

Request for Proposals

Issue Date: September 7

Proposal Due Date: October 7

Anticipated Award Date: October 18

To Whom It May Concern:

IREX (International Research & Exchanges Board) is seeking quotes from qualified respondents to serve as IREX's primary lead consultant or firm to develop a Learning Management System (LMS) Platform for use as an online media literacy learning management resource. The LMS Platform will be developed under the Media Literacy in the Baltics Program, supported by the U.S. Department of State. The anticipated award will be a firm fixed price purchase order. IREX reserves the right to withdraw this request for proposals at any time up to award of the contract.

Budget ceiling for LMS Platform: \$60,000 USD, including VAT

The International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX), with support from the U.S. Department of State, implements the Media Literacy in the Baltics program. The program supports future media and other professionals to provide audiences with quality journalism and heightened awareness of disinformation.

With rapidly growing technological advancements, people have easy access to an influx of information in their daily life. However, not all information available in the public domain or in cyberspace is factually true. A lot of disinformation and misinformation is being spread through social media and even in the mainstream press, using emotional triggers to bypass critical thinking, and undermine people's ability to make informed decisions. The media also employs various tactics such as sensationalism, conspiracy theories, fabrication, and emotional manipulation, for various reasons and to varying degrees. Often the public finds it difficult to differentiate between truth and falsehood, information, and propaganda. IREX has identified a dire need to promote critical information consumption as a core life skill among people across generations in the Baltic countries.

Given this context, IREX, in consultation with its local partners, is planning to develop a Learning Management System (LMS platform) as an online Media Literacy training resource that will equip citizens with the knowledge and skills necessary to critically engage with the media they consume, making them more resilient to misinformation and disinformation.

General design of the LMS platform will include:

- Home page: logo, banner, and boilerplate (the what, how, etc.)
- Homepage link to materials in five different languages (English, Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Russian)
- Up to 15 lessons organized in 5 units and sub-units: each lesson will cover a discrete learning component related to media and information literacy.
- Lessons will be a mix of video (embedded YouTube, or other platform), text, and infographics;
- We may add an interactive gaming component within some of the lessons.
- User analytics

While this is an online learning platform, we do not expect users to all follow a consistent progression. Lessons will not be numbered, and we will not require successful completion of one lesson in order to unlock the next. All content will be open and we encourage multiple pathways to engage with and explore the various lessons.

Reference Site: Very Verified - <https://verified.ed-era.com/> This course was developed by IREX as a general learning resource in Ukraine. Most of these lessons will be adapted for the Baltics.

Key features of the website:

- Simple and user friendly
- Responsive design (I.e. works well on mobile, tablet and desktop, plus runs well on multiple browsers)
- Platform options should be fully updated to current internet data and security standards with the capacity to integrate with multiple operating systems, especially including Microsoft 360. (examples include Microsoft Community Training on Azure and Moodle)
- Multilingual (Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Russian, and English) provides the user the ability to access preferred language version(s)
- .com, .lv, .lt, .ee domains
- 20GB hosting
- SSL certificate
- Links to Social Networks
- Logo and animation designing
- Ability to proceed to different levels, with scoring and reward systems at each level
- Include videos
- Quizzes
- Ability to apply updates and changes to the website as required
- Monitoring dashboard
- Built in monitoring and evaluation tools, including pre-post questionnaires and ability to calculate percentage changes per individual
- Analyzing and reporting system, including ability to download a ‘Certificate of Completion’ upon successful completion of all modules
- User feedback feature
- Support and maintenance
- Search Engine Optimization
- Chat Bot
- Optional sign-up for updates
- Platform and associated domain hosting for 3 years
- Space for expansion for future modules and materials

The IREX team will provide the primary content to populate the LMS in coordination with a video production company (videos, quizzes, animations, articles, etc.). IREX will also request training from the LMS provider, once the LMS is populated, on how to make basic edits/changes to the platform.

Anticipated Timeline and Major Deliverables:

Deliverable	Due Date
LMS platform outline	2 weeks after signing contract
English version of the platform	12 weeks after signing contract
LV, LT, EE and RU versions of the platform	20 weeks after signing contract

Testing period	20-28 weeks after signing contract
Final product ready	30 weeks after signing contract

The Service Provider will be selected based on the following criteria:

- Overall Price Competitiveness (25%)
 - Cost proposals will be evaluated for appropriateness and cost effectiveness.
- Proposal's compliance with LMS key features (20%)
 - Ability to conceptualize the product and design the LMS Platform to suit the needs of the target audience.
 - Please specify number of users the LMS can accommodate at one time
- Technical expertise and organizational capacity (20%)
 - Multilingual (English, Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Russian) and diverse audience.
 - Previous experience working with non-profits and civil society organizations.
 - A fair understanding of the media industry in the Baltics.
 - At least five years of experience with a strong track record in the industry, including references.
- Qualifications of key personnel (10%)
 - Interested organizations must provide documented staff expertise
- Experience in LMS development (10%)
 - Previous experience developing educational products. Interested organizations must provide relevant examples of previous LMS platforms developed.
- Flexibility and customer service (5%)
 - Strong analytical and problem-solving skills.
 - Ability to customize content and provide services
- Creativity in approach (5%)
 - Excellent sense of creativity and open to feedback and suggestions.
 - Demonstrated ability to plan strategically and creatively to meet objectives.
- Experience in collaborative projects (5%)
 - Strong interpersonal skills and strong sense of work ethic
 - Commitment to teamwork and willingness to take direction from multiple collaborators, including IREX and any partner content development companies and/or individuals

Evaluation and ranking of proposals will be done by IREX in Riga, Latvia and Washington, DC. IREX may at its discretion ask for additional information.

Small businesses, minority-owned businesses, and women-owned businesses are encouraged to apply.

How to apply: Interested individuals and companies are encouraged to submit their Proposals explaining their strengths, approach, and additional value-added services (if any). Proposals must address the criteria referenced above and include:

- Description of the LMS development concept (up to four pages)
- Approximate, step-by-step development schedule for the LMS (up to two pages) including design, testing, updates, and maintenance
- Estimated budget in excel, with sufficient detail to determine price elements
- All application documents should be in English.

Proposals must be accompanied by the following additional attachments: Resumes of key staff that will be assigned the project, and samples of at least three relevant previous projects,

with contact information for the clients. Submission of this application indicates approval for IREX to contact former clients.

IREX will host an optional open briefing session about the LMS platform on September 15, 2021 at 4pm Riga time.

Proposal submissions: If you are interested in furnishing this service, please submit the proposal and additional documents outlined above on or before October 7, 2021 via email to abusarovs@irex.org with the subject line: LMS platform development for IREX. Questions and requests for additional information about this RFP may also be addressed to abusarovs@irex.org. Late submissions will only be considered if in the best interests of the project, and then at IREX's sole discretion. All proposals submitted must be valid for a period of not less than sixty (60) calendar days from the closing date indicated above.

Renewal

IREX reserves the right, based on availability of funding and vendor performance, to enter into subsequent contractual agreements with the winning vendor for a period of up to three years without issuing a new RFP.