Request for Proposals (RFP)

To:	Offerors
From:	Institute of International Education, Inc. (IIE)
Subject:	*Project GO and Language Training Centers Website Maintenance and Upgrade*

RFP Issue Date:	March 3, 2025
RFP Questions Due:	March 11, 2025 – 5 PM EST
RFP Answers to Questions:	March 18, 2025 – 5 PM EST
RFP Closing Date:	March 27, 2025 - 5 PM EST
Performance Period:	May 1, 2025 – April 30, 2026

Enclosed is a Request for Proposals (RFP). IIE invites qualified firms and organizations ("Offerors") to submit a best-value proposal for the requested services. The Contract resulting from this award will be a USG-Funded Contract serving the below mentioned program.

Offerors are encouraged to read this RFP in its entirety (including any and all attachments), paying specific attention to the instructions and requirements included herein. Issuance of this solicitation does not, in any way, obligate the Institute of International Education (IIE) to award a contract, nor will IIE pay for any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal. The agreement resulting from this RFP will be provided to the most responsive Offeror(s) whose Offer will be the most advantageous to IIE in terms of cost, functionality, and other factors as specified in this RFP.

The required services are described in the "Statement of Work" in Attachment A. IIE encourages your organization to indicate its interest in this RFP by submitting a proposal according to the instructions in "Proposal Preparation Instruction". Proposals will be evaluated based on the "Evaluation Criteria.

This is a small business set aside opportunity. The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Code for this action is 541519 — Other Computer Related Services. Only offerors that certify in SAM.gov or directly to IIE that they are a small business under this NAICS code are eligible for this opportunity. If the Offeror thinks that another NAICS code is more appropriate for this opportunity they can submit a question or suggestion in writing, as part of the Q&A process.

The selected Offeror must provide IIE with their Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number. UEI is a 12-character (alphanumeric) number issued by the System for Award Management (SAM.gov). IIE will not be able to issue a contract until the selected Offeror has provided IIE with its UEI.

All proposals are due by the dates and times stated above. Any proposal received after the required time and date specified for receipt shall be considered late and non-responsive. Late proposals will not be evaluated.

Questions: Any questions are to be submitted via email to the email address listed below no later than the date and time listed above. No questions will be entertained if they are received by means other than the specified email address. No oral answers will be provided. Answers to questions IIE deems relevant to this RFP will be published on the date listed above, on IIE's website under Subawards and Procurement at: https://www.iie.org/Work-With-Us/Subawards-Procurements/Solicitations-for-Goods-and-Services.

> **Meredith Schumacher**
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Proposal Submission: Proposals, including any attachments (limited to 6MB), should be sent electronically in PDF format to: mschumacher@iie.org. Be sure to include in the subject line: "Request for Proposal (RFP)— *"Project GO and Language Training Centers Website Maintenance and Upgrade."* IIE will not accept proposals received by fax.

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Section 1: Background and Purpose

Language Training Centers

The Language Training Centers (LTC) Program is a Department of Defense (DOD) funded initiative established in 2011 to accelerate the development of foundational or higher-level expertise in strategic languages and regional studies for DOD personnel by leveraging U.S. institutions of higher education to meet the existing and demonstrated training needs of DOD units, offices, or agencies. The LTC initiative currently provides funding to ten institutions of higher education to carry out this mission.

The LTC website can be found at https://www.dodltc.org.

Project Global Officer

Project Global Officer (Project GO) is an initiative of the Defense Language and National Security Education Office that is administered by the Institute of International Education. Established in 2007, Project GO currently provides funding to nine institutions of higher education to promote critical language education, study abroad, and intercultural exposure among ROTC students. The program's goal is to develop future military officers across all the services who possess the necessary linguistic and cross-cultural communication skills required for effective leadership in the 21st century operational environment.

The Project GO website can be found at https://www.rotcprojectgo.org.

Purpose of Request for Proposal

IIE is seeking a website development company with demonstrated technical expertise in website design, development, and maintenance and hosting to support the Language Training Centers and Project Global Officer programs' websites.

The purpose of this Request for Proposal ("RFP") is to invite qualified bidders to submit a proposal to provide ongoing technical support, maintenance, enhancements, hosting, and improvements to the current websites; implement site upgrades from Drupal 10 to Drupal 11; and provide enhancements to existing functionality that adheres to the stipulations and needs as described in this request for proposal.

The information presented in this RFP is furnished solely for the purpose of assisting the bidder in making its own evaluation of the Scope of Work and does not purport to be all-inclusive or to contain all the information you may require. This RFP is not an offer by IIE to contract, but rather an attempt to establish a common framework for IIE to evaluate potential suppliers. The bidder should make its own investigations, projections and conclusions to verify independently the information contained in this RFP, and to obtain any additional information that it may require, prior to submitting a proposal.

Section 2: RFP Conditions

IIE reserves the right to:
- Reject any or all offers and discontinue this RFP process without obligation or liability to any potential Offeror or other party.
- Accept other than the lowest price offered.
- Award a contract on the basis of initial offers received, without discussions or requests for best and final offers.
- Award more than one contract.

Nothing in this RFP is, or should be relied on by Offeror as a promise or representation by IIE. IIE does not make any representation or warranty as to the completeness of this RFP or have any liability for any representations (express or implied) contained in, or omissions from, this RFP. This RFP and any replies to any written notifications are transmitted to the Offeror solely for the purposes of the Offeror preparing and submitting a Proposal. Each Offeror shall keep the RFP and its contents confidential and shall return the RFP (without keeping copies) to IIE if the Offeror elects not to submit a proposal, or upon being requested to do so by IIE.

Any information or materials submitted in response to this RFP and/or as a proposal (whether successful or unsuccessful) shall become the property of IIE and will not be returned.

In submitting a proposal, you must agree that your offer shall remain firm for a period of no less than 120 days from the RFP closing date.

Failure to follow the specifications and requirements provided in this RFP may result in disqualification.

The successful Offeror will be obligated to enter into an agreement containing the same or substantially similar terms and conditions found at https://www.iie.org/Work-With-Us/Subawards-Procurements/Solicitations-for-Goods-and-Services. The IIE terms and conditions may be changed, added to, deleted or modified by IIE prior to awarding the agreement. Other terms and conditions may be negotiated between IIE and the successful Offeror, at IIE's discretion. State Universities and Agencies should not expect or ask IIE to modify its Terms and Conditions to incorporate any State Regulations or Statutes.

Section 3: Proposal Preparation instructions

Proposals are expected to be comprehensive and include the information set forth below. Offerors are also invited to send any additional information or supplemental material they believe will aid IIE in properly evaluating their service offerings. Please be sure to respond to each of the elements requested and frame your answers in direct response to the information being sought.

Include only your own work and no text copied from sources outside of your organization, unless those sources are adequately cited and credited. In order to be qualified for this RFP, all Offerors are requested to provide the following information, and format their proposal as follows:

1. **Letter of transmittal, one page**

2. **Basic information, one page**

    - Legal name, registered address, and "Remit to" mailing address, if different from registered address
    - Name of authorized representative for this RFP, with telephone number(s), and e-mail address
    - General information about your organization and the services it offers

3. **Qualifications and Capabilities**

    - Brief description of the organization/entity and experience in the field that illustrates overall services and capabilities to meet the terms of the RFP
    - Years of relevant experience
    - Any plans to outsource/subcontract the services or any part thereof

4. **Past Performance and Experience**

Document and summarize your proven track record of successfully implementing similar activities. Using the table format provided below, please list only the relevant projects you implemented within the past 3 years, a brief description of how each is relevant to the scope of the RFP, and the contact details for each previous client or donor. You may also include recommendation/appreciation letters and certificates.

#	(a) Name of Organization	(b) Activity Title	(c) Locations of activity	(d) Synopsis of the activity and relevance to this RFP	(e) Performance period (date and duration)	(f) Cost for the activity	(g) Name & Contact Info (E-mail **and** phone)
1							
2							
3							

5. **Implementation of the Statement of Work**

- Detailed description of the services being offered and any information relevant to meeting the technical specifications stated in Attachment A
- Methodology, and reasoning behind the methodology chosen
- Quality control plan including:
  - A description of internal review procedures that facilitate high-quality standards
  - How quality control will be managed when completing multiple projects for multiple clients
- Exceptions to the RFP, additional or different ideas, in the statement of work and other requirements should be expressly noted

6. **Cost Proposal**

- Submit a detailed cost proposal, in U.S. dollars, in the recommended format shown in Attachment B
- Include any additional cost items that the Offeror wishes to propose
- Total cost proposed

Section 4: Terms of Payment

Payment terms for the award shall be approximately net thirty (30) days after satisfactory completion of each deliverable or milestone agreed upon and established in the resulting agreement. Payment shall be made by the Institute of International Education ("IIE") via check or electronic funds transfer/bank wire. The final payment terms in the contract will control, not this RFP. No advance payments will be provided.

Section 5: Evaluation of Proposals

All proposals will be evaluated by IIE and may also be reviewed by outside evaluators as appropriate. IIE may discuss an application with an applicant if deemed necessary; IIE also reserves the right to make a selection without discussion with any applicants. IIE may reject any or all applications, or cancel the competition, if applications do not sufficiently demonstrate applicants' ability to meet the stated goals of this RFP.

Any award made pursuant to this RFP will be based upon the proposal with appropriate consideration given to operational, technical, cost and management requirements. Evaluation of offers will be based upon the bidder's responsiveness to the RFP, including the proposal's format and organization, the bidder's demonstrated competence, and overall compliance.

Each proposal will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Item	Requirement	Maximum Length	Points Available
Technical	Considering the Statement of Work in Attachment A, please describe in detail the following: a) Relevant experience b) Testimonials / references c) Timeframe d) Design capabilities (if applicable)	7 pages	60 points
Cost Proposal	IIE's review of the cost proposal shall determine if the overall costs proposed are realistic for the work to be performed, reflect a correct understanding of the project requirements, and are consistent with the Offeror's technical proposal.	3 pages	30 points
Competitive Advantage	Does the vendor offer something that sets them apart from the others that will be useful to IIE.	3 pages	10 points
	Total	13 pages	100 points

Pages in excess of the maximum length limit will not be reviewed and evaluated.

Bidders determined by IIE to possess the capacity to compete for this contract will be selected to move into the negotiation phase of this process. Written notification will be sent to these bidders via email. Those bidders not selected for the negotiation phase will also be notified.

Section 6: Annual Renewal

Annual Renewal: Selection(s) may be renewed annually, at IIE's sole discretion, for up to five years before re-competition. IIE reserves the right to exercise any one of the following options:

- Accept the updated proposal if changes are reasonable and within the scope of the original selection;
- Negotiate any updates/changes; or,
- Decide not to renew

Attachment A: Statement of Work

The Institute of International Education is seeking to identify a qualified firm that will:
Provide maintenance, support, development, hosting, and security monitoring for the Project GO and LTC websites on an ongoing basis, including any patches and regularly scheduled code updates to Drupal, as well as provide a one-time upgrade for both sites from Drupal 10 to Drupal 11. The website will be hosted by the firm that is selected to perform the work.

Project GO Website Description

The Project GO website is designed to provide information on Project GO to potential participants and others interested in the program. The site's main function is to provide a searchable database of summer programs open to any ROTC student in the nation. Information on each program is entered into the program database by one of nine institutions selected as grantees.

In addition to the information that is publicly viewable on the Project GO website by any external visitor, there is also a "Resources" section available to users with log-ins (institutional users), and an Annual Meeting section that is only accessible via direct link.

The Resources section of the site houses documents and videos that are useful to our institutional users, including recordings of webinars and trainings, the Project GO handbook, and announcements shared with all Project GO institutions.

The Annual Meeting section of the site serves as an information hub about the meeting (agenda, hotel information, etc.) for our institutional partners and other attendees.

The Project GO website has two primary user roles, as follows:

Administrator – Administrators have the largest set of available permissions in the system, including the ability to create, read, edit, and delete all content and settings in the site. There are seven active users with administrator accounts.

Institution – Institutional users have the ability to create and edit their own content in the Programs and Resources sections of the website. They may not delete or publish their own content, and they have no permissions to edit content created by other users. They have access to read all content that is publicly available, as well as all content in the Resources and Annual Meeting sections of the website. There are currently 9 Project GO institutions, each of which has 1-2 active institutional users who create and edit content on the site.

Additionally, there are three other user roles for the Project GO website that are currently not in use (annual meeting registration, publisher, and viewer).

The Project GO website runs on the Drupal platform for backend use by IIE staff and 9 institutional grantees to maintain program pages and add content on the site.

For reference, interested vendors should review the current site at https://www.rotcprojectgo.org/.

LTC Website Description

The LTC website's main function is to provide information on the program and its participants, as well as to serve as a conduit for making program-related announcements. The site's main function is to provide a searchable database of LTC courses and languages currently offered by the eight LTC institutions. Information on the institutions and courses is entered into the program database by one of 5-6 IIE staff members, but may someday function more like the Project GO website, where the institution and course data is entered into the site by representatives from the institutions selected as grantees.

In addition to the information viewable on the LTC website by any external visitor, there is also a "Resources" section available to users with log-ins (institutional users), and an Annual Meeting part of the site that is only accessible with a direct link.

The Resources section of the site houses documents and videos that are useful to our institutional users, including copies of LTC RFPs, copies of annual meeting presentations, website user guides, and other information that may be useful to LTC partner institutions.

The Annual Meeting section of the site shares information about the meeting (agenda, hotel information, etc.) with our institutional partners.

The LTC website has two primary user types, as follows:

Administrator – Administrators have the largest set of available permissions in the system, including the ability to create, read, edit, and delete all content and settings in the site. There are seven active users with administrator accounts.

Institution – Institutional users have the ability to create and edit their own content in the Programs and Resources sections of the website. They may not delete or publish their own content (content must be reviewed before publishing), and they have no permissions to edit content created by other users. They have read access to all content that is publicly available, as well as all content in the Resources and Annual Meeting sections of the website. There are currently 10 LTC institutions, each of which has 1-2 institutional users of the website.

Additionally, there are two other user roles of the LTC website that are currently not in use (publisher and viewer).

The current LTC website runs on the Drupal platform for backend use by IIE staff to maintain program pages and add content on the site.

For reference, interested vendors should review the current site at https://www.dodltc.org/.

The remainder of this RFP provides additional information that will allow a bidder to understand the scope of the effort and develop a proposal in the format desired by IIE.

A. ONGOING MAINTENANCE, SUPPORT, DEVELOPMENT, HOSTING, SECURITY MONITORING

I. Hosting, maintenance, and other technical requirements
   a. The vendor shall maintain the current content management system.
   b. FedRAMP compliant hosting preferred but not required.
   c. The vendor shall propose how to work with the existing CMS consistent with best practices in the field, including, but not limited to:
      i. Providing security reviews, preventive maintenance, back up, and recovery for the website, including all associated databases, and site optimization as needed.
II. Monitoring
   a. Antivirus/Anti Spam Software, monitoring for DoS (denial of service attacks)
   b. Web Server Monitoring (Health, Logs)
   c. Location of hosting facility where the servers will be hosted.
III. Support:
   a. Provide 24 x 7 x 365 technical support
   b. Provide a copy of your Service Level Agreement, (SLA)
   c. Maintenance support for Web and Databases
   d. Common web server applications such as SQL and PHP
   e. Hardware and software upgrades, as required to maintain operations
   f. Provide a copy of your support model and associated costs after completion of the project for troubleshooting and correcting bugs, errors, and other problems with the website and CMS
IV. Ensure compatibility with:
   a. Section 508 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act which states that Federal agencies must ensure that public access to information for people with disabilities is comparable to access available to others.
   b. All major browsers, for current site and any changes.
   c. Common, commercially available software and hardware and that it meets current IT and security best practices.
V. Access:
   a. Allow access to root directory remotely by IIE and vendor
   b. Provide ability to install and administer programs (such as SQL, PHP)
   c. Provide password protected ftp access from dynamic IP addresses to upload files to server.
VI. Install:
   a. Patches and upgrades to software platforms, as necessary.
   b. Periodic review of site for additional plug-ins to enhance the site or improve current functionality. A plan for changes to the site needs to be noted in the budget, such as the hourly rate or other method.

B. DRUPAL UPGRADE

    I.   LTC Website
        a. A one-time upgrade from Drupal 10 to Drupal 11 for the entire LTC website with a target completion within 2025 federal fiscal year.

    II.   Project GO Website
        a. A one-time upgrade from Drupal 10 to Drupal 11 for the entire Project GO website with a target completion within the 2025 federal fiscal year.

Please be sure that your response includes, but is not limited to, the following items:

Company Details:
- Brief overview of company regarding the design of full higher education/international education/non-profit website projects
- Size and composition of non-profit organization customer base
- Examples of recent projects and experience with non-profit organizations
- Examples of managed websites using the Drupal content management system

Solution Details
- Description of how your firm would propose to achieve IIE's desired objectives
- Description of the process used to develop page templates with consistent design
- Description of ongoing customer service options
- Describe how company can meet IIE's stated goals in the phased approach outlined above

Solution Parameters
- All work must be developed using the Drupal platform
- Adherence to ADA web accessibility standards

Projected Costs
- For budgeting purposes, a range of total costs, including the firm's fees and any and all additional expenses
- Proposals shall include budgets incorporating the following line-items:
  - Hosting
  - Maintenance and Support
    - The budget should be for a fixed price for a set number of hours each month for each site.
  - Upgrade from Drupal 10 to Drupal 11 for LTC website
  - Upgrade from Drupal 10 to Drupal 11 for Project GO website
  - Additional functionality – include a budget cost or plan for additional functionality that IIE may need in the future, such as new plug-ins and enhancements.

Miscellaneous

- Please provide an approximate timeframe to complete the project given the proposed work
- What resources from IIE are necessary to complete the project?

Service level/Response times
- Include a proposed list of service levels and response times; if you would like to propose more than one set of service levels and response times please be sure that the cost differential between the options is clearly shown.

Attachment B: Cost Proposal Template

Submit a detailed, budget for the services described in the technical proposal. IIE's review of the cost proposal shall determine if the overall costs proposed are: realistic for the work to be performed, reflect a correct understanding of the project requirements, and are consistent with the Offeror's Technical Proposal.

The following is a format may be used as a guide to assist you in the preparation of the cost proposal. You may submit the cost proposal using this form or in the format of your choice (plain sheets, your own form, or a variation of this form). The Offeror may list any cost line items, but it is recommended that the Offeror follow the major categories listed below, breaking down all "lump sum" items as much as reasonably possible.

At a minimum, please include the following elements in the cost proposal:
- Proposed ceiling for the one-time activities and tasks including a description of the assumptions that are included
- Monthly hosting fees
- Fixed hourly rate for different tasks
- Budget for an initial period of performance of one year (12 months)

Offerors may propose other amounts, rates and fees as needed. The cost proposal must include all costs and fees that the offeror proposes to include in the resulting contract.

Item No.	Description	Quantity	Unit (hours/days/months/other)	Unit Price (USD)	Total Price
1	Hosting – LTC Website	12	months		
2	Hosting – PGO Website	12	months		
3	Maintenance – LTC Website	120	hours per year		
4	Maintenance – PGO Website	120	hours per year		
5	Drupal Upgrade – LTC Website	1	each		
6	Drupal Upgrade – PGO Website	1	each		

Attachment C: Additional Requirements

IT Security Evaluation

IIE's IT security assessment is based on The NIST (National Institute of Standards and Technology) Cybersecurity Framework v1.1 (CSF) and is carried out through an assessment conducted by OneTrust. NIST is a guidance, based on existing standards, guidelines, and practices for organizations to better manage and reduce cybersecurity risk. The NIST CSF consists of five concurrent and continuous Functions—Identify, Protect, Detect, Respond, Recover. When considered together, these Functions provide a high-level, strategic view of the lifecycle of an organization's cybersecurity risk management.

- If the vendor will send, store or receive Personal Data (any information that can identify a specific individual person, including name, address or email address) on behalf of IIE an **IT Security Evaluation is required prior to signing a contract.** Please note that this includes vendors that will provide a technology solution that sends, stores or receives Personal Data.

- The evaluation may include vendor completion of a security compliance assessment and delivery of security evidence to IIE.

Prohibition on certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment

IIE cannot enter into a contract to procure or obtain equipment, services, or systems that uses covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology as part of any system. As described in Public Law 115-232, section 889, covered telecommunications equipment is telecommunications equipment produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities).

Covered equipment and services must not be part of your offer to IIE.