

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL:

## Establishing the security framework of AdoptUSKids

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**Issued by**

Northwest Resource Associates and Adoption Exchange Association

**RFP number**

100

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# Summary

Northwest Resource Associates and the Adoption Exchange Association are accepting proposals in response to this request for proposal (RFP) to find a qualified source to help us establish and demonstrate the security framework for AdoptUSKids. Our goals are to ensure that:

- Our websites, applications, and databases are and remain secure.
- Our policies and procedures are documented and meet industry standards.
- We can demonstrate this security to stakeholders and funders.

The objective of this RFP is to locate a source that will provide the best overall value to Northwest Resource Associates and the Adoption Exchange Association. While price is a significant factor, other criteria will form the basis of our award decision as described below.

## Submission guidelines and requirements

The following submission guidelines and requirements apply to this RFP:

1. Only qualified individuals or firms with prior experience on projects such as this should submit proposals in response to this Request for Proposal.
2. Bidders intent on submitting a proposal should notify the technical and contract representatives identified on the cover page.
3. Bidders may submit questions on this RFP to the technical and contract representatives identified on the cover page by noon (eastern time) on January 14, 2020. We will email all questions and answers to bidders who have notified us of intent to bid.
4. Bidders must describe their company and/or services and list and briefly describe at least 3 projects that are substantially similar to this project and include at least 1 reference for each. In particular, we're interested in projects with similar goals and deliverables, where the secured system was like ours and where the bidder's client

was a small nonprofit, small company, or government agency.

5. In addition to the above information, proposals must include:
  - An overview of the proposed solution that is free from jargon and easy for laypersons to understand
  - Names, titles, bios, and contact information for all the key personnel
  - Any additional deliverables recommended.
  - The reason we should choose the bidder.
  - A detailed schedule and milestones.

Additional information is permitted, but written content should not exceed 20 pages, plus any visual or graphic content.

6. Proposals must include a fixed-price proposal, described by deliverable or groups of deliverables, in case cost requires us to narrow our scope or allows us to expand it. Proposals must also include a price proposal based on hourly rates and an estimated total number of hours, in case we decide to award a contract on an hourly rate basis.
7. Proposals must be signed by a representative that is authorized to commit the bidder's company.
8. Bidders should submit standard terms and conditions if they have them. All terms and conditions will be subject to negotiation.
9. Proposals must be received by noon (eastern time) January 21, 2020.
10. Proposals must remain valid for a period of [NUMBER] days.
11. Northwest Resource Associates anticipates selecting at least two individuals or firms to have more in-depth discussions with and will make an award to one of these "down-selected" individuals or firms.

## Project description

AdoptUSKids is a federal project that educates families about foster care and adoption and gives child welfare professionals information and support to help them improve their services. We develop and maintain the nation's only federally funded photolisting service that connects waiting children with families. In addition, we develop and maintain 10 state photolistings and a tracking tool used by our foster care and adoption specialists (similar to a call center) and several state agencies.

The Adoption Exchange Association, based in Linthicum, MD, operates AdoptUSKids grant functions with its partners. Northwest Resource Associates, based in Seattle, Washington, is one of the AdoptUSKids partners and is responsible for the development and maintenance of digital media. Both organizations are small nonprofit organizations.

This project concerns the AdoptUSKids hardware and software systems that support our websites ([adoptuskids.org](http://adoptuskids.org), [blog.adoptuskids.org](http://blog.adoptuskids.org), [professionals.adoptuskids.org](http://professionals.adoptuskids.org)), which include the photolisting ([adoptuskids.org/photolisting](http://adoptuskids.org/photolisting)). Child welfare professionals in almost all states register children on their caseloads who need to be adopted, creating their public and private profiles. Potential families browse the public profiles. Qualified families may register and obtain children's private profiles and reach out to child welfare workers to inquire about adopting specific children. State managers can obtain reports on the children in their state who are listed. The project also concerns our Family Information Tracking Tool, or FITT, a website that collects information from families and passes it on to state agencies.

Each month the AdoptUSKids websites and photolisting receive about 3 million page views in 425K sessions made by 280K users. In any given month about 5,500 children are listed on the photolisting, which is being used by 2,200 registered child welfare professionals and 2,500 registered families.

The external-facing websites are housed in Tierpoint's cloud environment. Our development environment is located in-house and managed by a professional IT company. We are a small digital media team with one to two software engineers developing and

maintaining these products and five supporting team members (providing technical support, design, content, and user experience strategy).

A stakeholder agency has inquired and expressed concern about the security of the websites. Although not shown externally, adoptuskids.org stores some personally identifying information and HIPPA- and FERPA-protected information about children and prospective families.

We and our major funder, the US Children’s Bureau, take information security very seriously and want to confirm that we are meeting industry standards. In addition to establishing a general security framework, we need to respond specifically to the stakeholder that raised concerns.

**The goals of this project are as follows:**

1. Ensure that our systems, websites, applications, and databases are protected from internal and external threats .
2. Ensure that the information we store—in particular, the personally identifying information of children and families— is protected from unauthorized viewing or use.
3. Ensure that we have the right policies and procedures in place and documented and that they meet industry standards.
4. Develop a plan and protocol for regularly monitoring security at an appropriate interval.
5. Demonstrate our security to stakeholders and funders, including the agency that raised security concerns.

## **Project scope**

The project will address our information security policies and procedures for AdoptUSKids websites, applications, and databases, including in the following areas as appropriate:

- Organizational security framework
- Cloud classification and configuration

- Access control
- Awareness and training
- Audit and control
- Control assessment and authorization
- Configuration management
- Contingency planning
- Identification and authentication
- Incident response
- Media protection
- Physical and environmental protection
- System and information integrity
- System and communications protection
- Data security and information lifecycle
- Interoperability and portability

**The successful bidder will be responsible for:**

1. Interviewing and reviewing information from us, our private cloud provider, and our IT company, developing an in-depth understanding of our external and internal environments.
2. Identifying where gaps exist and help us understand the work to be done.
3. Documenting existing policies and procedures using an accepted standards framework (for example, NIST or ISO).
4. Identifying missing policies and procedures and taking the lead in creating and documenting them.
5. Helping us identify and prioritize any development work that needs to be done.
6. Helping us update a security assessment from one of our stakeholders.
7. Advising us about the need for vulnerability scanning, penetration testing, and security auditing and providing or scoping these services as appropriate.
8. Helping us set up a security monitoring and reporting program.

The deliverables and acceptance criteria are:

| Deliverable  | Acceptance criteria  |
|--|--|
| 1. List of policies and procedures needed, given the characteristics of our system.                          | Technical representative confirms receipt of the list.   |
| 2. Gap analysis: description of existing security and work that needs to be done to meet industry standards. | Technical representative agrees that we understand what's needed and why.  |
| 3. Necessary and sufficient set of policies and procedures needed, tailored to our system and organization.  | Technical representative confirms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Existing policies are documented.</li> <li>● Newly created policies are understood; we are able to uphold them.</li> <li>● We have the policies in hand in an agreed upon format.</li> <li>● The policies adhere to ISO, NIST, or another agreed upon framework.</li> <li>● We have the information we need to respond to stakeholders.</li> </ul> |
| 4. Vulnerability scanning  | Technical representative confirms receipt of vulnerability scanning results.   |
| 5. Penetration testing   | Technical representative confirms receipt of penetration testing results.  |
| 6. Prioritized list and description of software development projects that need to be done, if any.           | Technical representative confirms receipt and understanding of list and descriptions.  |
| 7. Security monitoring policies and procedures are in place.   | Technical representative confirms policies and procedures are in place and that we have the information we need to respond to stakeholders about ongoing security monitoring.  |

## RFP and project timelines

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| Request for proposal issuance   | 01/07/2020               |
| Last date to submit questions on RFP  | 01/14/2020               |
| Questions and answers emailed to all bidders who have expressed intent to bid | 01/16/2020               |
| Proposals due   | 01/21/2020<br>Noon ET    |
| Selection of top bidders  | 01/22/2020               |
| Start of negotiation  | 01/23/2020               |
| Contract award and notification to unsuccessful bidders                       | Target date:<br>2/1/2020 |
| Formal project kickoff  | Target date:<br>2/8/2020 |
| Completion of deliverables 1, 2, and 3  | TBD*                     |
| Project completion  | TBD*                     |

\*This is a high-priority, first-quarter project for us in 2020. We will work with the winning bidder to establish an aggressive timeline.

## Evaluation factors

Northwest Resource Associates and Adoption Exchange Association will rate proposals based on the following factors (in no particular order):

1. Responsiveness to the requirements set forth in this RFP.

2. Cost.
3. Technical expertise/experience of bidder.
4. Relevant past performance/experience with similar organizations and systems.
5. Reference reports.
6. Demonstrated ability to communicate and work well with non-technical staff.

Northwest Resource Associates and Adoption Exchange Association reserve the right to award to the bidder that presents the best value as determined by Northwest Resource Associates and Adoption Exchange Association.