

**Request for Proposals to Design Website to Facilitate “Foreign
Credential Recognition Support for Labour Market Needs in
Saskatchewan”**



SIAS

SASKATCHEWAN INSTITUTE OF
APPLIED SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Attention:

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**Responses (mail only) will be received until 3:00pm Central Standard
Time (CST) Friday, January 9th, 2009.**

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1.0 Acronyms

BDIP.....	Business Development and International Partnership
CLB.....	Canadian Language Benchmarks
FCR.....	Foreign Credential Recognition
ITS.....	SIAST Information Technology Services
HRSDC.....	Human Resources Social Development Canada
SINP.....	Saskatchewan Immigration Nomination Program
SIAST.....	Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology

2.0 General Information for bidders:

Category: Website Design/Services

Agent/ Delivery: SIAST Foreign Credentials Recognition project in Canada

Direct Inquiries and Bid Submissions to:

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Estimated Bid Value: CAD\$100,000

Proposal Closing Date:

Please submit (3) complete copies of your response. Responses will be received until 3pm Central Standard Time (CST) Friday January 9th, 2009 and all submission packages will be delivered to the above address by that time to be classified as viable for consideration under tender guidelines.

Proposal Validity:

Proposals shall remain valid for a period of 60 days after the aforementioned response deadline for evaluation and contract awarding.

Rights Reserved:

It is SIAST's intent to elicit bids to help proceed with the procurement of services to design a Foreign Credentials Recognition communication portal (website). SIAST reserves the right to pursue an award based solely on what it considers to be the best response to the RFP if an award appears to be in SIAST's best interests.

SIAST may, at its sole discretion, issue the contract to vendors identified in the RFP process as being most capable of fulfilling SIAST's requirements. SIAST reserves the right to request clarification or additional information from any respondent at any time during the RFP process.

3.0 Statement of Work

Description: SIAST requires the services of a qualified website specialist to design a website of specific requirements for its project entitled, “Foreign Credential Recognition Support for Labour Market Needs in Saskatchewan”, funded in part by the Government of Canada’s Foreign Credential Recognition program.

Scope and Objectives:

Tender submissions for the FCR website design to erect a communications portal (website) that will help link SIAST and Canadian employers seeking to source immigrant employees with skills tailored to the Canadian workplace.

The website would assist in the assessment and selection by Canadian businesses of all technical and non-technical skills of immigration applicants from overseas.

Utilizing SIAST’s key international educational partners in the countries of Ukraine, Philippines, and Vietnam, SIAST will assess potential immigrant labour overseas. Through the website, businesses in Canada will be able to register and select key work skill and language descriptors that best suit their work place.

4.0 Specific Technical Requirements

The successful vendor must directly address the following parameters and specifications to develop the following:

1. Foreign Credential Database in Oracle. SIAST will host/administer/manage access to Oracle DB and server.
2. Banner SungardHE student module.
3. LCMS web content management, from SungardHE. Work with SIAST
4. Maintain the continuity of the Datamodel load course and person data into FCR DB
5. Create Matching Application and website using LCMS (1) for web content management
6. Input form for candidate information and competencies
7. Matching form to present candidates to employers
8. Export Successful Candidate personal and course data to SIAST banner Staging area using existing person and course data models.

The tender closes on January 9th, 2009 and on *December 15th, 2008* there will be a one-hour meeting/conference call with SIAST to delineate technical issues for perspective vendors.*

For further reference please see swim diagram of overall program in Attachment A.

Objectives:

- Website (online delivery system) will allow interested Saskatchewan businesses and overseas partners to self register easily online to take part in the project
- Develop area of website that will allow Saskatchewan businesses to easily specify the number and nature of their hiring needs
- Ensure website lists detailed descriptors for both language and work (technical and non-technical) skills with which to enable online matching and thus selection
- Develop a dedicated discussion forum with which to relay feedback from both overseas partner or Saskatchewan business to facilitate intercommunication and surveys
- Include a Content Management System (CMS) that allows for template-based creation of content on WebPages
- Develop a SIAST Administrative Interface which will be taken over in transition by SIAST personnel once the website is complete

5.0 Background:

SIAST has initiated a CAD\$4 million program, funded in part by Government of Canada's Foreign Credential Recognition program to design and implement a project entitled Foreign Credential Recognition Support for Labour Market Needs in Saskatchewan.

Pioneering a new approach in Canadian immigration and foreign credential recognition, the project will provide cost-effective and sustainable credentialing and skills recognition services to the Canadian employers of prospective immigrants to Canada to be admitted primarily under the Saskatchewan Immigration Nomination Program (SINP) and other provincial immigration nomination programs. After training from SIAST faculty, partner agencies overseas conduct technical skills and language assessments of immigration applicants in their home country as per SIAST requirements and standards. The assessment will result in a "skills passport" - a document officially registered and produced by SIAST that will guarantee the achievement of specific technical competencies (SIAST curricula standards) and language standards (Canadian Language Benchmarks). The "skills passport" will assist Canadian employers to select new immigrant employees as well as help new immigrants transfer their skills to SIAST certificate and diploma credentials upon arrival in Canada.

While the partner overseas agencies will measure the technical and non-technical skills of the immigration applicants (which form the basis of the labour market "supply"), SIAST must also be able to identify and measure the Canadian labour market demand. Data on the specific needs of employers in terms of the numbers of employees and the specific skills needed of those employees must be collected in a timely, efficient and cost effective way. Therefore, SIAST requires a web-based data collection process where Canadian employers can register their international human resource sourcing needs. Employers will be able to indicate which technical and non-technical competencies are needed for new employees.

The dates when new employees with the required competencies are needed will be recorded as well as if the employer has a preference between the assessment country locations. The data shall remain confidential to SIAST through a secure server.

SIAST will market the service throughout Canada but efforts will concentrate in Saskatchewan. Public relations campaigns through regional economic development and employer associations will be the primary marketing method aside from the internet. Although the web site will be the primary avenue for data collection, SIAST will maintain a program officer dedicated to each request registered on the site. The SIAST program officer will continually update requests through personal contacts with the employer. Similarly, the program officer will assist the employer in refining their new employee technical and non-technical competency search criteria.

Based on the data submitted from employers, SIAST will advise the overseas partner agencies of the numbers of required skilled immigrants and the types of competencies required. Overseas partner agencies, in turn, will use the demand data to counsel potential immigration applicants of their prospects *vis a vis* the applicants' current and demonstrated technical and non-technical skills. In addition to advising the overseas partner agencies, under some bilateral provincial immigration agreements (with the Government of the Philippines) SIAST is required to notify the respective provincial governments (who in turn notify the overseas governments) of the projected annual numbers of immigrants likely to be processed through the provincial nomination programs.

6.0 Rationale:

SIAST requires a web portal to fulfill the following four principal functions:

1) Employer Skills Immigration Demand

The web portal will describe and record specific language and technical skills demand of individual Canadian employers. The portal will record the specific language and technical skills requirements of each new employee required. The skills and language standards will be as per the SIAST curricula and the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLBs).

2) Immigrant Skills Supply

The web portal will allow for partner agency to register individual immigration applicants and record the skills and language achievements against the determined standards (*i.e.* SIAST curricula and CLBs). The data reported must be stored securely and easily integrated with the SIAST student information software (Banner).

3) Skills Matching Analysis and Reporting

The web portal will analyze the skills demands of employers against the skills supply of immigration applicants. The report produced will be used to counsel immigration applicants and

employers of the number and best matches. It will also help to advise immigration applicants of the potential for 'gap' training (conducted in their home country) to better qualify them for further employment opportunities.

7.0 Anticipated Work Packages

For further reference please see swim diagram of overall program in Attachment A.

SIAST anticipated the following components will be required for development, hosting and ongoing servicing:

- 1) Scoping General Architecture Development
 - a) Design the application architecture that meets the requirements of SIAST, Partner Agencies, and Employers.
 - b) The application must possess an advanced set of administration tools to enable the SIAST Administrator to maintain autonomy and control, access employer requirements and generate reports
 - c) The application must include a Content Management System that allows for posting of content to the Partner Agency sites.
 - d) The application must include a tool that matches employer needs against applicant profiles and notifies SIAST of the match
 - e) The application interface must maintain a cohesive look and feel to ensure synchronization with the SIAST partner agencies and employers.
- 2) General Administration and Logging Tool
 - a) System administrator to setup and monitor the network communications protocols, IP port numbers, firewall configuration
- 3) Employer Records
 - a) Record Identifier
 - b) Name
 - c) Location
 - d) # of employees needed and when
 - e) Country of origin preference (of any) (by employee)
 - f) Skills/language levels required (indicate from draw down tables of descriptors)
 - g) Date of data entry
- 4) Applicant Skills Assessment
 - a) Applicant Identifier
 - b) Contact Information
 - c) Partner Agency
 - d) Partner Assessor
 - e) Partner Guarantor
 - f) Date of Assessment

- g) Language Assessment Results
- h) Technical Assessment Results

5) Skills Matching Assessment Tool

The skills matching assessment tool matches the current skills of candidates against the employer skills requirements. The tool notifies the SIAST Administrator of matches by Partner Agency, Occupation, Employer and Job Order Number.

6) SIAST Application Administration Tool

The SIAST administration tool will enable the SIAST administrator to create user accounts and establish user profiles with respect to applicants, partner agencies and employers. If possible seamless data transfer to the SIAST student information system (Banner) would be greatly beneficial.

7) Documentation

The product will include basic help files as user documentation.

8) Hosting and System Administration

The platform will be hosted (at least initially) by a third party hosting with SIAST administering the service. Training of the SIAST administrator will be required. This approach would liken the service to a turn-key operation.

8.0 Content of Submissions

Submissions are to include:

a) Company Profile

The following details the company profile information that we are requesting as part of this RFP. Respondents will please provide the following information:

- Provide the name of the company, its head office address, and any branch office addresses.
- Indicate the legal form and age of the business.
- State the total number of employees for the company.
- State qualifications and expertise of employees you would devote to a project of this nature including a project manager.
- State the number of full-time equivalents you would anticipate devoting to a project of this scope and scale.
- Provide detail on recent (last 3 years) projects your company has engaged in relating to full-service web/website development.
- Identify other major products or services your company offers.

b) Client Profiles

SIAST is requesting with proposal submissions a list of clients who have recently implemented website solutions similar to the requested tender. The provision of other post-secondary educational organizations whose requirements are similar to those of SIAST would be encouraged. Please provide the following information from three (3) to a maximum of five (5) clients. The names, addresses and telephone numbers of additional references may also be included with your response.

- Describe the full range of services your company offers.
- Provide the name and address of each referenced client.
- List the name of the client's project manager, their telephone number, fax number and email address.
- Provide a comprehensive project description for each referenced client.
- Provide a URL where the completed work can be viewed along with a brief description to provide context to what is viewed.
- Specify if there were any substantial delays in implementation; please note the length of the delay and the reason(s).
- Provide an estimate of the final contract amounts.
- Identify which other software systems were interfaced in those projects, whether systems were of a proprietary or commercially available nature.
- Any additional information that would help SIAST understand how you find success in working with organizations of like size and complexity.
- Describe examples of partnerships that you have engaged in that have resulted in successful projects of similar scope and scale.

7.0 Implementation, Training, Maintenance and Budget

Please provide the following information:

- Describe the project implementation process and project schedule. What personnel and other resources will SIAST need to devote for successful implementation of the solution?
- Please provide a full and detailed budget that coincides with a work plan to undertake and complete the project.
- Your project schedule should be structured to include reporting periods (quarterly) to allow SIAST to track your progress to completion, under the guideline times you set to complete the work.

8.0 Evaluation criteria

- **Workplan 30%** - Proposals must include a detailed work plan toward the development of the website. The various project work packages should be described as well as a clear description of the transition to SIAST webmasters to control and access information from the website.
- **Company/Project Profiles 30%** - a detailed description of your company profile as well as the project profile based on selected milestones should accompany your proposals, describing the approach and methodology employed to erect the website
- **Design Team 30%** - proposals should delineate clearly who is involved in each stage of the development and delivery, including types of positions (roles and qualifications), and length of time (level of effort) for each work package.
- **Financial Proposal 20%** - The financial proposal with the lowest all-inclusive fee rate would be awarded the maximum amount of points (20). Point totals for other financial bids will be calculated on a pro-rata basis. For example, if the fee proposal from Consultant 'A' exceeds the lowest fee submitted or Consultant 'B', by 10 %, Consultant A would receive 20 points minus (10% of 20, or 2 points) which is 18 points. If the bid from Consultant A is 100% higher than the lowest bid (Consultant B), then Consultant A would receive 0 points.

9.0 Contractor selection method

- The winning contractor must have met all criteria and supplied all information outlined in the RFP
- Score no less than 60% out of a possible 100% in the evaluation criteria
- Provide an effective project breakdown and cost

Neither the highest point total nor the lowest cost would be awarded the tender; rather the best combination of point total and cost shall be awarded the contract.

Any appeals must be documented and sent in writing to the SIAST Project Coordinator within two weeks of the closing date, decisions rest with SIAST's internal evaluation committee.

10.0 Signing Procedures:

- Submitted proposals must have an individual signature of a signatory responsible for the submission (and that can be readily contacted) affixed to the final page, with a type written or printed version of the signature included.

11.0 Attachment A: “Vendor” section at bottom of swim diagram.

