

TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

Request for Information (RFI)

My Texas Future

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
1200 East Anderson Lane
Austin, Texas 78752

RFI Post Date: August 24, 2021
Response Deadline: September 8, 2021, by 11:30 p.m. CT

Introduction

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) is a state agency that provides leadership and coordination for higher education in the state of Texas. THECB received an allocation from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) fund to support the development and successful launch of My Texas Future, a new innovative portal designed to propel more Texas residents to degree, credential, or certificate completion.

The My Texas Future portal will focus on supporting: (1) high school seniors; (2) high school students, grades 9 through 11; (3) advisors across high school and higher education; (4) potential transfer students; and (5) adult learners, with an emphasis on stop-outs, dropouts, veteran/military, and workers displaced by the pandemic, seeking to obtain a degree or credential of value in the labor market. This portion of the project must launch by April 2022. The portal will ultimately expand to provide all Texas students, parents, and advisors exploring post-secondary education access to resources and tools aimed at supporting their success.

Envisioned functionality for the portal includes, but is not limited to:

- Intuitive pathways to relevant information including localized industries and job growth patterns and earnings potential, career pathway visualizations, and educational path to achievement;
- Leverage existing advising resources available through Texas OnCourse and other agency sites designed to shepherd users from the portal to a warm handoff to a training provider or higher education institution;
- Integrated advising chatbot;
- Comprehensive marketplace of education and training options available across the state with advanced search functionality including but not limited to geographic and programmatic data;
- User registration to integrate with a customer relationship management system;
- Access to resources to support enrollment and/or return to school such as articles and financial aid information;
- Administrative access for THECB staff and institution/training provider staff; and
- Easy integration with THECB's Azure data pipeline and existing THECB assets such as [Texas OnCourse](#) and [ApplyTexas](#).

THECB anticipates contracting outside partners to support the development of the strategy, design, and engineering/technical development of a successful My Texas Future portal. The design and implementation of the new portal will ultimately have to conform to the agency's enterprise architecture design principles, including the data model, and comply with all the applicable security, accessibility, and compliance requirements. The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to seek feedback from the vendor community qualified to provide this type of product and service. Qualified vendors are encouraged to respond to this RFI and include a brief outline of proposed approaches and work plans. Alternatively, or in addition, vendors are encouraged to respond with suggested edits to the proposed THECB process, keeping in mind that the April 2022 launch is non-negotiable.

Please note that this RFI is not a procurement opportunity; no contract will be developed from a response to this RFI.

Proposed Process for My Texas Future

The following rough outline represents THECB's proposed procurement and development timeline:

- September 2021: Post a Statement of Work or Request for Offers solicitation for combined strategy, design, and engineering
- October 2021: Award contract (which may include subcontractors)
- November 2021: Begin strategy and design work, informed by persona development and UI/UX testing already underway at THECB
- April 2022: Launch student portal with an architecture that allows for expansion
- Late May 2022: Begin public campaign to build awareness and drive adoption

Request for Information

THECB is interested in gaining information on the following:

- 1) What capabilities and capacities, either alone or with partners, are needed to meet the needs of this project on the outlined timeline?
- 2) What would be an anticipated (rough, non-binding) approach to completing the project successfully?
- 3) How would you propose to reach underserved and under resourced populations and ensure a consistent experience? How does this inform your design approach?
- 4) What steps are needed to ensure the project design aligns with user needs?
- 5) To maximize engagement and quality assurance, define what roles and skills would be required from THECB staff.
- 6) What type of pricing model would best suit this project?
- 7) What clarifying questions, or suggested changes, would provide more confidence in being able to successfully complete this project on schedule? THECB may use these questions and suggestions in crafting the solicitation for this project.

Responses

Responses should not exceed five (5) pages in total.

Responses must be submitted via email to Contracts@highered.texas.gov and received by THECB no later than September 8, 2021, by 11:30 p.m. The subject line of the email should be entitled "Response to RFI – My Texas Future."

Confidentiality

Vendor responses to this RFI are subject to release under the Texas Public Information Act (PIA), Texas Government Code §§ 552.001-.376. If a responding vendor considers any portion of its response to this RFI to be privileged or confidential, responding vendor

must clearly label the privileged or confidential information and identify the specific PIA exception that applies to disclosure. A blanket statement that the entire response is excepted from disclosure because the response contains some privileged or confidential information is not acceptable and shall make the entire response subject to release under the PIA.

Please Note: Nothing in this document or in any received response commits THECB to engage in any specific work or respond to any specific question from potential vendors.