

INVITATION TO TENDER TO SUPPLY ALT WITH WEB-DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Date of issue: 16 August 2004

Closing date for responses: 12 noon on 1 October 2004

Instructions for Tenders

1. Tenders are invited for the provision of web-development services as detailed in the Service Requirements sections below.
2. Contracts will be awarded on the basis of best value to ALT and ALT does not bind itself to accept the lowest or any tender.
In addition ALT reserves the right to apply additional criteria, but if this were to be the case such additional criteria would be:
 - i) made known to all bidders;
 - ii) applied to all bidders;
 - iii) applied objectively.
3. ALT will consider entering into a long-term agreement of 3 years duration, reviewed and renewable annually.
4. Tenders should include copies of tendering organisations' Service Standards (if any) including any Quality Statement.
5. Tenders must be submitted on the basis specified in the tender. If any part of the Service Requirements cannot be met then this should be clearly stated.
6. A minimum of 3 reference organisations must be provided. ALT will make contact with reference organisations.
7. Tenders should include your annual turnover and your annual turnover in respect of the previous three financial years, if available.
8. ALT's payment terms are net monthly.
9. Tenders must be returned direct to ALT in an envelope marked 'Private and Confidential – Web Development Services'.
The address to be shown on the envelope is:
Marion O'Dea
Operations Manager
ALT
Oxford Brookes University
Headington
Oxford OX3 0BP
10. Any enquiries concerning the tender invitation must be made in writing and directed to Marion O'Dea, address as above, fax number 01865 484165.
11. Any enquiries concerning the Evaluation Criteria or Service Requirements must be made by e-mail to Seb Schmoller at sschmoller@brookes.ac.uk.
(Any requests for further information under either of the above paragraphs should be received no later than 31 August 2004 ALT's responses will be made available by email to all organisations who have requested a copy of the ITT.)
12. The deadline for receipt of tender is 12.00 noon, 1 October 2004. Tenders received after this date will not be considered.
13. ALT aims to reach a decision on tenders by 1 November 2004.

Evaluation Criteria

The tenders will be evaluated, taking into account the following criteria (listed in no particular order of importance):

1. Financial status, including confirmation that suitable professional indemnity insurance is carried
2. Capacity to meet the Service Requirements detailed below
3. Cost
4. Experience within the education and charitable/voluntary sectors
5. Quality and reliability of service
6. Value for money taking account of quality and reliability of service
7. Technical ability
8. Evidence of long term commitment

Service Requirements

Background

About ALT

ALT is a professional and scholarly association which seeks to bring together all those with an interest in the use of learning technology.

ALT aims to:

- promote good practice in the use of learning technology in education and industry;
- represent the members in areas of policy;
- facilitate collaboration between practitioners, researchers, and policy makers.

Based at Oxford Brookes University, with charitable status and 4.5 directly employed staff, one of whom works from home, we run an annual 3 day academic conference (ALT-C), and a wide range of smaller conferences and workshops.

We publish ALT-J and ALT-N, and a range of occasional publications.

We have nearly 200 institutional and corporate members, and around 500 individual members. We are growing.

Our annual turnover in 2004/2005 is likely to exceed £400k, during which period we expect to have spent in total around £30k on web-development work, a figure which is unlikely to be matched in 2005/2006.

For more information see <http://www.alt.ac.uk/>

Summary of current ALT web systems

ALT's main website consists of a combination of static pages with limited use of PHP/MySQL to support those parts of the site which need to be driven from a data-base. The dynamic part of the main site was originally developed as an ASP application for ALT as part of a project by an academically supervised computer science student. Subsequently a second student implemented the site within a design-template commissioned by ALT from Futurate Ltd – <http://www.futurate.com/>, and then migrated the site from ASP to PHP/MySQL. At the same time the site was moved between hosting services and now resides on a shared server run by Positive Internet Limited – <http://www.positive-internet.com/>, with whom ALT intends to develop a long term relationship, moving from a shared server to a professionally managed server during Q4 2004.

The other three main components of the website are as follows.

- The ALT-C 2004 information site, <http://www.alt.ac.uk/altc2004/>, which was designed for us by Futurate Ltd and which consists of static pages which we maintain by hand.
- The ALT-C Paper Submission and Reviewing System, <https://www.alt.ac.uk/pss/>, was developed for us by Futurate Ltd during Q1 2004 and supports the processes of capturing proposals for sessions at ALT-C, and of refereeing and reviewing these prior to the conference. This site is implemented in PHP and MySQL.
- The ALT-C [Booking System](#), was developed for us by Futurate Ltd and enables people to book and pay for conference places and accommodation, using Worldpay for credit card transactions. This system is ALT's first involvement in e-commerce.

Based as we are at Oxford Brookes University, ALT is keen to continue to make some use of computer science students in our web-development work, partly for reasons of economy, and partly for the "general good". But, as can be seen from the description of our main systems, this is only a realistic option for our non-core systems, the deployment of which is not driven by tight deadlines, and for which liability for errors is not a major issue.

The approach we want to take to procuring web-development services

ALT recently adopted some new rules governing its purchasing processes. These require us to go out to tender on larger projects and to obtain "competing" quotations for all but the smallest projects.

From time to time we need to get small or smallish amounts of web-development work done (typically in the range £400 to £2500). We wish to have identified in advance 2 or at the most 3 suppliers of web-development services whom we can call upon to do such work, sometimes at short notice, without the need to go out to tender or competitive quotation, whom we have selected through an open tendering process. We would envisage that selected suppliers' contracts would be annually renewed, subject to satisfactory performance, with tri-annual re-tendering for the core service.

Requirements

1. Willingness to work collaboratively with our student developer, with other developers nominated by ALT, and with Positive Internet, which hosts and manages our web server.
2. Acceptance that ALT will normally own the IPR of any systems that are developed or enhanced by suppliers of web-development services to ALT, notwithstanding the fact that these may be implemented in open source software.
3. The ability to work with users presenting incomplete specifications to tight deadlines.
4. Willingness to charge for maintenance work on a time and materials basis, at pre-agreed prices and with pre-agreed statements of scope, in increments as low as 15 minutes, billed bimonthly in arrears.
5. Availability during normal office hours, with limited provision for out-of-office contact in (pre-defined) emergency circumstances. (A condition of contract will be an agreed SLA to include out-of-hours support for emergencies, and a definition of the classes of event which qualify as emergencies.)
6. Capacity to document all work and willingness to make this documentation available to ALT and to other suppliers of ALT's web development services.
7. Ability to undertake development work, quickly, economically and to a high standard, using a range of applications and languages, for example: PHP; MySQL, and suitable management tools such as MySQL Control Centre or Navicat; Javascript; Plone; Dreamweaver; Python.
8. Core competencies in:
 - a. systems analysis and design;
 - b. requirements capture;
 - c. pre-release testing;
 - d. integration between MySQL (on the server) / Microsoft Access (on the desktop);
 - e. web site design;
 - f. the application of W3C standards;
 - g. disability and usability issues pertaining to the design and deployment of web systems;
 - h. the production of user documentation;
 - i. data and web-site security;
 - j. integration between website and third-party e-commerce services such as Worldpay.