategy;

6. Goal measurement and monitoring criteria; and
7. Any other quality or characteristic deemed in the best interests of the State or the Issuer.

Potential Providers are advised that materials contained in Proposals are subject to the Nebraska Public Records Statutes and may be viewed and/or copied by any member of the public, including news agencies and competitors, in accordance with the Public Records Statutes (NEB. REV. STAT. §§ 84-712 through 84-712.09). Providers claiming a statutory exception to the Nebraska Public Records Statutes should indicate on the outside of the envelope that confidential materials are included and should specify which statutory exception provision applies.