

Request for Proposals (RFP)

To : Offerors
From : Institute of International Education, Inc. (IIE)
Subject : Selection for IIE Preferred Partners for Custom Application Development and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Services

RFP Issue Date : June 1, 2026
RFP Closing Date : July 6, 2026
RFP Closing Time : 5:00 PM Eastern time (ET)
Performance Period : five (5) years from date of award

Enclosed is a Request for Proposals (RFP). IIE invites qualified firms and organizations (“Offerors”) to submit a best-value proposal for the requested services. The agreement(s) resulting from this RFP will support IIE’s enterprise technology initiatives across multiple programs and business units.

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. Offerors must carefully review all sections of this RFP, before preparing their proposal.

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 **5:00 pm, Eastern Time, June 17, 2026**. 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 **5:00 pm, Eastern Time, June 25, 2026** on IIE’s website under Subawards and Procurement (<https://www.iie.org/Work-With-Us/Subawards-Procurements>).

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Proposal Submission: Proposals, including any attachments (limited to 6MB), should be sent electronically in PDF format to: Jbukke@iie.org

Be sure to include in the subject line: **IIE Preferred Partners – Custom Application Development and AI Services (RFP)**. IIE will not accept proposals received by fax.

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RFP SCHEDULE

Event	Date
RFP Distribution to Offerors	June 1, 2026
Offerors Questions Submission Deadline	June 17, 2026
Responses to Offeror’s questions	June 25, 2026
Proposal Submission Due Date	July 6, 2026
Vendor Shortlisting, Demonstrations, and Interviews	July 13, 2026
References will be contacted	July 20, 2026
Anticipated decision and selection of Offeror	July 27, 2026

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 100 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 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, Houston, and San Francisco) and staff in other countries (China, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Thailand, and Ukraine).

Purpose of Request for Proposal

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (“RFP”) is to invite qualified individuals and organizations to submit proposals for providing Custom Application Development, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and related support services in support of multiple applications managed by IIE’s Technology Department. As projects are identified by IIE that are appropriate for vendor development, the Information Technology Department seeks to engage vendors in an efficient and timely manner to deliver solutions that are scalable, secure, and cost-effective.

This Request for Proposals is issued independently of any specific current project or procurement requirement. Rather, it is intended to establish a pool of pre-qualified vendors who may be engaged at IIE’s discretion to support future initiatives across the organization.

Selected preferred vendors will be included on IIE’s preferred vendor listing for up to five years, contingent upon successful performance and at IIE’s sole discretion. Preferred vendors are not guaranteed any minimum volume of work, and engagement as-needed basis across multiple IIE programs and business units.

SECTION 2: RFP CONDITIONS

IIE reserves the right, in its full discretion, 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 based on initial offers received, without discussions or requests for best and final offers.
- Award more than one contract as it deems necessary, appropriate, or otherwise at its option.

Nothing in this RFP is, or should be, relied on by the 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 considering, preparing and/or submitting a Proposal.

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. Nothing set forth herein or in this RFP process or thereafter shall be construed as legal advice. Any Offerors shall consult their own, independent legal counsel as needed.

SECTION 3: PROPOSAL PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals submitted in response to this Request for Proposals (RFP) must be complete, clearly structured, and fully responsive to the requirements outlined below. Offerors are expected to present their capabilities in a concise, professional manner appropriate for enterprise-scale Information Technology (IT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) services.

Offerors may include supplemental materials they believe will support the evaluation of their service offerings; however, all required elements must be explicitly addressed. Offerors are strongly encouraged to comply with these instructions and provide complete information to ensure full consideration during the evaluation

All proposal content must represent the Offeror's original work. Any third-party materials, methodologies, or frameworks must be clearly identified and appropriately cited.

1. Letter of transmittal, one page

The proposal must include a Letter of Transmittal that:

- Summarizes the Offeror's understanding of the RFP scope and objectives
- Confirms commitment to deliver services in a timely, secure, and cost-effective manner
- Identifies individuals authorized to represent and contractually bind the organization
- Is signed by an authorized officer, including title and authority
- Demonstrates executive-level engagement and organizational commitment

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 Offeror and relevant experience in the field that illustrates overall services and capabilities to meet the terms of the RFP
- Years of relevant experience
- Any plans to outsource/subcontract the services or any part thereof (and to whom, if known)

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.

#	(a) Name of Organization	(b) Activity Title	(c) Locations of activity	(d) Synopsis of the activity and relevance to this RFP	(e) Performance period (date and duration)	(f) Cost for the activity	(g) Name & Contact Info (E-mail <u>and</u> phone)
1							
2							
3							

5. Implementation of the Statement of Work

Offerors must provide a comprehensive response aligned with Attachment A , including technical, function and operations requirements

- 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:
 - A description of internal review procedures that facilitate high-quality standards
 - How quality control will be managed when completing multiple projects for multiple clients
- Exceptions to the RFP, additional or different ideas, to 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: TECHNICAL PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals are expected to be comprehensive and include the information set forth below. Offerors also are 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.

In summary, proposals should address the following:

A. General Questions

- i. Market presence
- ii. Prior experience
- iii. General information about your organization and the services it offers
- iv. Description of relevant partnerships and business relationships
- v. References

B. Planning

- i. Whether you will utilize subcontractors

- ii. Project Management Approach
- C. Maintenance Support Requirements
 - i. Technical support
- D. Post-Implementation Services
 - i. Re-touching, corrections

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

SECTION 5: 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 6: EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals will be evaluated based on responsiveness to the requirements outlined in section 3 and Attachment A.

Criteria	Description	Weight Factor
Company's Financial stability & Reputation	Financial soundness, organizational stability, reputation, history, relevant certifications and standards, and recognition (including women-owned, minority-owned, and veteran-owned business status where applicable).	25
Depth of skills and relevant experience	Qualifications, credentials, certifications, areas of specialization, and demonstrated experience of proposed technical resources, including experience with modern application development and AI-enabled solutions.	30
Cost	Competitiveness and clarity of the proposed rate card, blended rates, fixed-fee options where applicable, and any applied discounts or pricing efficiencies.	20
References	Quality, relevance, and availability of references; overall assessment of Offeror performance by prior clients.	10
Presentation and Interview	Quality of oral presentation, demonstrations, communication clarity, responsiveness, and overall engagement during interviews or experience discussions, if conducted.	15
Total		100

IIE reserves the right to:

- Request clarifications or additional information
- Conduct interviews or experience discussions with selected Offerors
- Verify references and past performance

- Negotiate scope, pricing, and terms with one or more Offerors

The evaluation will result in the selection of the Offeror(s) whose proposal(s) are determined to be most advantageous to IIE, considering both qualitative and quantitative factors.

SECTION 7: 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 Institute of International Education (IIE) Technology Department intends to enter into agreements with qualified firms that possess the expertise required to support **custom application development, maintenance, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) services** in support of IIE systems and platforms.

a. Custom Application Development and Maintenance:

Services may include, but are not limited to:

- Requirements gathering, business analysis, and product discovery
- Application architecture design, including cloud-native and microservices-based solutions
- Application development using modern frameworks and modular design patterns
- API-first and event-driven development for system interoperability
- Data integration, transformation, and enterprise data management
- Quality assurance, automated testing, and continuous testing practices
- DevOps enablement, including CI/CD pipelines and release automation
- Technical documentation, knowledge transfer, and training
- Application support, maintenance, and performance monitoring
- Continuous improvement, enhancements, and optimization of existing solutions
- Integration of AI and intelligent services into business applications

The required technology expertise may include, but is not limited to:

- Modern web technologies (HTML5, CSS3, JavaScript)
- Frontend frameworks and libraries (e.g., React, Angular, modern UI frameworks)
- Backend platforms and languages (e.g., .NET, C#, Java, Python, Node.js)
- API development and integration standards (REST, GraphQL, event streaming)
- Relational and non-relational databases (e.g., SQL Server, NoSQL platforms)
- Cloud platforms and services, including Microsoft Azure (App Services, Functions, Containers, Kubernetes)
- DevOps tools and practices (CI/CD pipelines, version control, infrastructure as code)
- Secure application development practices, identity management, and testing tools

b. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Services

AI-related services may include, but are not limited to:

- Design, develop, and implement applications leveraging large language models (LLMs) and generative AI technologies
- Build and customize enterprise Copilot solutions (e.g., M365 Copilot, Copilot Studio, custom Copilots)
- Develop AI-powered use cases, including conversational agents, virtual assistants, document processing, summarization, semantic search, knowledge extraction, and decision support
- Implement Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG) solutions integrating enterprise data sources (e.g., SharePoint, databases, APIs)
- Evaluate and recommend best-suited AI platforms, tools, and architectures based on business requirements
- Integrate AI capabilities into existing applications, business processes, APIs, workflows, and cloud-native platforms
- Define and implement AI guardrails, including:
 - Prompt governance and control
 - Data access, security, and privacy policies
 - Responsible AI practices and compliance standards
- Ensure solutions are aligned with enterprise requirements for security, privacy, compliance, and governance
- Preparation, ingestion, and management of enterprise data sources for AI solutions, including indexing, data quality, and integration pipelines

- Model lifecycle management, including versioning, monitoring, retraining, and continuous improvement of LLM-based solutions
- Monitor, maintain, and optimize deployed AI/LLM solutions, including:
 - Accuracy and response quality
 - Performance and latency
 - Cost efficiency
- Establish and maintain performance benchmarks for AI solutions, including accuracy, response quality, latency, and cost efficiency
- Provide ongoing enhancements, troubleshooting, operational support, and continuous improvement

ATTACHMENT B 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 that 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.

Item No.	Description	Quantity	Unit (hours/days)	Unit Price (USD)	Total Price
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					

ATTACHMENT C - ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Third-Party IT Risk Management Process (TPRM)

An **IT Security Questionnaire** is required prior to signing a contract if the vendor will process IIE proprietary data or Personal Data according to GDPR's definition on behalf of IIE or connect to IIE's network.

- Vendors who can furnish evidence of an **ISO 27001 Certification** are asked to attach such documentation and to provide their up-to-date **System and Organization Controls (SOC) 2 Type 2 Attestation**.
- Vendors who cannot furnish IIE with ISO 27001 Certification evidence will be asked to provide a **SOC 2 Type 2 attestation** and complete a **security assessment that is mapped to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Cyber Security Framework (CSF)**. NIST is a guidance, based on existing standards, guidelines, and practices for organizations to manage better and reduce cybersecurity risk. The NIST CSF consists of five concurrent and continuous Functions—Identify, Protect, Detect, Respond, Recover. When considered together, these Functions provide a high-level, strategic view of the lifecycle of an organization's cybersecurity risk management.
- If your organization does not wish to complete this request using the automated OneTrust platform, please visit the "Welcome" screen of the IT Security Questionnaire (using the emailed link from OneTrust) and click "*Complete Offline Using Excel*" to download the **Excel** version of the NIST CSF assessment. Please make sure to upload the completed file to OneTrust using the same path and **submit**.

Prohibition on certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment

IIE cannot enter into a contract to procure or obtain equipment, services, or systems that uses covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology as part of any system. As described in Public Law 115-232, section 889, covered telecommunications equipment is telecommunications equipment produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities).

Covered equipment and services must not be part of your offer to IIE.