



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP):
Virtual Reality Software Training**

**DATE OF ISSUE: 5 August 2021
DEADLINE: 23 August 2021 at 12:00 PM**

Table of Contents

About the Agency 3

Overview of Current Training Environment..... 3

Information Requirements and Format..... 3

 I. Company Background 4

 II. Rates 4

 III. Support 4

 IV. Proposed Approach and Solution 4

Submission Requirements 5

Review & Selection Criteria..... 6

 Announcement 6

Key Dates 7

General Terms & Conditions..... 7

Agreement of Non-Disclosure..... 7

About the Agency

East Tennessee Human Resource Agency, Inc. (ETHRA) has an overall mission to assist individuals and families through the provision of services, education, and information to solve problems that inhibit their ability to be productive and self-sufficient.

ETHRA is a Knoxville, Tennessee based public not-for-profit 501c3 organization that has been serving Knox County and the surrounding sixteen counties since 1974. ETHRA is a member of NJPA. ETHRA is sales tax exempt and eligible for government and/or non-profit pricing. The administrative offices are located at 9111 Cross Park Drive, Suite D-100, Knoxville, Tennessee 37923. ETHRA is an equal opportunity employer.

As a careful steward of the funds awarded by state, local, and federal governments, ETHRA weaves its resources together to maximize the impact of each dollar invested in support of the many public service programs it operates. We leverage these resources to serve East Tennessee communities through our participation as a grant administrator, local resource network, and nonprofit partner in dozens of public programs and projects.

Through this Request for Proposal (RFP) opportunity, ETHRA wishes to select a vendor to provide and support age-appropriate software employing virtual reality and learning science theory in secondary career and technical education programs of instruction.

Overview of Current Training Environment

The East Tennessee Human Resource Agency is collaborating with three (3) local education agencies in the East Tennessee Local Workforce Development Area to provide workforce development solutions to adolescents. The software must be age and content appropriate for adolescent and adult learners. Virtual reality simulations within the software shall enable students and job seekers to explore career pathways while offering work-based learning and pre-employment assessment. Career exploration and training clusters included in the software should, at minimum, mirror the sector strategies of the East Tennessee Local Workforce Development Board, i.e.:

- Hospitality and Tourism
- Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics
- Architecture and Construction
- Manufacturing

Information Requirements and Format

Respondent should include responses to all sections below in its proposal submission. If additional material is required for one or more questions, please label attachments clearly and reference them in your response. Responses received under the RFP that fail to address each of the sections, in adequate and complete detail, will be deemed as non-responsive and will not be considered for selection. Note that responses of “to be provided upon request” or “to be determined” or the like, or that do not otherwise provide the information requested (e.g. left blank) are not acceptable.

For the purposes of understanding more about your company and your ability to successfully fulfill the requirements, please provide the information below as part of your response, clearly referencing each specific question.

I. Company Background

1. Give a brief overview of your organization's involvement in providing instructional software—most specifically, workforce development software that provides artificial intelligence and learning sciences theory to calculate the probability that trainees can perform job tasks at an expected level of proficiency.
2. How long has the organization been in this business?
3. Please describe your relationships and experience selling and supporting software to education agencies.
4. What differentiates your organization from your competitors in the marketplace, and how will this be relevant to this purchase?
5. Will you subcontract any components of the proposed solution to third party organizations? If so, please describe the components to be subcontracted and provide details of any agreement in place with the subcontracted firm/individuals as well as a summary of past work that you have successfully completed together.
6. Please provide details of current customer accounts that are similar in scope and requirements to those of ETHRA.

II. Rates

1. Describe the pricing model(s) that you typically employ for your standard services.
2. If not outlined above, please provide pricing model(s) for Years 2, 3, 4+.

III. Support

1. Describe fully your technical support options, including the assistance request process, support hours, response times, staffing levels, staff expertise, and physical location of the help desk.
2. Describe any documentation and support (e.g., user manuals, online help, interactive demos, web-based seminars, and online knowledge base) that will be available, both from the technical perspective and the end-user perspective.
3. What options are available for user training and technical training that may be required by local staff?

IV. Proposed Approach and Solution

1. Following ETHRA's payment for licenses and associated products, how long will it take to receive and implement the licenses and associated hardware?
2. Please provide the requirements the software needs to be able to do along with hardware required to go along the software.
3. If ETHRA elects to move forward with your organization, what information would you

require during the course of the purchase and subsequent hand off to ETHRA's subrecipients, i.e., local education agencies?

Submission Requirements

- A. Potential bidders must register by sending an email to Nick Pappada, npappada@ethra.org, to receive updated information and answers to questions that will be sent to all registered bidders.
- B. All questions about this proposal should be directed to Nick Pappada, ETHRA, npappada@ethra.org.
- C. ETHRA's Proposal Response must be signed by an authorized company representative and submitted along with responses to the specific questions identified herein. Additional documentation may be attached to this form.
- D. Proposals must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. EDT, Monday, 23 August 2021, to ETHRA's administrative offices at 9111 Cross Park Drive, Suite D-100, Knoxville, TN 37923.
- E. Electronically transmitted submissions (Email or Fax) **will not be accepted.**
- F. Bids must be addressed and mailed or hand-delivered to:
ETHRA
Attention: Nick Pappada
9111 Cross Park Drive, Suite D-100 Knoxville, TN 37923
- G. Envelopes containing the proposal should be clearly marked with
"RFP Response – 5 August 2021"
- H. ETHRA is not bound to accept the lowest bid. Other considerations will apply:
 - Demonstrated ability to provide necessary service and support
 - Technical certifications and experience
 - Demonstrated expertise in machine learning
 - Evidence-based learning theory
 - References
- I. ETHRA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or any portion thereof.
- J. ETHRA reserves the right to waive minor informalities or technicalities when it is in ETHRA's best interest.
- K. ETHRA reserves the right, at its sole and absolute discretion, to amend or modify any provision of this RFP, or to withdraw this RFP at any time prior to contract award. ETHRA

shall not be bound by or liable under this RFP and/or any response thereto until a final written contract has been executed by ETHRA and the vendor incorporating the terms and conditions of the award.

- L. Vendors shall hold their price firm and subject to acceptance by ETHRA for a period of thirty (30) days from the date of proposal submission.
- M. Vendors may be asked to provide proof of financial and business capability. Evidence could include a business history, evidence of financial soundness, and business references. ETHRA will make the final determination as to the bidder's ability.
- N. Unsigned proposals will not be considered.

Review & Selection Criteria

ETHRA will use multiple criteria to select the most appropriate vendor. Respondents are encouraged to be as aggressive and creative as possible in their proposals. The following list summarizes the major qualitative areas that will be evaluated:

- Industry expertise and experience
- Demonstrated customer service quality and support
- Previous relevant experience
- Vendor strength and stability
- Utilization of machine learning algorithms
- Financial considerations

Announcement

Selection decisions are expected to be announced by 24 August 2021. All respondents will receive written notice as to whether or not your company was selected for this opportunity.

Contract Terms & Eligibility

Contract Term: One-year license and necessary hardware from date of contract effective date
Non-disbarment

Key Dates

DATE	ACTIVITY
8/5/21	RFP posted
8/13/21	Deadline to submit questions
8/17/21	Q&A posted to website
8/23/21	Deadline to submit proposals
8/25/21	Proposal Review Completed
8/27/21	Anticipated Selection Notification

General Terms & Conditions**No Guarantee**

The submission of a proposal does not, in any way, guarantee a selection. ETHRA is not responsible for any costs incurred related to the preparation of a proposal in response to this RFP. ETHRA reserves the right to withdraw a selection prior to execution of a contract with a vendor in ETHRA's sole and absolute discretion.

ETHRA makes no guarantee of future volumes and offers volume information for directional purposes only, to assist vendors with proposal preparation.

Agreement of Non-Disclosure

This document is considered to be proprietary and shall not be disclosed to any other party. It is designed, developed and submitted to potential partners of ETHRA solely for the benefit of ETHRA.