

Cal State Online Request for Proposals for Online Course and Program Delivery Services

Cal State Online invites proposals from firms presently engaged in the business of providing comprehensive online course and program delivery services. Cal State Online may select one or more firms to provide the services requested. Firms may work in groups to submit proposals.

SECTION I CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Issuance of RFP	April 2, 2012
Notice of Intent to Propose	April 23, 2012
Proposal Due Date	May 4, 2012
Interviews and Presentations	Early June, 2012
Vendor Selection	June, 2012
Proposed Board Action	June 22 nd , 2012 Board Meeting

Notice of Intent

Interested parties should fax a brief Notice of Intent to Propose to this RFP to Online@calstate.edu on or before 5:00 p.m. on Monday, April 23, 2012. The Notice must include the single point of contact responsible for the RFP response and must provide telephone, fax and e-mail information for this individual.

No Contact

No contact with Cal State Online Board members or senior staff of Cal State Online or the CSU Chancellor's office is permitted during the pendency of this RFP.

Written Questions

Written questions will be accepted only via e-mail at Online@calstate.edu, Written questions to the above e-mail address will be accepted only from 10:00 am (PST) on Monday, April 9, 2012 through Noon on Wednesday, April 25, 2012. Responses to questions will be posted to the official RFP website.

Withdrawal of RFP

Proposers may withdraw their submittal at any time prior to the deadline upon presentation of a written request to Cal State Online. After the submission deadline, submittals shall be firm and may not be withdrawn for a period of 180 days.

Due Date

Eight printed copies and an electronic copy (thumb drive or CD) of the proposal are due no later than **5:00 p.m.** on Friday, May 4, 2012, in a sealed package or packages. All proposals must be delivered to:

The First Floor Reception Desk
The CSU Chancellor's Office
401 Golden Shore
Long Beach, CA 90802
Attention: Ruth Claire Black

Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered, nor will email or faxed proposals, whenever received.

No Reimbursement For RFP Expenses

Cal State Online will not provide reimbursement for any expenses incurred in connection with this RFP including the costs of preparing the response, providing any additional information and attending an interview or interviews. All material submitted in response to this RFP will become the sole property of Cal State Online. Cal State Online expressly reserves the right to utilize any and all ideas submitted in the proposals received unless covered by legal patent or proprietary rights.

Interviews and Presentations

Interviews and presentations by top-qualifying firms may be conducted at Cal State Online's discretion. All firms or partnership groups selected for an interview and presentation will be notified of the proposed interview date(s) at least one week in advance.

Firms or partnership groups selected for interview must present, for in-person interview, both the dedicated/lead point of contact for the project and the vendor representative with financial decision making authority for the project.

Confidentiality

All responses to this RFP become the property of Cal State Online and will be kept confidential until such time as a recommendation to negotiate a contract has been announced by the Cal State Online Board of Trustees. Thereafter, submittals are subject to public inspection and disclosure under the California Public Records Act. If a respondent believes that any portion of its submittal is exempt from public disclosure, such portion may be marked "confidential." Cal State Online will use reasonable means to ensure that such confidential information is safeguarded but will not be held liable for inadvertent disclosure of such materials, data and information. Any proposal marked "confidential" in its entirety will not be honored and Cal State Online will not deny public disclosure of all or any portion of submittals so marked.

By submitting information with portions marked "confidential", the respondent represents it has a good faith belief that such material is exempt from disclosure under the California Public Records Act and agrees to reimburse Cal State Online for, and to indemnify, defend and hold harmless Cal State Online, its officers, fiduciaries, employees and agents from and against: (a) any and all claims, damages, losses, liabilities, suits, judgments, fines, penalties, costs and expenses including, without limitation, attorneys' fees, expenses and court costs of any nature whatsoever (collectively, "Claims") arising from or relating to Cal State Online's non-disclosure of any such designated portions of a proposal if disclosure is deemed required by law or court order.

SECTION II CONTRACT PERIOD

The term of the contract/award will be for a five year period. Cal State Online may, in its discretion issue up to three one year extensions of the contract.

SECTION III BACKGROUND

Cal State Online is envisioned as a system-level component of Cal State University System designed to support and supplement the Cal State University System academic offerings through marketing, servicing, developing and facilitating online educational programs. Cal State Online will draw upon current programmatic and faculty strength on the Cal State campuses to create new programs, markets and service support for online learners. While Cal State Online will be a centralized organizational entity responsible for student recruitment and support for existing and new online programs the academic programs will remain academically controlled by their originating campus.

Cal State Online is governed by the Cal State Online Advisory Board. The Board is made up of four Cal State University Campus Presidents, one Cal State University Campus Provost or AVP, one Cal State University Campus Dean of Extended Education, one Cal State University Academic Technology Steering Committee member, two members of the Cal State University Statewide Academic Senate and one California State Student Association Student Representative. The Cal State University Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer, the Cal State University Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer and the Chair of the Cal State University System-wide Academic Senate are Ex-Officio members of the Board. The Cal State Online Board and the Executive Director work closely with various constituency bodies throughout the Cal State System to develop and direct the budget, structure and operations of Cal State Online.

Campuses throughout the Cal State System have the option of participating in Cal State Online with one or more fully online programs that they have developed or that they are developing alone or in consortium with other Cal State System Campuses. Participation in Cal State Online is voluntary and the Cal State Online offerings and participating campuses are a “coalition of the willing.”

Participating program oversight and direction remains with the campus that offer the program. All programs participating in Cal State Online are subject to the same approval processes and oversight structures as an on campus program, including conformance with the terms of the applicable collective bargaining agreements. While Cal State Online students will receive substantial and ongoing support from Cal State Online they will be admitted students of the campus that offer’s the student’s program.

The goal of Cal State Online is to create a standardized, centralized, comprehensive business, marketing and outreach support structure for all aspects of online program delivery for the Cal State University System. Cal State Online seeks to support and market the best possible online education to the broadest possible spectrum of society, embracing the needs of the entire population. Cal State Online will focus on building enrollments throughout California in years one through three but expects to be

international in scope, welcoming students from all 50 states and across the globe by year five. Cal State Online plans to enroll over 250,000 students over the next several decades and to provide them with a comprehensive and expansive set of Cal State fully online program offerings combined with world class student support and a variety of innovative learning technologies.

Additional information about Cal State Online is available at www.calstateonline.net.

SECTION IV PROPOSED TERM SCHEDULE

Cal State Online anticipates a six term per year or trimester schedule. Each term will be eight weeks long. For the 2013 calendar year Cal State Online anticipates utilizing a six term schedule with a single start date for each term. During the 2014 calendar year Cal State Online may consider moving to two start dates for each term start so that students can have added flexibility in scheduling and more opportunities to begin courses.

SECTION V PROPOSED LAUNCH TIMELINE

Cal State Online expects to officially launch in January 2013, with as many as ten degree programs. For the late fall 2012 term (beginning in late October 2012) Cal State Online anticipates offering two to three courses in several programs in a live beta test term.

SECTION VI FACULTY AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Cal State Online expects to work with the campuses and the colleges of extended learning, and in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements, to ensure payment of all teaching and faculty fees and any costs associated with intellectual property acquisition. All other course and partnership costs must be part of the RFP proposal.

SECTION VIII ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

Vendors should base proposals on 1000 three unit course enrollments in year one and 3000 three unit course enrollments in year two.

SECTION IX PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS SERVICES TO BE DELIVERED

Following is a list of the information to be provided for each of the services sought. A proposal that does not include the information required below may be deemed non-responsive and subject to rejection. In setting forth its qualifications, each firm shall provide, in concise but adequate detail, the information sought below. Proposals may not exceed 25 pages in length.

For each item listed below briefly describe the services your firm will provide.

TEACHING AND LEARNING TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

- Comprehensive fully hosted LMS services
- Comprehensive course conversion services to move existing courses from other platforms or from face to face or blended formats to the selected partner platform
- Integrated assessment and reporting tools, rubrics and analytics for assurance of learning and accreditation reporting
- Comprehensive technology solutions and services for ADA compliance requirements within the online course environment
- At least one integrated student electronic portfolio option
- Comprehensive integrated technology solutions and services for exam proctoring
- Comprehensive integrated technology solutions and services for plagiarism monitoring and identification
- Applications for embedded digital text and embedded content options within the online course that enable full and rich online course experiences on mobile and tablet devices
- Applications for streaming video and full length films within courses

WEBSITE SERVICES

- Comprehensive website development, maintenance and updating services

CUSTOMER (STUDENT) RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT SERVICES

- Comprehensive services to support student lead and student prospect generation.

- Comprehensive recruitment, outreach and public relations support

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

- Comprehensive student 7/24 help desk services
- Student success coaching from prospect phase through middle of third term

FACULTY SUPPORT SERVICES

- Comprehensive faculty 7/24 help desk services
- Basic, intermediate and advanced faculty development for online teaching and online course and program development delivered onsite and virtually at participating campuses on an agreed upon schedule
- Comprehensive instructional design and consultation services

ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS SERVICES; INTEGRATION WITH EXISTING CSU PEOPLESOFT SYSTEM

- Full student and administrative information system integration services (with PeopleSoft) related to full implementation and launch of the initiative
- Web and portal based applications for financial aid, admissions and enrollment (preferably with integrated phone, email, text and live chat support options)

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT SERVICES

- Portal and web based applications and options for licensing content from publishers and holders of intellectual property rights

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE SERVICES

- Systems, services and data collection options for assisting campuses and programs in meeting and reporting of state and federal gainful employment requirements (especially relating to certificate programs)
- Systems and services to assist campuses and programs in meeting state by state education rules and requirements regarding advertising and serving students in specific states (The “qualification to do business rules”)

PROJECT OFFICE

- The vendor partner should also expect to handle a modest office location for the Cal State Online project for years one and two

Firm Qualifications

Cal State Online invites proposals from firms presently engaged in the business of providing comprehensive online course and program delivery services. Cal State Online may select one or more firms to provide the services requested herein. Firms may work in partnership groups to submit proposals.

While partnership groups and joint proposals may include new or less established firms as well as innovative or specialized companies and organizations, the lead proposer must meet the following firm qualifications. Briefly describe how the lead proposer meets each of the following criteria:

- a. Continuously engaged in the business of providing comprehensive online course and program delivery services for at least 5 years
- b. Recognized industry leader in online education services
- c. Total annual revenue in excess of \$10M
- d. At least 10 current contracts in excess of \$100,000 annually to provide comprehensive online course and program delivery services to fully accredited public and private non-profit educational institutions
- e. Qualified to do business in the United States

Management Qualifications

State the names of the firm personnel who would be assigned to the Cal State Online partnership. Describe the services to be provided by each individual.

Identify the partner/senior director in charge of the project and, for this partner/senior director, provide five client references relating to engagements similar to the ones described in this RFP. Briefly describe each partner/senior director's experience working with engagements similar to the ones described in this RFP.

Identify the dedicated program administrators and managers to be assigned to the project and, for each program administrator and manager, provide five client references relating to engagements similar to the ones described in this RFP. Briefly describe each administrator's and manager's experience working with engagements similar to the ones described in this RFP.

Describe your firm’s experience related to the services to be provided, including a brief summary of any current and prior contracts, partnerships, transactions or relationships which you feel demonstrate the nature and extent of your firm’s expertise. Provide ten client references relating to the delivery of comprehensive online course and program delivery services at fully accredited public or private not-for-profit institutions.

Fee Proposal

Proposals shall contain a single/total per unit fee that covers all listed service items. If an item cannot be provided briefly explain why. For each individual service item, assign a per unit cost and a vendor provider. Utilize the following format example for the total fee and individual costing:

All inclusive/total fee per unit:		\$XX.XX
Comprehensive fully hosted LMS services:	Provider	\$XX.XX
Assessment and reporting rubrics and analytics	Provider	\$XX.XX
Comprehensive lead/prospect generation services		Not Available
Electronic student portfolio	Provider	\$XX.XX

1. Proposals may provide a tiered or waterfall based fee that adjusts as enrollments build over time
2. If additional items and/or services can be delivered briefly describe the additional deliverable and itemize the cost in the required format
3. A start-up/seed funding mechanism for the Cal State Online initiative that provides sufficient funds to accommodate all items identified in this RFP
4. A proposal for repayment, or forgiveness of the start-up funds that allows the Cal State Online initiative to prosper and grow while meeting repayment obligations or benchmarks for forgiveness
5. A start-up/seed funding mechanism for new programs, partnerships and initiatives within Cal State Online
6. Describe how any current agreements with CSU campuses will be handled under the terms of a new Cal State Online system-wide contract

Briefly state any special considerations, concepts or proposals that you believe differentiate your proposal from other submissions and make your firm’s services more cost effective or superior. Each proposal may put forward any alternative fee models, revenue sharing options or start up financing structures deemed appropriate as a supplement to the items and format requirements listed above.

SECTION X EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Cal State Online will only consider proposals from financially responsible firms presently engaged in the business of providing comprehensive online course and program delivery services. The award will be made to the most responsible vendor or partnership group whose proposal is determined to be the most advantageous to Cal State Online based on the following criteria, listed in order of importance:

1. Maximizing services and innovative technology options (20 points)
2. Total fee proposal including start-up funding amounts and terms of repayment as well as financial stability and resources of the responder or partnership group (20 points)
3. Unique, proprietary and/or creative products or services that will enhance the Cal State Online brand and differentiate and distance Cal State Online from other public and private online education ventures (15 points)
4. Interview with demonstration (15 points)
5. Past performance and experience with similar large scale projects and clients (10 points)
6. Demonstrated ability to meet the launch timelines (5 points)
7. Information provided by client references (5 points)
8. Overall organization, completeness, and quality of proposal, including cohesiveness, conciseness, and clarity of response (5 points)
9. Qualifications of key partnership personnel including longevity of service to the vendor/partner and time commitment and long term availability to Cal State Online (5 points)

Selection Process

Any proposal that does not address all requested requirements or is incomplete will be rejected. Cal State Online may afford firms the opportunity to clarify proposals for the purpose of assuring a full understanding of their responsiveness to the RFP.

Cal State Online may conduct interviews of Proposers found to be most qualified to perform the services required, based upon the listed criteria. If so, Proposers will be notified in advance of the proposed interview date. All Proposers will be notified in writing once one or more firms have been selected.

SECTION XI PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS AND CONDITIONS

Limitations

1. This RFP does not commit Cal State Online to award a contract, pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response, or procure or contract for services of any kind whatsoever. Cal State Online reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to negotiate with any or all firms considered, or to cancel this RFP in whole or in part
2. Proposers may be requested to clarify the contents of their proposal. Other than to provide such information as may be required by Cal State Online, no Proposer will be allowed to alter its proposal or to add new information after the due date
3. A proposing firm may be required to participate in negotiations and to submit price, technical or other revisions to its proposal which may result from such negotiations
4. All material submitted in response to this RFP will become the sole property of Cal State Online
5. From among the proposals received Cal State Online may select one or more firms to serve as counsel in the practice area

Proposal Submission

Proposals may not exceed 25 pages. Proposals must include a cover letter indicating the mailing address of the office from which the proposal is submitted, the name of the individual who is the primary contact for the proposal, and the telephone, fax and e-mail information of the primary contact. The Proposal cover letter **must also include** a specific acceptance of the administrative specifications below.

1. Non-responsive proposals include, but are not limited to, those that:
 - a. Are irregular or not in conformance with RFP requirements and instructions
 - b. Are conditional, incomplete, indefinite or ambiguous

- c. Have no signature or an improper one
 - d. Are not submitted on time or are submitted at any time via fax or e-mail
2. Cal State Online may waive minor informalities or irregularities in a proposal that are merely a matter of form and not substance and the correction of which would not be prejudicial to other proposals.

Administrative Specifications

- 1. All proposals must be irrevocable for 180 days and signed by an authorized officer of the firm or of each firm if there is a joint response.
- 2. The successful Proposer must agree to provide Cal State Online with audit access on request during the term of the contract and for 7 years thereafter.

The cover letter of the Proposal must confirm your firm's acceptance of the above administrative specifications. Failure to specifically confirm your Proposal's acceptance of each of the above administrative specifications may result in your Proposal being deemed non-responsive.

Errors and Admissions

If a Proposer discovers any ambiguity, discrepancy, omission or other error in this RFP, please immediately notify Cal State Online in writing of such error and request clarification or modification of the document.

Should Cal State Online find it necessary, modification to the RFP will be made by addenda. Such modifications or requests for addenda may be given by written notice to all parties who have furnished an RFP or a written Notice of Intent to Propose.

If the Proposer fails to notify Cal State Online of a known error or an error that reasonably should have been known prior to the final filing date for submission, the Proposer shall assume the risk. If awarded the contract, the Proposer(s) shall not be entitled to additional compensation or time by reason of the error or its late correction.

SECTION XII CONTRACT APPROVAL

Cal State Online's selection of one or more successful Proposers shall not be binding until it has been approved by the Cal State Online Board of Directors.