Request for Proposals (RFP)

To: Offerors
From: Institute of International Education, Inc. (IIE)
Subject: Selection of Vendor for Technical Development Services - Chatbot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RFP Reference Number:</th>
<th>080620MM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RFP Issue Date:</td>
<td>August 7, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notification of Intent and Signing of NDA</td>
<td>August 14, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questions Due Date:</td>
<td>August 17, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questions Answered Date:</td>
<td>August 19, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demos:</td>
<td>August 24, 2020 – August 26, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFP Closing Date; Time:</td>
<td>August 28, 2020; 5:00 pm US Eastern Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Period:</td>
<td>September 7, 2020 – October 9, 2020</td>
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</table>

Enclosed is a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the technical development of an artificial intelligence-focused chatbot. IIE invites qualified firms and organizations (“Offerors”) to submit a best-value proposal for the requested services. The Contract resulting from this award will be a **USG-Funded Subcontractor Agreement** serving the below mentioned program.

Offerors are encouraged to read this RFP in its entirety (including any and all attachments), paying specific attention to the instructions and requirements included herein. Issuance of this solicitation does not, in any way, obligate the Institute of International Education (IIE) to award a contract, nor will IIE pay for any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal. The agreement resulting from this RFP will be provided to the most responsive Offeror(s) whose Offer will be the most advantageous to IIE in terms of cost, functionality, and other factors as specified in this RFP.

The required services are described in the “Statement of Work” in Attachment A. IIE encourages your organization to indicate its interest in this RFP by submitting a proposal according to the instructions in “Proposal Preparation Instruction”. Proposals will be evaluated based on the “Evaluation Criteria”.

All proposals are due by the dates and times stated above. Any proposal received after the required time and date specified for receipt shall be considered late and non-responsive. Late proposals will not be evaluated.

Questions:

Any questions are to be submitted in writing via email to the email address listed below no later than 5pm, EST, **August 17, 2020**. No questions will be entertained if they are received by means other than the specified email address. No oral answers will be provided. Answers to questions IIE deems relevant to this RFP will be published on **10am, EST, August 19, 2020** on IIE’s website under Subawards and Procurement ([https://www.iie.org/Work-With-Us/Subawards-Procurements](https://www.iie.org/Work-With-Us/Subawards-Procurements)).

Version 2 - February 2, 2018

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Proposal Submission: Proposals, including any attachments (limited to 6MB), should be sent electronically in PDF format to: MBenjamin@iie.org. Be sure to include in the subject line: Selection of Vendor for Technical Development Services - Chatbot. IIE will not accept proposals received by fax.

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SECTION 1: BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Background: Institute of International Education

The Institute of International Education ("IIE" or the "Institute") is a New York not-for-profit corporation that is among the world’s largest and most experienced international education and training organizations. Founded in 1919, IIE promotes educational exchange around the world through a wealth of programs and services including Fellowship and Scholarship Management, Higher Education Institutional Development, Emergency Student and Scholar Assistance, and Leadership Development.

For more than 90 years, IIE has promoted educational exchange around the world. The Institute currently implements more than 200 programs benefiting 40,000 participants from 183 countries. Foremost among these programs is the world-renowned Fulbright Program, which IIE has had the honor to administer on behalf of the U.S. Department of State since the program’s inception in 1946. In addition to the U.S. Department of State, program sponsors include: the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID); World Bank; major philanthropic foundations; private and public corporations; foreign governments; and individuals.

With IIE’s global headquarters in New York City, IIE has offices around the world, including offices in the United States (Washington D.C., Chicago, Denver, Houston and San Francisco) and in other countries (China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Russia, Thailand, Ukraine, and Vietnam).

Purpose of Request for Proposal

The purpose of this Request for Proposal ("RFP") is to invite qualified individuals and organizations to submit a proposal for the development of an artificial intelligence-focused chatbot outlined more fully in Attachment A.

IIE and sponsored program are seeking to develop and implement a chatbot that would serve as a resource for advisers globally and provide a consistent voice to answer basic student inquiries. It will also provide a helpful resource to the domestic staff managing social media channels and increase the advising capacity to support any future marketing campaigns conducted. Expected benefits of the chatbot implementation include the following:

Improved resources for prospective students
- Advising prospective students on educational opportunities available to them in the United States
- Providing prospective students with 24/7 access to relevant, accurate, and updated support
- Providing short personalized responses using resources such as the 5-steps and FAQs
- Engaging customers on channels that they currently use such as mobile and social media
- The ability to escalate inquiries to advisers in the appropriate regional offices when answers aren’t sufficient
- Increased responsiveness via social media (Instagram & Facebook) chat functions

Increased adviser productivity
- Reducing labor and communication required of staff and advisers for basic or routine inquiries
- Allowing staff to focus additional time on other campaigns and services to maximize impact
- Interacting with multiple customers concurrently
- Capturing metrics and interactions with participants occurring in social media to provide analytical reports
- Improving the knowledge base to develop new program content and advising resources
- Increasing targeted outreach capabilities using reports on interactions with prospective students

Operational
- Reducing the cost of hiring advisers for long hours to support students
- Reducing customer service cost
- Potential scalability to other channels, regions, and languages
- Ability to scale without significant recruiting or hiring of new staff
SECTION 2: RFP CONDITIONS

IIE reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all offers and discontinue this RFP process without obligation or liability to any potential Offeror or other party.
- Accept other than the lowest price offered.
- Award a contract on the basis of initial offers received, without discussions or requests for best and final offers.
- Award more than one contract.

Offerors must:

- Align with ECA Communications Guidance: https://eca.state.gov/comms-guidance

Nothing in this RFP is, or should be relied on by Offeror as a promise or representation by IIE. IIE does not make any representation or warranty as to the completeness of this RFP or have any liability for any representations (express or implied) contained in, or omissions from, this RFP. This RFP and any replies to any written notifications are transmitted to the Offeror solely for the purposes of the Offeror preparing and submitting a Proposal. Each Offeror shall keep the RFP and its contents confidential and shall return the RFP (without keeping copies) to IIE if the Offeror elects not to submit a proposal, or upon being requested to do so by IIE.

Any information or materials submitted in response to this RFP and/or as a proposal (whether successful or unsuccessful) shall become the property of IIE and will not be returned.

In submitting a proposal, you must agree that your offer shall remain firm for a period of no less than 120 days from the RFP closing date.

Failure to follow the specifications and requirements provided in this RFP may result in disqualification.

The successful Offeror will be obligated to enter into an agreement containing the same or substantially similar terms and conditions found at: https://www.iie.org/Work-With-Us/Subawards-Procurements/Solicitations-for-Goods-and-Services. The terms and conditions may be changed, added to, deleted or modified by IIE prior to awarding the agreement. Other terms and conditions may be negotiated between IIE and the successful Offeror, at IIE’s discretion. State Universities and Agencies should not expect or ask IIE to modify its Terms and Conditions to incorporate any State Regulations or Statutes.

SECTION 3: PROPOSAL PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals are expected to be comprehensive and include the information set forth below. Offerors are also invited to send any additional information or supplemental material they believe will aid IIE in properly evaluating their service offerings. Please be sure to respond to each of the elements requested and frame your answers in direct response to the information being sought.

Include only your own work and no text copied from sources outside of your organization, unless those sources are adequately cited and credited. In order to be qualified for this RFP, all Offerors are requested to provide the following information, and format their proposal as follows:

1. Letter of transmittal, one page
2. Basic information, one page
   - Legal name, registered address, and “Remit to” mailing address, if different from registered address
   - Name of authorized representative for this RFP, with telephone number(s), and e-mail address
   - General information about your organization and the services it offers
3. Qualifications and Capabilities
   - Brief description of the organization/entity and experience in the field that illustrates overall services and capabilities to meet the terms of the RFP

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• Years of relevant experience
• Any plans to outsource/subcontract the services or any part thereof

4. Past Performance and Experience

Document and summarize your proven track record of successfully implementing similar activities. Using the table format provided below, please list only the relevant projects you implemented within the past 3 years, a brief description of how each is relevant to the scope of the RFP, and the contact details for each previous client or donor. You may also include recommendation/appreciation letters and certificates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>(a) Name of Organization</th>
<th>(b) Activity Title</th>
<th>(c) Locations of activity</th>
<th>(d) Synopsis of the activity and relevance to this RFP</th>
<th>(e) Performance period (date and duration)</th>
<th>(f) Cost for the activity</th>
<th>(g) Name &amp; Contact Info (E-mail and phone)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

5. Implementation of the Statement of Work

• Detailed description of the services being offered and any information relevant to meeting the technical specifications stated in Attachment A
• Methodology, and reasoning behind the methodology chosen
• Quality control plan including:
  o A description of internal review procedures that facilitate high-quality standards
  o How quality control will be managed when completing multiple projects for multiple clients
• Exceptions to the RFP, additional or different ideas, in the statement of work and other requirements should be expressly noted

6. Cost Proposal

• Submit a detailed cost proposal, in U.S. dollars, in the recommended format shown in Attachment B
• Include any additional cost items that the Offeror wishes to propose
• Total cost proposed

SECTION 4: TERMS OF PAYMENT

Payment terms for the award shall be approximately net thirty (30) days after satisfactory completion of each deliverable or milestone agreed upon and established in the resulting agreement. Payment shall be made by the Institute of International Education (“IIE”) via check or electronic funds transfer/bank wire. The final payment terms in the contract will control, not this RFP. No advance payments will be provided.

SECTION 5: EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Maximum Length</th>
<th>Points Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1) Understanding & Approach | Considering the Statement of Work in Attachment A, please describe in detail the following:  
  a) The steps, in chronological order, that you will take to implement the work. Make sure to describe any innovative approaches or technology you plan to use.  
  b) Why you chose the methodology: make sure to mention similar projects you implemented in the past and lessons you learned from them. | 2 pages | 20 points |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Corporate Qualifications &amp; Capacity</th>
<th>Corporate resources, capacity and historical track record as they relate to the SOW.</th>
<th>1 page</th>
<th>15 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3) Staffing</td>
<td>Please provide the following, in order:</td>
<td>A description of your staffing plan for this activity and a general overview of the expertise of the individuals included.</td>
<td>2 pages (a and b) and 1 page per CV</td>
<td>15 points</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>A list of your proposed staff in the following format:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Name:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Proposed position on your team:</td>
<td>Proposed position on your team:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Summary of relevant expertise and experience:</td>
<td>Summary of relevant expertise and experience:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>c) Please include the CVs of each proposed staff member. Each CV must be no longer than one page in length.</td>
<td>Greater points will be awarded for presentation of staff with greater qualifications and experience in managing works similar that stated in this RFP.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4) Past Performance/Projects Completed</td>
<td>An assessment of the relevance and performance of past projects in relation to the proposed scope of work</td>
<td>1 page</td>
<td>15 Points</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5) Demo</td>
<td>• PowerPoint or prototype</td>
<td>60 mins</td>
<td>15 points</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Multi-channel</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Natural Language processing</td>
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<td>• Reporting/Analytics</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Licensing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Requirements Gathering and testing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Q&amp;A</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6) Cost Proposal</td>
<td>IIE’s review of the cost proposal shall determine if the overall costs proposed are realistic for the work to be performed, reflect a correct understanding of the project requirements, and are consistent with the Offeror’s technical proposal.</td>
<td>1 page</td>
<td>20 points</td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>7 pages</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 points</strong></td>
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**SECTION 6: ANNUAL RENEWAL:**

Annual Renewal: Selection(s) may be renewed annually, at IIE’s sole discretion, for up to five years before re-competition. IIE reserves the right to exercise any one of the following options:

- Accept the updated proposal if changes are reasonable and within the scope of the original selection;
- Negotiate any updates/changes; or,
- Decide not to renew.
ATTACHMENT A STATEMENT OF WORK

The implementation of the chatbot will require a contractor for technical development and support. The contractor is required to deliver the requirements articulated:

- Technical Requirements (Attachment B)
- Business Requirements (Attachment C)
- Third-Party Information Security & Privacy Assessment (Attachment E)

Contractors will be required to incorporate an agile development approach highlighting stakeholder involvement and feedback throughout development.

High-Level Deliverables
- Chatbot interface
- Chatbot Admin Console
- Chatbot analytics; dashboards and reports that deliver key performance metrics
- Support, training, and maintenance documentation
ATTACHMENT B TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Functional Requirements

1. Chatting:
   • The system should allow users to chat.
   • The system shall inform the user if an answer is not available.
   • The system shall inform the user about spelling mistakes.
   • The system shall inform the user about the validity of the sentence.

2. Voice Interface:
   • The system should have the capability for speech (voice) input and output.

3. Languages:
   • The system should have the capability to support and scale to different languages (Multilingual API).
   • The initial system implementation will be in English.

4. Searching:
   • The system should allow users to search for relevant information.

5. Logs:
   • The system should maintain a log of all questions and answers and also track the satisfaction level of users.

6. Feedback:
   • The user should be able to leave feedback, which is comprised of a text message and a rating.

7. Administrative system
   • Information management: The administrator should be able to add, update and delete questions, answers and keywords.
   • The system learning process should be able to be monitored and managed
   • Log Management: The administrator should be able to view and delete logs.
   • Feedback Management: The administrator should be able to view and delete feedback.
   • Reporting Functionality

Non-Functional Requirements

1. User Interface:
   • The system shall maintain an easy to use interface across all functionality and for all users
   • The clients' user interface should be compatible with all commonly used browsers, such as Internet explorer, Firefox, Google chrome and Safari.
   • The system should be able to integrate with other/multiple channels

2. Scalability:
   • The system shall be able to scale based on the number of users using the system.

3. Security:
   • The administrative system should be protected from unauthorized access.
   • The database should be protected from attacks and unauthorized access.
• The interface should be protected from attacks.
• All passwords should be stored as a secure hash of the administrator password.

4. Third party interactions:
• The system should be able to interact with the Google spelling server, which handles the spelling.
• The system should be able to interact with the Google search server.

5. Portability:
• The system should run on a variety of operating systems that support the Java language.
• The system should run on a variety of hardware.

6. Maintainability:
• The system should be easy to maintain.
• The system should be developed in a supportable platform (Software, SDK)
• There should be a clear separation of HTML and Java interface code.
• There should be a clear separation between the interface and the business logic code.
• There should be a clear separation between the data access objects that map the database and the business logic code.

7. Exception handling:
• Exceptions should be reported effectively to the user if they occur.

8. Ethics:
• The system shall not store or process any information about its users.
## ATTACHMENT C BUSINESS REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Stakeholder (s)</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>As a/an...</th>
<th>I want to...</th>
<th>So that.....</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Customer/Student</td>
<td>User Experience</td>
<td>Customer/Student</td>
<td>Have conversational interactions with the chatbot</td>
<td>I can communicate in common language and receive concise answers to my questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Customer/Student</td>
<td>User Experience</td>
<td>Customer/Student</td>
<td>The chatbot should ask for more information</td>
<td>I can identify appropriate answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Customer/Student</td>
<td>User Experience</td>
<td>Customer/Student</td>
<td>Be able to contact my country adviser for additional questions</td>
<td>I can talk to a person and get answers to questions the bot doesn't know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Customer/Student</td>
<td>User Experience</td>
<td>Customer/Student</td>
<td>Receive a response to everything that I write to the chatbot</td>
<td>I know my questions and/or concerns are being addressed by someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Customer/Student</td>
<td>User Experience</td>
<td>Customer/Student</td>
<td>To indicate the helpfulness of an answer provided by the chatbot</td>
<td>Continue receiving valuable and relevant information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Customer/Student</td>
<td>User Experience</td>
<td>Customer/Student</td>
<td>Be able to use English spell check functionality in the text input</td>
<td>I send clear questions in English without spelling mistakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Customer/Student</td>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>Customer/Student</td>
<td>Be provided with some suggestions about what to ask the chatbot</td>
<td>I can find information even if I don't know what to ask</td>
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<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Priority</td>
<td>Stakeholder(s)</td>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>As a/an....</td>
<td>I want to....</td>
<td>So that.....</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Adviser</td>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>Adviser</td>
<td>Access the names and emails of students utilizing the chatbot from my country on a daily basis</td>
<td>I can create an outreach list and engage with more students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Adviser</td>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>Adviser</td>
<td>Be able to see all the questions asked by students from my country/region</td>
<td>I can better understand how to advise my students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Adviser</td>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>Adviser</td>
<td>Link to the chatbot function from/on my social media accounts or country specific websites</td>
<td>I can utilize the chatbot function on the flagship social media accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Adviser</td>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>Adviser</td>
<td>To receive notifications each time a user from their country enters contact information and access the contact information via the notification or a daily report</td>
<td>I can better provide necessary customer service and follow up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Adviser</td>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Identify and implement functionality and a process to monitor, refine and adjust content</td>
<td>I can provide valuable and relevant content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Identify all questions that the bot was unable to answer</td>
<td>I can improve the knowledgebase of the bot and the advising resources for the program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Metrics &amp; Reporting</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Be able to report how many participants the chatbot interacts with and see the countries they are from</td>
<td>we can measure engagement, create success metrics, and report to the sponsor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ATTACHMENT C BUSINESS REQUIREMENTS – CONT’D

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Stakeholder(s)</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>As a/an...</th>
<th>I want to...</th>
<th>So that.....</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Metrics &amp; Reporting</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Group the student questions into categories or question intents</td>
<td>The most important questions and concerns of students can be identified</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>User Experience</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Have students provide feedback about how helpful the chatbot answers were</td>
<td>I can update the least helpful answers and improve the adviser content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Technical Administration</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Select a chatbot solution that is not a custom build</td>
<td>the system is not outdated or complex to manage 3-4 years down the line (ECA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>User Experience</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Provide interactive content including videos, images, and PDFs within the chatbot</td>
<td>Students can access more engaging content than just text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>User Experience</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Embed the bot in Facebook Messenger and Instagram accounts</td>
<td>Questions can be answered via social media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>User Experience</td>
<td>Customer/Student</td>
<td>Email students with a copy of the chat</td>
<td>Students can have a record of answers to their questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Metrics &amp; Reporting</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Optional end survey</td>
<td>To gather more information on who is utilizing the chatbot/interested in studying the U.S.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ATTACHMENT D COST PROPOSAL TEMPLATE

Submit a detailed budget for the services described in the technical proposal. IIE’s review of the cost proposal shall determine if the overall costs proposed are: realistic for the work to be performed, reflect a correct understanding of the project requirements, and are consistent with the Offeror’s Technical Proposal.

The following is a format may be used as a guide to assist you in the preparation of the cost proposal. You may submit the cost proposal using this form or in the format of your choice (plain sheets, your own form, or a variation of this form). The Offeror may list any cost line items, but it is recommended that the Offeror follow the major categories listed below, breaking down all “lump sum” items as much as reasonably possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit (hours/days)</th>
<th>Unit Price (USD)</th>
<th>Total Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Technical Development</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Training &amp; Support</td>
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<td>10</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ATTACHMENT E THIRD-PARTY INFORMATION SECURITY & PRIVACY ASSESSMENT

Security Governance and Compliance:

- What compliance certifications does the company have? Please provide SOC2 report if available.
  - SOC 1, SOC 2, SOC 3
  - FISMA, DIACAP, FedRAMP
  - DOD CSM Levels 1-5
  - PCI DSS Level 1
  - ISO 9001 / ISO 27001
- Does the company or solution comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the NIST Cyber Security Framework (CSF) from a regulatory compliance perspective?
- Does the organization have documented information security and data privacy policies?
  - Please list applicable policies (e.g., Acceptable Use, Incident Response, Data Retention, etc.)
  - Are the information security policies and standards reviewed and approved on a regular basis by company leadership?
- Is Information Security Training required of employees at least annually?
- Is staff (including temporaries, contractors and outsourced vendors) required to sign a confidentiality agreement and/or Acceptable Use Policy to promote accountability?
- Do third-party contracts contain language that describe responsibilities regarding information protection and data privacy requirements?

Access Control:

- Please describe the Access Control procedures and security measures taken to prevent unauthorized access to IIE data.
- Does the company maintain an inventory of customer assets, and are they clearly identified?
- Please describe the account and password restrictions along with reset requirements for the system(s) that (would) manage IIE information assets.
- Do you conduct periodic user access validation checks to support the concepts of least privilege and separation of duties?
- What are your procedures with regards to the handling and storage of information assets?
  - Please provide details regarding the handling of particularly sensitive data

Secure Data Handling:

- Is data encrypted both at rest and in-transit?
  - Please describe standards and protocols.
  - Please describe security aspects involving uploading of documents/ attachments
  - Does the system(s) “mask” data?
- Please explain security aspects involving custom-built and standardized APIs and interfaces.
  - Please include any specifics that IIE IT must do to configure APIs
- If the contract with IIE is terminated for any reason, how will the data be returned to IIE, and how will they (vendor and hosting facility) purge IIE data? – Including any backup data.

Application Security:

- Do you provide firewall monitoring and IDS/IPS monitoring on the system(s)?
- Do you provide 24×7 x 365 live, technical support to customers?
- Are routine penetration tests, vulnerability scans and patching performed on the system(s) to support continuous monitoring?
  - Will these results be shared with IIE upon request?

Incident and Change Management:
• What processes and standards do you follow for incident management (including potential data breaches)?
  o Please describe the company’s Incident Notification Protocol to its customers.
• What processes and standards do you follow for change management?

**Data Center Hosting:**
• Please describe your hosting solution (public, private, hybrid cloud, etc.)
  o Who owns and operates the hosting facility? (Is it proprietary or via a Cloud Service Provider (CSP))?
  o Who is responsible for support issues? (e.g. will the vendor be responsible for contacting the hosting facility for issues surrounding hosting?)
• What certifications does your data center have?
  o SOC 1, SOC 2, SOC 3
  o FISMA, DIACAP, and FedRAMP
  o DOD CSM Levels 1-5
  o PCI DSS Level 1
  o ISO 9001 / ISO 27001
• Please describe your system’s ability to handle load balancing, redundancy and fault tolerance?
• How will IIE be notified of an outage?

**Disaster Recovery:**
• How do you protect our data from environmental hazards such as fire, water, etc.?
• Where is DR performed? Please provide location and distance from primary site.
• How are backups performed (full, incremental, differential)?
• Where are the backups stored?
• Please describe your RTO and RPO timeframes.
  o In the event of a system outage, what are the standards of your Service Level Agreement? In what timeframe can IIE expect issue resolution, full data restoration and 100% system functionality (to be able to perform all business functions associated with the system?)