

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TO CREATE AN IPAD (iOS) MOBILE APPLICATION FOR EDUCATIONAL WEBSITE

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Summary

The Visionlearning project is seeking proposals from experienced and qualified firms or individuals to assist with the creation of a mobile application for delivering site content and features through the iPad.

Contact and Deadline

Firms or individuals responding to this RFP shall submit an electronic proposal in accordance with the Submittal Requirements noted later in this document no later than 5:00 pm on September 15th, 2012, to:

Visionlearning
Attn: Heather Falconer
hfalconer@visionlearning.com

Project Background

Visionlearning.com provides high-quality, accessible, educational content in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines at the introductory undergraduate level. Our free materials, targeted to both students and educators, make available peer-reviewed, bilingual content that not only explores specific STEM concepts, but examines how we have come to understand them, the people who have contributed to our understanding, and the ongoing research that builds our scientific knowledge. By utilizing the Internet and new media, and incorporating both the history of science and process of discovery in all of our learning modules, we aim to improve student understanding of science, promote multi- and inter-disciplinary teaching, and provide a community foundation for those interested in improving STEM education.

As part of an initiative based at John Jay College of Criminal Justice (JJC), we were awarded a Department of Education (DOE) HSI-STEM Grant to expand the services we offer online.. This is a multi-year project for which funding is provided on a year-to-year basis; the coming project period is October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2013.

One of the deliverables within this grant-funded project is to provide access to learning materials and their constituent components via mobile devices. The deliverables include the

text and figures of the modules, audio recordings, full glossary of technical terms, and quizzes associated with each learning module. The Project would like to begin execution of this objective with the development of a mobile application for the iPad.

Currently, the website holds 90 learning modules and over 300 glossary definitions in both English and Spanish. Visionlearning has already developed a free glossary application for the iPhone that is accessible at <http://itunes.apple.com/app/science-glossary/id331657060?mt=8>. The source code used to build this glossary application may be available to the contractor for modification and use within Phase I.

While this RFP addresses a mobile application for presenting content, the Project envisions this as a scaffolded endeavor – with additional features to be added to the application over time and, if successful, the development of additional applications for the iPhone and Android platforms.

Services Requested

All Visionlearning data (e.g. URLs, terms and definitions) and collection protocol will be provided by Visionlearning to the contractor. The Visionlearning Programmer and Project personnel will work closely with the contractor to facilitate a rapid and accurate development of the app.

There are two long-term objectives for this work: 1) to make Visionlearning content available to users for reading offline; and 2) to provide supplementary learning materials in an engaging, fun format. As such, the project is envisioned as scaffolded, with various components working seamlessly together and available as upgrades to the initial work. Phase I will allow users to (at minimum):

- download learning modules for reading offline;
- access the Visionlearning glossary (which may include re-envisioning the existing Glossary Application);
- sync their on-site MyModule lists (a customized list of our learning materials) with the application;
- access MyClassrooms to which the user is registered on the site.

Phase II of development will allow users to:

- take specific module-related quizzes and have their scores synced with their online profile (e.g. recorded in a MyClassroom for which they are a student);
- take discipline-related quizzes (e.g. elect to answer questions specifically related to biology);
- view imagery related to specific modules or disciplines separate from the text;

- purchase a flashcard activity that draws on glossary terms. In addition to a general, random word population, this will include a feature for selecting terms related to specific modules, categories, or disciplines (e.g. terms related only to Data modules);
- purchase audio recordings of the modules.

The Project would like the application to be free on initial download, with the inclusion of three (3) modules chosen by the user. However, the app should also include an in-app purchase strategy that allows users to purchase all other modules for a one-time fee and purchase additional features (as described in Phase II) individually.

We request that proposals approach the building of the application with the scaffolded approach in mind, so that the app functions in Phase I and is enhanced in Phase II. This RFP is for Phase I only, though we would like proposals to discuss how the app will be built ready for Phase II.

Production Deadlines and Warranty

The period during which the services described herein will be performed will start upon award of the contract.

The contractor shall make the final version of the iPad application available to the public for download via the iTunes library by July 30th, 2013. This project shall not be constrained from distribution to publication by any copyright, trademark, or other legally restricted process.

The contractor will provide an unconditional service warranty to insure that the application is error free, accessible by the community, and meets the design standards for one (1) year from the date of public release.

This is a work for hire: all source code, content and keys to external sources used and required to run the application and download the application will be the property of Visionlearning.

Qualifications of the Contractor

The contractor must have thorough knowledge of iOS application design and development for the iPad, and thorough knowledge of Objective C, Java and Honeycomb API. Subversion experience is required. Preference is given to contractors with general knowledge of educational content management systems.

Financial Constraints

The maximum budgeted amount for this RFP is \$36,000.

The contractor or one individual on the contractor's staff may be required to travel to the project location (Manhattan, New York) to meet with project personnel. All necessary travel will be approved by the Project prior to the expenditure of travel funds. All approved travel and per diem expenses will be reimbursed directly to the travelling individual per federal regulation and budget constraints, and are not part of the maximum budgeted amount for the RFP listed above.

Technical Questions

Technical questions regarding this RFP should be directed by email to Heather Falconer (hfalconer@visionlearning.com) no later than 1:00 pm (EST) on September 7th, 2012.

Technical questions must reference this RFP and include the individual's name, company, address and contact information. Answers will be sent to the inquiring individual as well as all registered bidders.

Interested persons may become registered bidders by notifying Heather Falconer of their interest by email (see above).

Evaluation Criteria

Part 1 – Written Proposal

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the overall best value for the Project based on the quality, service, price, and other criteria set out in this RFP, but not limited to:

- The proposer's demonstrated experience in similar projects;
- The proposer's business and technical reputation and capabilities, and, where applicable, the experience of its personnel, track record, and references of current and former customers;
- The proposed plan of approach and work schedule;
- The proposed methodology for coordination with Visionlearning;
- The quality of submission;
- Compliance with Visionlearning's new design aesthetic (see Attachment A);
- Any other criteria set out in the RFP or otherwise reasonable and considered relevant.

Part 2 – Interview

The top candidates will be interviewed to determine which firm or individual most closely meets the Project's needs. The interviews will be conducted via Skype or telephone, unless all top candidates are within the NYC metro region, in which case interviews will be conducted in person.

There are no funds available for candidates' travel or per diem expenses to this interview.

Selection Process

The selection process is described below.

1. After the period has closed for receipt of proposals, each proposal will be examined to determine compliance with the format and information requirements specified in the RFP. Any proposal that does not meet the requirements may be eliminated from competition and returned to the consultant. The Project may reject any proposal if it is conditional, incomplete, or contains irregularities. The Project also reserves the right to reject all proposals.
2. A selection panel will perform a blind review of each proposal that meets the format and informational requirements.
3. Following independent evaluation of the proposals, the top candidates may be requested to participate in an interview to determine and select the consultant that most closely meets the Project's needs. However, the Project reserves the right to select based solely on the written proposal.
4. All competitors will be notified by email of the results of their application.

Notable Dates

RFP Release	August 6th, 2012
Technical Questions Due By	September 7 th , 2012
Submission Deadline	September 15 th , 2012
Interviews	TBD – late September

Submittal Requirements

All documents are to be received by Visionlearning electronically prior to the submission deadline. Proposers should email all materials to Heather Falconer (hfalconer@visionlearning.com).

A complete application will include the following:

1. Letter of Interest
2. Proposal, including:
 - a. Timeline for Project – Phase I only
 - b. Approach to scaffolding (preparation for Phase II)
 - c. Method of coordination with Visionlearning
 - d. Approach to incorporating new design aesthetic
3. Resumes of Key Personnel

Applications should be submitted in **either** PDF or MS-Word format; other formats will not be accepted.



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Biology



Chemistry



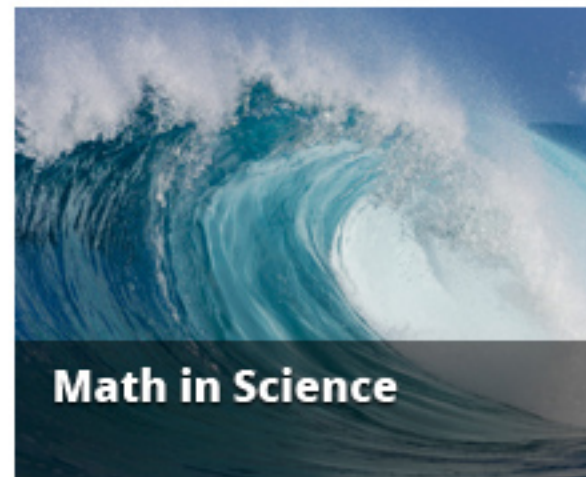
Earth Science



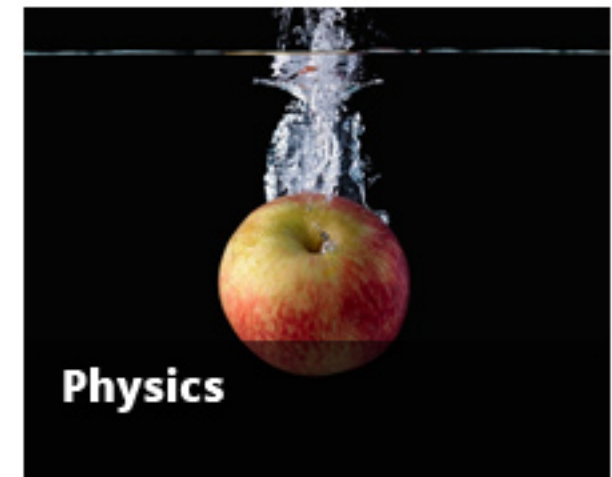
Environmental Science



General Science



Math in Science



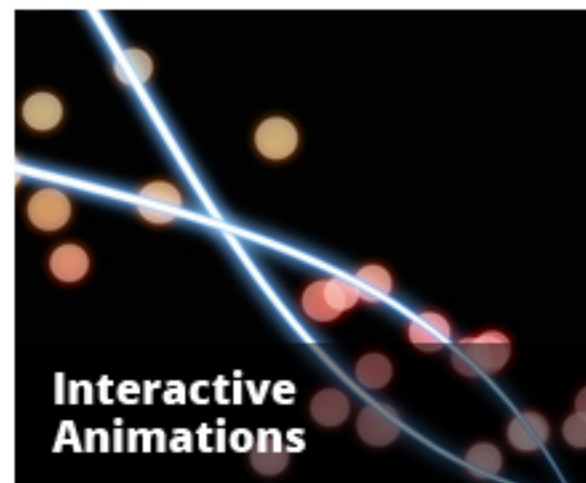
Physics



The Process of Science



Science in the Real World



Interactive Animations

Module Quiz

[Earth Structure »](#)

test your knowledge

The Moho is the boundary between

- ☐ a. the lithosphere and the aesthenosphere
 ☐ b. the inner core and the outer core
☐ c. the crust and the mantle
 ☐ d. the mantle and the core

Check Answer

★ Higher scores

Studies show that students using Visionlearning's web-based resources score significantly higher on standardized assessment tests than students who use printed textbooks.

[About Us »](#)

★ Success metrics

We are leading experts and scientists. Research and peer recognition are important indicators of the strength of our learning materials.

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