
Request for Information

Education Development Center, Inc.

(Hereafter referred to as EDC)

**Request for Information for a Mobile Research & Development Technical Support
Firm**

January 4, 2013

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1 Statement of Work

1.1 Purpose & Background

The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to invite prospective vendors to submit their qualifications to provide mobile research and development technical support to EDC and provide technical assistance to EDC to support the ongoing development needs for Stepping Stone, a mobile development toolkit (built in Java) to deliver educational multimedia content in low resource environments on low cost Java-enabled phones. Qualifications will be reviewed in accordance with Section 3.5

EDC has designed a software tool named Stepping Stone which acts as a multimedia slide creation tool for Java-enabled cell phones (Stepping Stone is compatible with Nokia S40 series phones). With Stepping Stone and a library of photos or illustrations, text and instructional audio, a teacher or curriculum developer can create a series of slides for viewing on a mobile phone by dragging / dropping components into place much like one would when creating a slide-based media presentation. The different lessons can then be loaded onto Java-enabled phones and played back as multimedia lessons. Java was selected for the development environment because research indicates that it is the single most widely distributed platform on phones worldwide.

The RFI provides vendors with the relevant operational, performance, application, and architectural requirements of the system.

1.2 Coverage & Participation

The intended coverage of this RFI, shall be for the use of all departments at EDC along with any satellite offices. EDC reserves the right to add and/or delete elements, or to change any element of the coverage and participation at any time without prior notification and without any liability or obligation of any kind or amount.

2 General Information

2.1 Original RFI Document

EDC shall retain the RFI, and all related terms and conditions, exhibits and other attachments, in original form in an archival copy. Any modification of these, in the vendor's submission, is grounds for immediate disqualification.

2.2 The Organization

EDC is a global nonprofit organization that develops, delivers, and evaluates innovative programs to address some of the world's most urgent challenges. Working with public-sector and private partners, we work to improve education, health promotion and care, workforce preparation, communication technologies, and civic engagement. Our services include research, training, educational materials and strategy, with activities ranging from small seed

projects to large-scale national and international initiatives. EDC enjoys a worldwide reputation for excellence in program and fiscal management and for the impact of its work.

2.3 Schedule of Events

The following is a tentative schedule that will apply to this RFI, but may change in accordance with the organization's needs or unforeseen circumstances.

Issuance of RFI	January 4, 2013, 5:00PM EST
Technical Questions/Inquiries Due	January 16, 2013, 5:00PM EST
EDC Responses to Inquiries	January 18, 2013, 5:00PM EST
RFI Closes	January 22, 2013, 5:00PM EST
EDC Complete Initial Evaluation	January 28, 2013, 5:00PM EST
Request Proposal and Budget Details from Qualified Vendors	January 30, 2013, 5:00PM EST
Final Vendor Selection	February 5, 2013, 5:00PM EST

3 Proposal Preparation Instructions

3.1 Vendor's Understanding of the RFI

In responding to this RFI, the vendor accepts full responsibility to understand the RFI in its entirety, and in detail, including making any inquiries to EDC as necessary to gain such understanding. EDC reserves the right to disqualify any vendor who demonstrates less than such understanding. Further, EDC reserves the right to determine, at its sole discretion, whether the vendor has demonstrated such understanding. That right extends to cancellation of award if award has been made. Such disqualification and/or cancellation shall be at no fault, cost, or liability whatsoever to EDC.

3.2 Good Faith Statement

All information provided by EDC in this RFI is offered in good faith. Individual items are subject to change at any time. EDC makes no certification that any item is without error. EDC is not responsible or liable for any use of the information or for any claims asserted there from.

3.3 Communication

Verbal communication shall not be effective unless formally confirmed in writing by specified procurement official in charge of managing this RFI process. In no case shall verbal communication govern over written communication.

Vendors' inquiries, questions, and requests for clarification related to this RFI are to be directed in writing to:

Education Development Center
International Development Division
43 Foundry Avenue, Waltham, MA 02453

Attention: Scott Isbrandt
Telephone: (617)618-2114
E-mail: sibrandt@edc.org

Applicable terms and conditions herein shall govern communications and inquiries between EDC and vendors as they relate to this RFI.

Informal Communications shall include, but are not limited to: requests from/to vendors or vendors' representatives in any kind of capacity, to/from any EDC employee or representative of any kind or capacity with the exception of Scott Isbrandt for information, comments, speculation, etc. Inquiries for clarifications and information that will not require addenda may be submitted verbally to the named above at any time.

Formal Communications shall include, but are not limited to:

- Questions concerning this RFI must be submitted in writing and be received prior to January 16th, 5pm US Eastern Standard Time (EST).
- Errors and omissions in this RFI and enhancements: Vendors shall bring to EDC any discrepancies, errors, or omissions that may exist within this RFI. With respect to this RFI, vendors shall recommend to EDC any enhancements, which might be in EDC's best interests. These must be submitted in writing and be received prior to January 16th, 5pm US Eastern Standard Time (EST).
- Inquiries about technical interpretations must be submitted in writing and be received prior to January 16th, 5pm US Eastern Standard Time (EST).
- Inquiries for clarifications/information that will not require addenda may be submitted verbally to the buyer named above at any time during this process.
- Verbal and/or written presentations and pre-award negotiations under this RFI.
- Addenda to this RFI.

EDC will tabulate all inquiries and will send a complete list, via email of all inquiries and responses to all vendors no later than January 18, 2013, 5:00PM EST.

EDC will not respond to any questions/requests for clarification if received after January 16th, 5pm US Eastern Standard Time (EST).

3.4 RFI Response Submission

Responses to this RFI must be delivered via email to:

Scott Isbrandt
Education Development Center
International Development Division
43 Foundry Avenue
Waltham, MA 02453

on or prior to January 22nd, 2013 at 5pm US EST. EDC shall not accept proposals received by fax.

3.5 Method of Qualifications Evaluation:

The evaluation of each response to this RFI will be based on its demonstrated competence, compliance, format, and organization. The purpose of this RFI is to identify those suppliers that have the interest and qualifications to supply EDC with Mobile Research and Development Technical Support identified in the Scope of Work.

Evaluation Criteria:

1. Technical Project Experience: 33.33 Points
2. Technical Staff Expertise: 33.33 points
3. Adequate Human Resource Availability/Responsiveness to Task Order Requests: 33.33 points

3.5.1 Selection and Notification

Offerors who score 70 points or higher by the EDC review team will be selected to move into the next phase of this process. Written notification will be sent to these vendors via email. Those vendors not selected for the next phase will not be notified.

4 Scope of Work, Specifications & Requirements

EDC seeks technical assistance from a development firm that can offer on-demand support for development of Stepping Stone. Stepping Stone has two main components: 1) the Stepping Stone Desktop Authoring Tool (DAT), a desktop application that runs in a windows operating system environment within the Java swing framework and 2) the phone-based J2ME client that plays back content created in the Stepping Stone DAT. Ongoing development support for Stepping Stone is required to support enhancements and feature modifications as required by project field operations in countries where Stepping Stone is used under the direction of EDC.

4.1 Tasks

The following technical assistance tasks will be required of the development firm retained to support Stepping Stone:

- Assign/supervise developer(s) to code solutions for new features, bug fixes, and upgrades as needed by EDC;
- Provide cost estimates on a task work order basis for discrete tasks as assigned by EDC;

- Maintain existing code base and propose improvements to Stepping Stone as required;
- Conduct research as directed by EDC concerning: compatibility with targeted mobile devices, trust certificate acceptance on mobile device, UTF-8 language support, increased support for custom font sizes that are able to display large fonts (beyond the capacity of device system fonts, and support for video playback.

4.2 Expertise required:

1. Extensive knowledge of development for Java environments, specifically the Java 2 platform, micro edition (J2ME).
2. Extensive demonstrable experience creating tools for J2ME environments and devices.
3. Able to demonstrate the ability to develop, test and deliver to low cost mobile devices similar to those that Stepping Stone currently targets (at the moment Nokia S40 devices) or other mobile devices.
4. Extensive knowledge of Android development and delivery (Stepping Stone intends to develop for Android devices in future iterations).
5. Knowledge of audio/video support for J2ME platform.
6. Expertise in other relevant programming languages and tools that can be used for mobile development to support Stepping Stone development.

Version one of Stepping Stone is currently complete and in usage by EDC in Mali, West Africa. Stepping Stone will soon be released by EDC as an open source application, under a GPL license.

5 Vendor Qualifications and References

All vendors must provide the following information in order for their qualifications to be considered:

1. A direct response to each point under Section 4.2 above (Expertise Required)
2. A brief outline of the vendor company and services offered, including:
 - Full legal name of the company
 - Year business was established
 - Number of people currently employed
 - Income statement and balance sheet for each of the two most recently completed fiscal years certified by a public accountant (if possible).
3. An outline of the product line-up they currently support.
4. A description of their geographic reach and market penetration.
5. An outline of their partnerships and relationships to date.
6. An outline of their current and future strategies in the marketplace.

7. Information on current software clients, including:
 - Total number of current clients
 - A list of clients with similar needs using the same software
 - Evidence of successful completion of a project of a similar size and complexity.
8. References: Contact information for 3 references (if possible) from projects similar in size, application, and scope and a brief description of their implementation.

6 Vendor Certification

This certification attests to the vendor's awareness and agreement to the content of this RFI and all accompanying calendar schedules and provisions contained herein.

The vendor must ensure that the following certificate is duly completed and correctly executed by an authorized officer of your company.

This proposal is submitted in response to RFI for **Mobile Research & Development Technical Support** issued by EDC. The undersigned is a duly authorized officer, hereby certifies that:

(Vendor Name)

agrees to be bound by the content of this proposal and agrees to comply with the terms, conditions, and provisions of the referenced RFI and any addenda thereto in the event of an award. Exceptions are to be noted as stated in the RFI. The proposal shall remain in effect for a period of 180 calendar days as of the Due Date of the RFI.

The undersigned further certify that their firm (check one):

- ☐ IS
☐ IS NOT

Currently debarred, suspended, or proposed for debarment by any federal entity. The undersigned agree to notify EDC of any change in this status, should one occur, until such time as an award has been made under this procurement action.

Person[s] authorized to negotiate on behalf of this firm for purposes of this RFI are:

Name:	_____	Title:	_____
Signature:	_____	Date:	_____
Name:	_____	Title:	_____
Signature:	_____	Date:	_____

Signature of Authorized Officer:

Name:	_____	Title:	_____
Signature:	_____	Date:	_____