Central Virtual Learning Platform (CVLP) Development Request for Quotes (RFQ)

Background:

eCampusOntario is a provincially-funded non-profit organization that leads a consortium of the province's publicly-funded colleges, universities and Indigenous Institutes to develop and test online learning tools to advance the use of education technology and digital learning environments.

As part of expanded supports for our member organizations, eCampusOntario has announced the launch of several programs under a Virtual Learning Strategy. One of these programs is the Central Virtual Learning Platform, or CVLP. The purpose of the CVLP is to address system gaps in virtual learning content creation and ensure that institutions have ready access to expertise and production capacity to produce this content.

Definitions: For the purposes of this RFQ, member institutions (or simply, 'institutions') are the Ontario Colleges, Universities and Indigenous Institutes that are supported by eCampusOntario. Suppliers are defined as the Ontario-based companies, freelancers and recent graduates of instructional design programs that provide professional services supporting the development of high-quality virtual learning content, including graphic design, multi-media development, instructional design, copywriting/editing and related supports.

Overview: eCampusOntario is seeking quotes from qualified vendors to provide a platform to manage the intake and management of supplier information and requests for support from member institutions. The platform will need to identify relevant details in the data to match demand to the appropriate supply and provide an admin interface to enable eCampusOntario staff to review recommendations and initiate engagements.

The Central Virtual Learning Platform directly supports institutions who have the ability to produce virtual learning materials but lack capacity in a key production role. Serving as a 'matchmaker' that connects institutions with professionals and companies that have expertise, the Central Virtual Learning Platform addresses gaps in the production of virtual learning materials. This response effort is critical to ensuring Ontario postsecondary education remains among the best in the world, now and into the future.

An internal pilot of the CVLP will be conducted in April of 2021 and managed by eCampusOntario staff using a manual process. The platform will replace the manual process and workflow.

The successful bidder will have access to anonymized data collected during the internal pilot for development purposes as well as access to eCampusOntario staff in a consultive capacity to share learnings from the pilot and to provide feedback.

Scope: The development of the Central Virtual Learning Platform expands upon eCampusOntario's internal pilot to provide both member institutions and suppliers of online learning services with a web-based platform that matches supply to demand.

The successful applicant will be responsible for finalizing the scope and timeline with eCampusOntario prior to the start of production. Applicants will be responsible for the design, development and coordination of the hosting requirements for the CVLP.

Proposals will be considered for the development of a custom CVLP application where eCampusOntario takes possession of all code and assumes responsibility for support and maintenance after the successful launch of the platform.

Proposals will also be considered for existing platforms that meet (or will be adapted within the scope of this engagement) to meet CVLP requirements. In this scenario, the applicant, in addition to all custom development and incremental costs to meet the requirements below, must include any license fees, hosting, or usage cost for the period of 1 year, and indicate the ongoing cost for continued use of the platform for an additional 2-year period.

Requirements: The following requirements provide details on the functionality of the CVLP platform to meet current expectations of outcomes for three groups of users: CVLP administrators (eCampusOntario staff), Institutions and Suppliers.

General Requirements:

- The web app/platform must be responsive and fully functional across popular mobile devices and tablets. If any elements of the web app/platform do not meet WCAG 2.0 standards it is the vendor's responsibility to identify and discuss this with eCampusOntario and implement a mutually satisfactory solution.

- All content and navigation must be available in French and English

- The site/platform must be AODA Compliant

- All content must be accessible/editable by eCampusOntario staff via a CMS (ideally via our extant WordPress platform)

- The site/platform must support multiple tiers of access (e.g. user/editor /admin/superuser)

Requirements for Institutional Users (Colleges, Universities and Indigenous Institutes):

- Institutional administrators will need to be able to create/update/delete Institutional users

- Institutional users should have the ability to search/sort suppliers by skills category (e.g. multimedia developer, instructional designer) and location

- Ability to bookmark supplier profiles and save to their user profile

- Ability to filter and sort selected supplier profiles by specific criterial (e.g. filter for 'Instructional Designer' and sort by hourly rate

- Ability to download saved profiles in a single PDF document

- Ability to tag and sort supplier profiles as 'preferred' – for example vendors that have been previously engaged by their institution

- Institutional administrators/users must have the ability to submit a request for support services along with a description of the project that includes but is not limited to:

  » Contact info and project description

  » Details of institutional contribution to the project

  » Details of supporting services requested, including specific educational technology expertise needed

  » Minimum/maximum number of hours required

  » Project start/end date

User Requirements for Suppliers (providers of professional services):

- Ability to create/update/delete a supplier profile including

  » Contact info, supplier details and description of services/rates

  » List previous experience, previous project details, and contact info for references

  » Upload a PDF brochure/rate card

- Ability to indicate availability (i.e. availability dates, available hours per week, mechanism to avoid double bookings

- Provide profile templates that accommodate both individual freelancers and full-service companies with multiple staff

- Platform Administrator Requirements: (eCampusOntario Admins)

- Ability to provision and manage all user accounts types (primarily Institutional Administrator accounts)

- CRUD interface to manually manage all Supplier / Project and Institutional profiles (including the ability to show/hide supplier and project profiles)

- Ability to download time-stamped data in an Excel or CSV format

- Ability to assign suppliers to institution projects and generate a project code

Vendors are invited to include where applicable a recommendation or recommended approach on the following:

- Method of user account creation and management (self-serve for most use cases)
- CMS recommendations (eCampusOntario's current site uses WordPress)
- Suggestions for data capture / matching and mapping Suppliers to suitable institutions
- Suggestions for matching supply and demand
- Suggestions for auto-notification,
- Recommendations for data security / user privacy

Timeline

March 10, 2021: Request for Quotation submissions due

March 17-24, 2021: Successful vendor notified and contract awarded

April 1, 2021: Platform architecture and UX wireframes presentation for approval

April 14, 2021: Feature detail + final documentation presentation for approval

April 16, 2021: eCampusOntario production signoff

April 19, 2021: Start of Production

Application

Applicants should submit a written response (no more than 8 pages) to this request for quote, including the following:

- Cover page (1 page)
- Company summary and executive summary of relevant experience (1 page)
- Proposed development process, solution and timeline, including supporting screenshots & wireframes (5 pages)
- A complete and detailed quote for all services (1 page)

Evaluation Criteria

Quote will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Quality of the solution: Proposed solution demonstrates a thorough understanding of CLVP objectives, users and desired outcomes.

- Experience and background: Demonstrated experience in building high-quality web applications with a focus on human-centred design, and in particular expertise in delivering services for the post-secondary sector

- Process and timeline: Development plan establishes clear deliverables and communication processes appropriate for the project scope and timeline.

- Budget: Proposal costs are detailed and appropriate to the project.

The award of this RFQ is subject to approved funding from the Province.

Please submit applications to procurement@ecampusontario.ca by **March 10th, 2021**.