

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
ONLINE GRANTS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

World Learning
For U.S. Department of State programs

***Proposals should be sent via email in a PDF or Word document to Jessica Mead,
jessica.mead@worldlearning.org by 5:00 pm on August 21, 2025***

World Learning's Corporate Profile

World Learning is a nonprofit organization advancing leadership in more than 60 countries. We envision a just world, driven by engaged citizens and thriving communities. Our mission is to empower people and strengthen institutions through education, sustainable development, and exchange programs. World Learning is a 501(c)3 organization incorporated in the state of Vermont and with offices in Washington, DC and Vermont.

World Learning's RFP Objective

World Learning is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to companies to create and maintain an online grants management system for a program funded by the U.S. Department of State.

The objective of this RFP is for World Learning to solicit proposals from companies that provide detailed solutions and strategies for an online grants management system with continued customer service support and updates.

This RFP does not obligate World Learning to accept or contract for any expressed or implied services, nor does it obligate the vendor to accept or contract for any expressed or implied services. Any commitment to purchase will be outlined in a subsequent contract. World Learning reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive irregularities and informalities in the submission process.

World Learning's Current Overview

An online grants management system is currently provided by one software company. This company has been a preferred provider. The Preferred Provider List is renewed every five (5) years. World Learning manages an online grants management system for approximately 100 higher education institutions every year. These higher education institutions apply for U.S. Department of State grants and submit reports on these grants.

Description of Required Services

The selected vendor will need to develop and maintain an online grants management system with user-friendly interfaces for the World Learning staff reading the applications and reports and for higher education institutions submitting the applications and reports. World Learning will also require functionalities that allow downloading

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these applications and reports, tracking applications and reports, and sending tailored emails from World Learning to the Higher Education Institution from the system, in essence a data management system. The proposed online grants management system will need to be able to integrate smoothly with World Learning's email system. The contract with the selected vendor will begin on September 1, 2025 and end on August 31, 2026.

RFP Submission Instructions

World Learning is requesting vendors to provide a written response. **Please submit your proposal via email in a PDF or Word document to Jessica Mead, jessica.mead@worldlearning.org by 5:00 pm on August 21, 2025.** Please use the following subject line in your email: [Response to RFP – Online Grants Management System].

Submissions should include a brief description of the company and services, proposal outlining your online grants management system, rates of service, the primary point of contact, and demonstrated capability and willingness to perform the required services, listed above.

See below for a detailed list of required information.

Information Required in RFPs

- Description of the proposed technical architecture of the system
- The cost of the online grants management system
- The services covered by the company in reference to the online grants management system
- Any additional service fees
- Cancellation policy and any surcharges related to cancellation
- Web accessibility standards of practice for people with disabilities
- Description of environmentally friendly practices and policies
- Please indicate if your business qualifies in the following categories:
 - Historically Under-Utilized Business (HUB) Zone Located,
 - Minority Business Enterprise, Small Business – Self Certified,
 - Small/Disadvantaged Business SBA 8(a) – Certified,
 - Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business,
 - Veteran-Owned Business, or
 - Women-Owned Business

Small, Minority, and Women owned businesses are encouraged to apply.

Selection Criteria.

After receipt of the proposal, the Selection Team will then evaluate all of the information presented and select a company. The selected company will be asked to sign a contract for services that will formalize the provisions (see below).

All valid RFP responses will be evaluated on several qualitative and quantitative criteria:

- Capability and willingness to perform the Required Services (listed above)
- Quality, flexibility, and reliability of services
- Competitive rates
- Web accessibility standards of practice for people with disabilities

Selection

Successful bidders will be notified by World Learning no later than 5:00 pm on August 29, 2025 and will be asked to sign a contract. World Learning reserves the right to use multiple or different vendors from this RFP if it is in the best interest of the program.

World Learning Schedule of Events – Key Dates

- August 13, 2025 – World Learning’s publication of RFP
- August 21, 2025 at 5 pm ET – Due date for all RFP responses to World Learning
- Week of August 25 – Evaluation of RFPs and any follow-up questions will be sent to bidders
- August 29 by 5 pm – World Learning selects vendor.

Questions

For questions about this RFP, contact Jessica Mead, jessica.mead@worldlearning.org

Some Provisions Included in All Agreements

Below are some key provisions World Learning includes in its contractor agreements. World Learning expects contractors to comply with the requirements outlined below. This is not an exhaustive list and World Learning reserves the right to amend as needed.

1. **Equal Employment Opportunity:** All agreements shall contain a provision requiring compliance with E.O. 11246, “Equal Employment Opportunity,” as amended by E.O. 11375, “Amending Executive Order 11246 Relating to Equal Employment Opportunity,” and as supplemented by regulations at 41 CFR part 60, “Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, Equal Employment Opportunity, Department of Labor.”
2. **Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment (31 U.S.C. 1352):** For all contracts or subgrants of \$100,000 or more, World Learning shall obtain from the vendor a certification that it will not and has not used Federal appropriated funds to pay any person or organization for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with obtaining any Federal contract, grant or any other award covered by 31 U.S.C. 1352. Likewise, since each tier provides such certifications to the tier above it, World Learning shall provide such certifications in all situations in which it acts as a subrecipient of a subgrant of \$100,000 or more.

3. Debarment and Suspension (E.O.s 12549 and 12689): In entering this agreement, the Contractor certifies that neither Contractor, nor any of its principals, is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, disqualified, or otherwise excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency.
4. Ownership of Intellectual Property and Protection of Data. Contractor agrees that all Works shall be the property of World Learning. Contractor hereby assigns and agrees to assign to World Learning Contractor's full right, title and interest to all Works and agrees that all copyrightable Works that Contractor creates shall be considered "works made for hire." Contractor represents and warrants that none of the Works will contain any material that infringes any intellectual property or proprietary rights of third parties.

In the course of performance, Contractor will have access to data generated by World Learning and/or its subrecipients and their grants and study abroad programs, including confidential and personally identifiable information. World Learning owns all such data and prohibits Contractor from using such data except in the course of performing the work. Contractor will share such data only with its employees on a need to know basis. Contractor will not disclose such data and will take robust measures, including cybersecurity measures, to safeguard confidential information, including protected personally identifiable information (PII) and other sensitive information, as required under 2 CFR 200.303(e).

5. Preventing Terrorist Financing. Contractor must not engage in transactions with, or provide resources or support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism, including those individuals or entities designated under E.O. 13224, or that appear on the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List maintained by the U.S. Treasury (online at: <http://www.treasury.gov/resourcecenter/sanctions/SDN-List/Pages/default.aspx>) or the UN Security designation list (online at: http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq_sanctions_list.shtml).
6. Trafficking in Persons. Contractors at any tier, or their employees, labor recruiters, brokers or other agents, must not engage in:
 - i. Trafficking in persons (as defined in the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime) during the period of this Agreement;
 - (ii) Procurement of a commercial sex act during the period of this Agreement;
 - (iii) Use of forced labor in the performance of this Agreement;
 - (iv) Acts that directly support or advance trafficking in persons, including the following acts:
 - (a) Destroying, concealing, confiscating, or otherwise denying an employee access to that employee's identity or immigration documents;
 - (b) Failing to provide return transportation or pay for return transportation costs to an employee from a country outside the United States to the country from which the employee was recruited upon the end of employment if requested by the employee, unless:
 - (1) exempted from the requirement to provide or pay for such return transportation by World Learning or U.S. Department of State under this Agreement; or

- (2) the employee is a victim of human trafficking seeking victim services or legal redress in the country of employment or a witness in a human trafficking enforcement action;
- (c) Soliciting a person for the purpose of employment, or offering employment, by means of materially false or fraudulent pretenses, representations, or promises regarding that employment;
- (d) Charging employees recruitment fees; or
- (e) Providing or arranging housing that fails to meet the host country housing and safety standards.

7. Safeguarding. Contractor shall not engage in any sexual exploitation and abuse conduct, or child safeguarding violations. Contractor acknowledges and agrees that World Learning will apply a policy of “zero tolerance” with regard to sexual exploitation and abuse, and child safeguarding violations. For purposes of this Agreement the following definitions shall apply:

- (a) “sexual exploitation” means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another;
- (b) “sexual abuse” means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. Sexual exploitation and abuse are strictly prohibited;
- (c) “child” means any person less than eighteen (18) years of age, regardless of any laws relating to consent or age of majority.
- (d) “child safeguarding violation” is a conduct by a party’s employees, personnel or subcontractors that actually or likely causes significant harm to a child, including any kind of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing:

- a. Sexual activity with any person less than eighteen (18) years of age, regardless of any laws relating to consent or age of majority, shall constitute the sexual exploitation and abuse of such person. Mistaken belief in the age of a child shall not constitute a defense under this Agreement.
- b. The exchange of any money, employment, goods, services, or other things of value, for sexual favors or activities or from engaging in any sexual activities that are exploitative or degrading to any person, shall constitute sexual exploitation and abuse.
- c. Contractor acknowledges and agrees that sexual relationships between beneficiaries of assistance and contractor are prohibited since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics, undermine the credibility and integrity of the work of World Learning.
- d. **Contractor must take the following measures for all its employees, contractors, volunteers or other agents (“representatives”) who could interact with participants before any interaction with participants occurs:**
 - **Conduct criminal background checks.** If criminal background checks are not available in the relevant jurisdiction, a current police report must be obtained. Contractor must disclose to World Learning any causes for concern revealed in the background check. Contractor must retain these signed documents on file and provide to World Learning upon request.
 - **Require such representatives to sign the below Safeguarding Standards of Conduct at Annex A and maintain on file and available upon request.**

8. Ethics and Compliance Hotline. Contractor MUST report immediately to World Learning any incidents involving safeguarding or other health and safety violations or fraud, bribery, gratuity, or other ethical misconduct potentially affecting this agreement or the Project. Contractor may disclose through World Learning's Ethics and Compliance Hotline which allows anonymous reporting of any incidents:

Website: www.lighthouse-services.com/worldlearning

Email: reports@lighthouse-services.com (must include "World Learning" in subject line)

Toll-Free Telephone:

English Speaking USA & Canada: 833-400-0039

Spanish Speaking USA & Canada: 800-216-1288

All other countries: 800-31-26-4002 (must dial country access code first – codes and instructions are available via the this link): [Universal-Toll-Free-Dialing-Guide.pdf](#)