



Request for Proposal Early Childhood Development Mobile Application

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Special Olympics

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Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities



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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Through this Request for Proposal (RFP), Special Olympics will identify a vendor to develop a multi-platform mobile app designed to support the needs of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) by guiding and advising parents and caregivers through a child's development.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Special Olympics

Special Olympics provides year round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

Special Olympics' work goes beyond sports events, aiming to drive social change, improve the health of our athletes and build inclusive communities that enable full social participation and life-long fitness for people with intellectual disabilities (ID) throughout the world. Through our 52 years of experience, we know that adults and children with intellectual disabilities are every society's most neglected population.

Young Athletes

Special Olympics Young Athletes is an early childhood play program for children with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), ages 2 to 7 years old. Young Athletes introduces basic sport skills, like running, kicking and throwing. Young Athletes offers families, teachers, caregivers and people from the community the chance to share the joy of sports with all children. Young Athletes provides children of all abilities the same opportunities to advance in core developmental milestones. Children learn how to play with others and develop important skills for learning. Children also learn to share, take turns and follow directions. These skills help children in family, community, and school activities.

Young Athletes programming lasts a minimum of eight weeks and takes place across one of three implementation models: school, community, and home. Activities are led family members, teachers, and volunteers with support from Special Olympics training and resources. Young Athletes follow standardized lessons corresponding to eight units focused on foundational developmental skill through interactive play.

After two months of participation in Young Athletes, children with IDD gained seven-months in motor skills, as well as improvement in social skills.¹ Moreover, mothers rated their children with IDD as having fewer challenging behaviors, indicating changes not only in child outcomes but in the mother-child relationship as well. Finally, family members reported significant positive changes in both their own

¹ Favazza, P. C., Siperstein, G. N., Zeisel, S., Odom, S. L., & Moskowitz, A. L. (2011). Young Athletes intervention: Impact of motor development. Washington, DC: Special Olympics, Inc.



attitudes towards their child and those of community members towards their child with IDD.² By addressing both the developmental and attitudinal challenges faced by families of children with IDD, Young Athletes has illustrated the impact of early interventions on health and development outcomes.

Sample Young Athletes activities can be seen in key Young Athletes resources, including the [Young Athletes Activity Guide](#) and [Young Athletes activity videos](#).

Healthy Start

For many mothers around the world, having a child with global developmental delays (GDD) or IDD presents great hardship. Families lack access to critical health, development and education resources that can support them in creating a caring environment for their child to thrive. Many families also feel hopeless and uncertain about their child's future; they feel cursed and ostracized by their communities.

Special Olympics' new initiative, Healthy Start, aims to use digital and in-person solutions to provide information and support to families to help them process and navigate their child's diagnosis with GDD or IDD. By connecting families to families, Healthy Start provides mentoring and social acceptance so that families are supported. By connecting families to information, Healthy Start provides accurate and evidence-based guidance on the common components of the diagnostic process, practical guidance on how to support and track the child's development, and a directory of local support services. By connecting families to health providers, Healthy Start provides access to care that would not be available to these families in their isolated state. Healthy Start's physical and mobile technology-based solutions will help these mothers move from fear and uncertainty to hope and opportunity and will provide access for children to health and developmental gains that allow the world to get closer to fulfilling the SDGs.

Sample Healthy Start content includes the [Guide for New Parents of Children with ID](#).

SCOPE OF WORK

The goal of the project is to create a **multi-platform mobile application that will guide families and caregivers of children with IDD through their child's development** with developmentally appropriate activities, while also creating an online resource forum to engage, educate and connect families of children with IDD. This app has the potential to meet the needs of the millions of young children with IDD and their families around the world who continue to face stigma and isolation, which often means limited or non-existent access to critical early childhood development programs. The app will differentiate itself from other early childhood and milestone tracking apps on the market by being the first app specifically targeting the development of children across the intellectual and developmental disability spectrum.

The target end user for the app is parents or caregivers of young children with IDD. The app will provide support to families from the time a child is diagnosed with GDD or IDD through their progress across key

² Smith, A., Ralston, R., Dubois, L., Anderson, T. (2019). The impact of Participation in Young Athletes on Families of Children with Intellectual Disabilities. Poster presented at the 52nd annual Gatlinburg Conference on Research and Theory in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, San Antonio, TX.



developmental milestones. The app will initially launch in the United States; however, future versions of the app will launch globally, across Special Olympics Programs in 200 countries, and thus need to be able to accommodate multiple languages. The app should provide a streamlined, easy-to-use experience that ensures users of all learning levels can quickly navigate the interface to find relevant content.

For initial piloting and launch of the app, Special Olympics will strategically target parents and caregivers of children with IDD between the ages of 2 – 7 years old. This group will primarily include mothers and children already participating in Young Athletes activities across major cities within the United States.

The vendor should describe the specific processes that will be used to accomplish the core features and functionalities described below.

I. CORE FEATURES

1. **User profile creation and Initial Child Assessment:** While some of the resources and content will be accessible to users without requiring a user to login, access to all individualized content will require a user to create a profile and login to the app. The process of creating a profile should be simple and easy to follow. Following the creation of an account, the user should be prompted to complete a short survey that will help the app assess the current developmental stage of their child. All information collected during this assessment, and the registration process, must meet relevant US and international data privacy laws, especially in regard to capturing data of children under age 8.
2. **Activities for Development:** The app will offer positive support for children as they progress through developmental milestones by helping families understand where their child is developmentally and then providing a broad range of activities that support child development for families to do at home. Using the information collected in the child assessment, the app will determine where a child is along a developmental continuum. This continuum will be developed by Special Olympics experts in early 2021 and will classify behaviors, skills, and traits into key developmental stages. From there, the app will suggest a variety of different activities that a family can do together at home that will help the child progress to the next developmental milestone. As they complete activities, the user can mark them as complete and keep track of their relevant activities. The user will be able to note when their child has reached a new developmental milestone, at which point, the app will suggest new activities to support the child's continued development. This function of the app should support both milestone tracking and customized activities for each user.
3. **Relevant Information about Development and Disability:** In addition to providing families with activities that will support developmental progress, the app will serve as a hub for accurate, scientific information about disability and child development. Resources for this section of the app will be sourced by Special Olympics experts to identify the research, data and information that is most relevant for families as they navigate their journey of having a child with IDD. The app should provide a streamlined approach for viewing, searching, or filtering through all content to ensure a simple user interface that allows users to find the content relevant to their child's needs. Content in this section will include curated articles, videos, and scientific content.



4. **Connection with Other Parents:** The final core feature of the app aims to alleviate the social isolation parents and caregivers often feel when having a child with IDD by connecting them with other parents who are experience a similar journey. Through the app, users will be able to connect with other parents by geography, disability and other relevant tags through message boards, social sharing, or other mobile connections. Special Olympics hopes to use one singular method for connecting parents and caregivers together and expects the developed selected to provide guidance as to the best method. Additionally, this section of the app will provide users with geomapped information about local events and opportunities for users to connect with other parents in person. Initially, events will include Special Olympics events sourced from state website event calendars ([example from SO Michigan](#)); however, future iterations of the app will include other partner and community events.
5. **Future Possibilities:** In addition to the four core features identified above, Special Olympics is interested in adding the features outline below into later iterations of the app. As such, the foundation of the app established through this RFP should be able to handle these or other additional features in the future.
 - a. Private networking to share content and support with other families and share selected moments/milestones with family members not on the app.
 - b. Support video uploads and sharing of videos by users.
 - c. Automated aggregation of events using APIs from Special Olympics, EventBrite and others.
 - d. Capacity for multiple languages and geographies.

II. KEY FUNCTIONALITIES

6. **Push Notifications:** Regular (daily/weekly) push notifications that encourage users to complete activities and update their child's milestone progress, while driving users to the content and events through push notifications targeted to the child/family's profile.
7. **Analytics:** Platform should track key user analytics, including downloads, devices, user engagement and usage, to drive regular content and app updates. Application should include ability to pull GPS location and other relevant paradata from user. Special Olympics will use platform analytics to learn and iterate into a fuller featured future product, so understanding user behavior metrics is key.
8. **Applications and Hardware:** Initial development of the app (for the MVP) should be built on iOS. Ultimately, the native app will be built to support both iOS and Android users,
9. **Data Management:** Restful API development with versioning and API URL endpoints (HTTPS) to enable the ability to extend the app or port data to other services or platforms in the future.
10. **Multilingual capabilities:** Given that Special Olympics is a global multilingual organization, it is important for the platform to have the capability to integrate content in multiple languages. Preference will be given to organizations that can build the architecture in a way that supports efficient and effective translation of the framework and content into priority languages. The official language used for Special Olympics International is English, but each Special Olympics country Program uses their official language. That said, for the purpose of this RFP, the first phase of the app will be conducted in English only.



11. **Offline Capability:** After initial download, the platform should be able to function without the need for regular WIFI or mobile data, to ensure accessibility globally.

III. PROJECT DELIVERABLES

In addition to the core features and functionalities outlined above, the consultant will be expected to complete key design deliverables during the development process, including:

- Create wireframes, storyboards, and designs.
- Develop fully functional phase 1 mobile application (most viable product), including backend and app design, compatible with iOS devices and should be made available on the Apple Store for download.

TERMS OF CONTRACT

Contract terms and conditions will be negotiated upon selection of the winning bidder for this RFP. All contractual terms and conditions will be subject to review by Special Olympics legal and finance departments and will include scope, budget, schedule, and other necessary items pertaining to the project.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Vendor responses compliant with instructions will be read and evaluated by the selection/implementation team. Finalists will be notified. Vendor responses will be evaluated based on, but not limited to, the following criteria.

1. Ability to meet the project needs of Special Olympics
2. Proven methodology for implementation and ongoing support
3. Level of overhead required to maintain Interoperability and integration with other Special Olympics databases and digital collection systems
4. Total cost of ownership with priority given to "Value In Kind" for parts of the proposal (see below)
5. Scalability
6. Company viability

Complete and Partial Bids

Special Olympics recognizes that to meet our specific requirements, we may require multi-party solutions. Vendors may respond as an "all-in-one" solution or as a "partial" solution provider offering solutions that meet the criteria for one area. In a partial bid, vendor solution must be able to integrate and interface with other vendors selected. In a partial bid, preference will be given to vendors who bring in partner (3rd party) vendors to complete the full bid.

Value in-Kind (VIK) Solutions

Special Olympics, being a non-profit organization, relies heavily upon sponsored or value-in-kind contributions. We ask vendors to state if, and how much, of their solution would be offered in a sponsored or VIK relationship.



INSTRUCTIONS

General Conditions and Terms

Special Olympics is not obligated to any course of action as the result of this RFP. Issuance of this RFP does not constitute a commitment by Special Olympics to award any contract. Special Olympics is not responsible for any costs incurred by any vendor or their partners in the RFP response preparation or presentation. Information submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of Special Olympics. All responses will be kept private from other vendors. Special Olympics reserves the right to modify this RFP at any time and reserves the right to reject any responses to this RFP, in whole or in part, at any time.

Questions, Delivery and Due Dates

Specific questions concerning this RFP may be emailed to: rralston@specialolympics.org. All questions are due to Special Olympics by January 22, 2021. Responses will be provided to all vendors via email by January 25, 2021.

Rebecca Ralston
1133 19th Street NW
Washington DC 20036

Proposal Review Schedule

Work shall begin within ten (10) days following receipt of a contract by the Vendor. The anticipated contract commencement date will be April 1, 2021. All tasks should be completed, and products/deliverables submitted within the following schedule. The scope of work is to include a proposed work schedule by task and project timeline, which shall include monthly progress, reports on the project's status. All dates are subject to change.

RFP Released to Vendors	January 11, 2021
Pre-Proposal Conference Call at 3pm EST <i>Opportunity for vendors to join conference call with Special Olympics to discuss questions or clarifications</i> Register to participate	January 19, 2021
Full RFP Response Submission Due	January 29, 2021
Selection and Notification of Shortlisted Vendors	February 8, 2021
Shortlisted Vendors to Conduct Virtual Presentation to Special Olympics Team	February 15 – 19, 2021
Notification of Selected Vendor	March 5, 2021
Contract Negotiation Begins	March 8, 2021
Implementation Start	April 1, 2021

Response Format

Responses shall be submitted in PDF format and sent using electronic mail. Send your response to: rralston@specialolympics.org by the date and time specified above. Receipt will be acknowledged via email. Please include the words "RFP: Vendor Response" in the subject line. Please note, financials should



be sent separately, directly to Special Olympics finance as a PDF or Word document via email to spattanaik@specialolympics.org.

Vendors should organize their proposals as defined below to ensure consistency and to facilitate the evaluation of all responses. All the sections listed below must be included in the proposal, in the order presented, with the Section Number listed. The responses shall be submitted in the following format:

- Section 1 – Executive Summary (provide a concise summary of proposed solution)
- Section 2 – Company Profile (provide answers using the template and instructions below)
- Section 3 – Specifications (provide overview of how your custom build or existing product will meet the features and functionalities outlined above)
- Section 4 – Implementation Plan and Proposed (provide a high-level implementation plan with estimated timeline and CVs for the project team members)
- Section 5 – Work Samples and References (provide links or demos to mobile apps created by company and a list of past clients)
- Section 6 – Cost Estimate (provide answers using the template and instructions below)

Section 2: Company Profile

Using the template below, please provide the requested information on your organization. Your response to a specific item may be attached to this section as an additional page if necessary. The below tables are broken down into a General section that every vendor must reply to and the component sections. Please only fill out the information for the components that you will be bidding on.

General	
Name	Click here to enter text.
Address (Headquarters)	Click here to enter text.
Address Continued	Click here to enter text.
Main Telephone Number	Click here to enter text.
Website	Click here to enter text.
Publicly Traded or Privately Held	Click here to enter text.
Parent Company (if applicable)	
Name	Click here to enter text.
Address	Click here to enter text.
Address Continued	Click here to enter text.
Telephone Number	Click here to enter text.
Main Contact	
Name	Click here to enter text.
Title	Click here to enter text.
Address	Click here to enter text.
Address Continued	Click here to enter text.



Telephone Number	Click here to enter text.
Fax Number	Click here to enter text.
Email Address	Click here to enter text.
Market Data	
Number of years as app developer	Click here to enter text.
Number of live apps	Click here to enter text.
Number of new apps over the last 3 years?	Click here to enter text.
Current # of users across live apps	Click here to enter text.
Number and percentage of apps in in the last two years that did not get installed four (4) months after signing contract?	Click here to enter text.
Total FTEs Last Year	Click here to enter text.
Total FTEs This Year	Click here to enter text.

Additional Information	
Has your company acquired, been acquired, merged with other organizations, or had any "change in control" events within the last five (5) years? (If yes, please provide details.)	Click here to enter text.
Is your company planning to acquire, be acquired, merge with other organizations, or have any "change in control" events within the next five (5) years? (If yes, please provide details.)	Click here to enter text.
Please provide information on any outstanding lawsuits or judgments within the last five (5) years. Please indicate any cases that you cannot respond to as they were settled with a non-disclosure clause.	Click here to enter text.

Section 3: Specifications (provide overview of how your company will meet the features and functionalities outlined above)

Section 4: Implementation Plan (provide a high-level implementation plan with estimated timeline and CVs for the project team members. Please also give your approach for designing deliverables to create mobile app.)

Section 5: Work Samples (provide links or demos to mobile apps created by company and a list of past clients)



Section 6: Costs

Please provide a detailed budget to develop the most viable product (MVP) outlined above. The budget should be submitted directly to Special Olympics finance as a PDF or Word document via email to spattanaik@specialolympics.org.

In your budget, please address the following cost considerations:

- Cost of development based on the core components and key functionalities outlined above, targeting English speaking parents in the US.
- Project management costs.
- Additional costs per user, if relevant.
- Monthly cost of any re-occurring charges for hosting, if relevant.
- Proposed hourly rate breakdown for making changes to the app after implementation.
- Annual cost of ongoing operations and maintenance once app is developed.