

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
FOR NAVAJO EDUCATION INFORMATION SYSTEM (NEIS) TECHNOLOGY
PLANNING SERVICES, BID NO. BID NO. 21-10-2587LE**

SECTION I

INFORMATION ONLY, A RESPONSE TO THIS SECTION IS NOT REQUIRED

- A. **ISSUING OFFICE:** This Request for Proposal (RFP) is issued by Navajo Nation Department of Diné Education (DODE), Administration Office.
- B. **PURPOSE:** This RFP provides prospective respondents with sufficient information to enable them to prepare and submit proposal for consideration.
- C. **SCOPE:** This RFP contains the instructions governing the proposal to be submitted and the material to be included therein; mandatory requirements which must be met to be eligible for consideration; and other requirements to be met by each proposal.
- D. **PROCUREMENT OF RFP:**
This procurement shall be conducted in accordance with all applicable Navajo Nation laws and regulations including the Navajo Business Opportunity Act. All applicable rules, regulations, and laws shall also be followed. Prospective Consultants shall familiarize themselves with Navajo Nation regulations prior to submitting responses to this RFP, and may request a copy of Navajo Nation procurement regulations from the DODE Program Manager at any time up to the Deadline for Proposals.
- E. **PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:**
- | | DEADLINE: |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1. Public Advertisement (via NN OOC website) | October 13, 2021-22, 2021 |
| 2. Due date for proposals | October 22, 2021 @ 5:00 p.m.MDST |
| 3. Opening of proposals and evaluation by Review Team | October 25, 2021 |
| 4. Final review of Contract w attachments by vendor | October 25, 2021 |
| 5. Begin 164 review of Contract | October 28, 2021 |
| 6. Complete of 164 process waiting for President's signature | November 1, 2021 |
| 7. Return Contract to Purchasing for Contract # | November 3, 2021 |
- F. **INQUIRIES:** Prospective respondents shall make written questions concerning this RFP to obtain clarification of requirements through e-mail to DODE Program Manager, Brent Nelson, at brentnelson@nndode.org. No inquiries will be accepted after the inquiry deadline listed in section E. NOTE: Inquires shall reference "NEIS Technology Planning Services Bid No. ???".
- G. **ADDENDUM OF SUPPLEMENT TO THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:** In the event that it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, an addendum will be issued.
- H. **PROPOSAL SUBMISSION:** Proposal must be received on or before **4:00 p.m., October 22, 2021 (MDST)**. Respondents who are mailing their proposals should allow sufficient

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time for mail delivery to insure receipt by the time specified. If mailed, it is recommended that proposals be sent by certified mail to the address indicated on the cover sheet of the RFP. Late proposal will not be accepted. No electronic submittals.

I. FOUR SETS OF PROPOSAL ARE REQUIRED: Four sets of the proposal must be delivered in a sealed envelope. The outside of the envelope should be clearly marked with the project name- "NEIS Technology Planning Services **BID NO. 21-10-2587LE** –and the name and address of the firm submitting the proposal.

Proposal Format:

Bidders shall provide information in the following format:

Part A. Written Proposal

- a. Section 1: Cover Letter and Bidder overview*
- b. Section 2: Statement of Qualifications and Resume
- c. Section 3: Experience in relation to services sought.
- d. Section 4: List of similar services provided to other clients on Navajo Nation in proportion to requested services for the last five years.
- e. Section 5: Signed W-9 Form and Suspension/Debarment Form
- f. Section 6: Certification of Insurance

Part B. Cost Proposal (Sealed separately in envelope)

- g. Consultant is to provide a quote for a fixed fee. The fixed fee should include all travel and per diem expenses as a part of the fixed fee and the 6% Navajo Nation Sales Tax. The consultant shall include in their fee at least three on site meetings or more if the consultant deems more are required.

*Consultant must include a statement in Cover Letter (Section I) that they agree to terms of the sample Navajo Nation contract template (see attached).

J. COST PROPOSAL: Cost proposals shall be **sealed separately**. Only when respondents have met the minimum qualification will the cost proposals be opened. If respondent fails to submit cost separately from proposal will result in respondent deemed non-responsive.

K. REJECTION OF PROPOSALS: DODE reserves the right to reject any and all proposals. This RFP may be canceled at any time and all proposals may be rejected in whole or in part when the DODE Program Manager determines it is in the best interest of the Navajo Nation.

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- L. **PROPRIETARY INFORMATION:** Any restriction on the use of data contained within any proposals must be clearly stated in the proposal itself. Proprietary information submitted in response to this RFP will be handled in accordance with applicable purchasing procedures. Each and every page of the proprietary material must be labeled or identified with the word “proprietary”.
- M. **RESPONSE MATERIAL OWNERSHIP:** All material submitted regarding this RFP shall become property of The Navajo Nation and will not be returned to the respondent. Responses received will be retained by DODE and may be reviewed by any person after final selection has been made, subject to paragraph L above. DODE has the right to use any or all system ideas presented in reply to this RFP, subject to limitations in paragraph L above. Disqualification or non-selection of a respondent or proposal does not eliminate this right.
- N. **INCURRING COSTS:** DODE is not liable for any cost by the respondents prior to issuance of a contract.
- O. **ACCEPTANCE TIME:** DODE intends to make a Consultant selection within five (5) working days after the closing date for receipt of proposals.
- P. **SUFFICIENT APPROPRIATION:**
A contract awarded as a result of this RFP is contingent upon the availability of funds. A contract may be terminated or reduced in scope if sufficient funds do not exist. Sending written notice to the Consultant shall effect such termination or reduction in scope. The DODE Program Manager’s decision to terminate or reduce the scope due to insufficient appropriations shall be accepted as final by the Consultant.
- Q. **EVALUATION PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA.**
1. An evaluation team will judge the proposals received in accordance with the general criteria used herein. The team may request oral presentations by respondents. Respondents should be prepared to provide any additional information the team feels necessary for the fair evaluation of proposals.
 2. Failure of a respondent to provide any information requested in the RFP may result in disqualification of the proposal. All proposals must be endorsed with the signature of a responsible official having the authority to bind the respondent to the execution of a contract.
 3. The sole objective of the review team will be to select the respondent who is most responsive to the needs of DODE. The specifications in this RFP represent the minimum performance necessary for a response. On the basis of the evaluation criteria established in this RFP the review team will select and recommend the

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respondent who best meets this objective. If there is only one responsive bid, the DODE Program Manager may elect to evaluate RFP solely.

4. Evaluation Criteria: The following criteria will be used by an adhoc committee in the selection process for contract award. Consultants and proposals will be evaluated to determine the best opportunity for DODE.

Qualifying Point Criteria:

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| a. Statement of Qualifications in performing the services sought. | 0-10 points |
| b. Resume or other description of qualifications of relevant experience and knowledge. | 0-15 points |
| c. Experience in relation to service sought | 0-30 points |
| d. List of similar services provided to other clients on Navajo Nation in proportion to requested services for the last five years. | 0-10 points |
| e. Navajo Nation Consultant, Priority 1 or 2 | 0-5 points |

Subtotal, possible points 70*

*Must obtain a minimum of 35 points to qualify for opening of cost proposal. Otherwise, respondent is disqualified.

Cost Point Criteria:

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| f. Delivery of all services at a reasonable cost. | 0-30 points |
|---|-------------|

Total possible points=100

R. **STANDARD CONTRACT:** The Navajo Nation reserves the right to incorporate standard contract provision into any contract negotiations as a result of a proposal submitted in response to the RFP (see attached contract template).

S. **TAX:**
All appropriate taxes should be included in cost of services including the Navajo Sales Tax. All work performed within the territorial jurisdiction of the Navajo Nation is subject to the Navajo Sales Tax of 6% (24 N.N.C. Section 601 et. seq.).

T. **TERM:** The term of this contract will be for a period of one year from date of award.

U. **SOVEREIGNTY:** The Navajo Nation will not relinquish any of its sovereignty rights.

V. **COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS:**

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The successful Consultant shall comply with all Federal, Tribal, State, and Local laws, regulations and Navajo Nation rules and policies pertaining to work under its charge, and shall, at its expense, procure any permits that may be required.

W. INDEMINIFICATION:

To the fullest extent permitted by law, or as otherwise defined in the Contract, the successful Consultant shall indemnify and hold harmless the Navajo Nation and its officials, employees and agents from and against all claims, liens or demands that result in losses, liabilities, defense costs and expenses (including but not limited to attorney's fees and costs of litigation) arising out of the term, conditions and performance under the contract. The Consultant further agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Navajo Nation, its agents, or employees, against claims or liability arising from or based upon the violation of any federal, state, county, city, or other applicable laws, bylaws, ordinances, or regulations by the Consultant, its agents, associates, or employees.

The indemnification provided above shall obligate the Consultant to defend at its own expense or to provide for such defense, at the Navajo Nation's option, of any and all claims of liability and all suits and actions of every name and description that may be brought against the Navajo Nation which may result from the operations and activities under any Contract resulting from this RFP.

The award of this Contract to the Consultant shall obligate the Consultant to comply with the foregoing indemnity provision.

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SECTION II

A. BACKGROUND

The Navajo Nation Department of Diné Education (DODE) is initiating a new comprehensive Navajo Education Information System (NEIS) IT Plan to address the following crucial objectives:

1. Create an IT infrastructure to collect, house and process the Navajo Education Information System (NEIS) accountability data efficiently and securely (currently carried out by Dell Systems)
2. Expand the reach and utilization of our programs out to more students during pandemic conditions and social isolation
3. Implement a secure and unified communications and data access infrastructure that will unite all departments under DODE
4. Create a sustainable operational model and save implementation and maintenance costs by leveraging partnership opportunities with other Navajo Government entities as well as states and additional grant opportunities

B. RESPONDENT REQUIREMENTS:

All respondents must have, as a minimum, the capabilities listed herein and the bid proposals submitted must reflect in detail the inclusion of these services as well as the degree of expertise in utilizing these capabilities.

C. TECHNOLOGY PLANNING SERVICES WILL CONSIST OF THE FOLLOWING:

The overall objective of this project is to develop and articulate a plan for the effective use of technology to support the mission of DODE as well as assess and validate the role of NEIS-IT as a strategic partner and technology enabler to the organization, for the next 5 years.

Vendors shall document a vision, a prioritized roadmap to implement a technology infrastructure to realize that vision, the resources required to maintain and support it, as well as any related infrastructure recommendations, suggested models, site specific project plans, collaborative scenarios involving other Navajo Government entities as well as States of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah as required to carry out infrastructure, data exchange and evaluation projects and complicated project funding and sustainability scenarios involving ARPA, Navajo General Funds, State funds and other US Government grants and incentives.

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The scope of the project will encompass all DODE programs, program offices and services provided to the entire Navajo Nation as well as the NEIS project that is currently under construction. The plan will identify and comply with all public regulations that govern data ownership, privacy and Internet access within the context of education in conjunction with the sovereignty of Navajo Nation and specific regulations applicable to data ownership.

The plan will evaluate the current state of the DODE NEIS IT infrastructure and make recommendations for improvements, remedy and upgrades. It will take into consideration viable options for implementation involving infrastructure architecture options provided by the latest cloud, on-prem or hybrid models and integration options of the selected option with the systems and communications infrastructure expected to be kept in place.

The primary deliverable from this effort will be a 5-year Technology Plan that addresses the following specific areas:

1. Identify organizational needs to continue to improve NEIS-IT services to DODE constituents in an easily and securely accessible fashion during pandemic and beyond. Review organizational objectives and recommend IT solutions that can support and augment the delivery of those objectives:
 - a. Facilitation, management and recordkeeping of meetings with organizational stake holders, similar organizations, case studies, technology demonstrations, potential governmental and private implementation partners
 - b. Facilitation of decision making and documentation
 - c. Documentation of risks, potential pitfalls and other opportunities for improved service, funding and service delivery to constituents
2. Assess the current technology platforms, service levels, staffing, communications architecture, business processes, interdepartmental communications, technology plans to determine continued usability as well as upgrade, update, replacement and repurposing opportunities as well as opportunities presented by more efficient use of currently purchased systems.
3. Identify and create a roster of all distinct projects currently underway and actively coordinate points of collaboration and leverage, in order to improve team communications and resource utilization while avoiding costly duplication. For each project, assess objectives, current status and progress with respect to deadlines, constituent reach, opportunities for improvement, gaps, risks and mitigation opportunities.
4. Review the design and implementation recommendations and systems blue prints produced by Dell Systems as part of Dell's design engagement involving NEIS. The NEIS Technology Plan is expected to accommodate these recommendations.

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5. Develop a plan to obtain applicable governmental compliance certification to access student and academic data from our State partners including New Mexico, Arizona and Utah.
6. Solidify a governance model from the standpoints of organizational policy and infrastructure to include recommendations to build a body of adopted security policies enforced across the organization, secure network infrastructure to meet connectivity requirements, secure access to data in compliance with all applicable regulations (CIPA, FERPA, etc).
7. Assess the scope of currently funded broadband projects and identify geographic and demographic segments that are still not adequately connected and recommend a financially sustainable plan for expanding coverage.
8. Coordinate additional resources with other Navajo Nation governmental entities that are charged to support IT initiatives such as Navajo Department of Information Technology as well as our State partners to reduce implementation costs and operational burden of the new consolidated IT infrastructure. Through Vendor's established relationships with the above entities, establish collaboration scenarios, partnerships and organizational alignment and cost/work sharing opportunities.
9. Evaluate options to create a consolidated infrastructure (on-premise, cloud and hybrid) and associated personnel needs based on platform choices and make recommendations to move forward with a cost effective, easy to manage model for implementation that takes into account Navajo Nation laws involving sovereignty of data.
10. Create a consolidation plan for the distinct programs under DODE, to utilize a single high performance, secure and reliable infrastructure and stop waste associated with the maintenance and upkeep of separate infrastructures. The Vendor must take into consideration, at a minimum, such factors as vulnerabilities in accessing the systems, including staff access rights, risks of system failure, Cyber Security risks, inoperability of existing legacy systems, business continuity, ability to adequately recover from a disaster, emergency preparedness, currently owned systems components that require an upgrade, scalability, reliability, accessibility and reasonable response times across varying connectivity speeds, current and future technology trends, distance education and interactive services, standardization, change management, business processes, clear definition and delineation of roles and responsibilities, staff and constituent training.
11. Identify additional funding sources to further support sustainability of DODE NEIS infrastructure initiatives.
12. Identify staffing resources required, including positions, roles, skills, organization structure for NEIS IT organization model that is capable of continually supporting organizational needs of DODE.
13. Distill all of the above information into a five-year implementation plan complete with prioritized phased approach and annual budgetary requirements.

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14. In order to assure the continued lifetime of the resulting NEIS Technology Plan, create a modification and improvement model based on feedback from all aspects of the organization and constituents.