

North Olympic Library System
E-Rate BEN 145263
Program Year 2022-23
INFORMAL REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Title	Due Date
Caching Server with Related UPS Unit, Software, Hardware, Accessories and Rack/Cabinet	28 Days from posting of 470 Form

Submit bids and direct questions to:

Contact: Claire O’Flaherty, Consultant, E-Rate Expertise, Inc.
claire@erateexpertise.com (253) 320-0664

SCOPE OF PROJECT:

The North Olympic Library System seeks to purchase a dedicated caching server and a supporting UPS Battery Back Up Unit, including related software, hardware, accessories, and rack/cabinet to be dedicated solely to storing information locally so that it is accessible more quickly than if transmitted across a network from a distance. The goals are to speed up internet service and to reduce the network traffic between the branches and the main data center at Port Angeles. The Library intends to purchase this equipment for the Forks and Clallam Bay branches in the first year, and may purchase additional equipment in later years for other locations. The Library is not considering a caching service instead of on-premise equipment owned by the Library at this time.

See chart below for specifications on products needed:

Products/Services and Required Capabilities (or Equivalent)	Initial Quantity*	Optional Total Contract Qty*
Server to be dedicated to Caching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No OS required • No Make/Model Preference • Windows Active Directory network • Up to 40 workstations per branch 	2	12
UPS battery back up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Make/Model Preference • Rack mount • Estimated 120 minute runtime 	2	12
Licensing (if necessary) – 5 year license	2	12
Software required to make equipment function Remote management capability	2	12
Rack/Cabinet with sound proofing capability and built in cooling fans and/or cooling units <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dimensions at Clallam Bay: 24U quiet wall mount unit for staff work area • Dimensions at Forks: 48U or greater freestanding unit 	2	12
Required accessories, cabling, hardware, etc	tbd	tbd
Installation	2	12

*Winning vendor will review branches and recommend final models and accessories.

BID REQUIREMENTS:

1. Bids should show pricing for the initial quantity of units and should have subtotals for the product/service listed in each row above in this RFP only. However, preference may be given to vendors who can supply products from other RFPs posted by the library (if any). Please indicate if lower rates apply for higher quantities purchased.
2. The Library reserves the right to work with the winning vendor to review system and branch sizes and needs and to modify the models, accessories and quantities of equipment providing the same functionality and equivalent capabilities as outlined in this RFP. Given the current economic issues with product supply and demand, additional equivalent substitutions depending on product availability may be necessary to fulfill orders. An updated quote may be required for the final E-rate 471 application. Future purchases, licensing, installation, and equivalent substitutions (which may include caching service in the future) can also be made with new quotes and amendments throughout the term of this contract.
3. Bids should indicate if any items are not eligible or are partially eligible for E-rate funding. Note that this server and the related accessories and equipment will be solely dedicated to caching technology to increase the speed of the internet service and to reduce the network usage on the WAN connection between the branches and the data center at Port Angeles. If the item is only partially eligible for E-rate funding, provide the eligibility % with bid. Ineligible items should be included in a separate Non-E-rate quote. If there is another comparable item that is fully eligible, please also include that item in your bid. The Library may work with the winning vendor to adjust the final quotes for ineligible products and/or locations.
4. Please include costs for 5 year Licensing/BMIC/Technical Support for the requested (or equivalent) equipment on a separate quote from the product purchase. Please also list the annual Licensing/BMIC/Technical Support costs for subsequent years. Describe whether the license is for a Right to Use and is required for the product to function because this affects the E-Rate categorization and reimbursement procedures for the license. If product SKUs are available that include some level of licensing and support bundled at no additional cost (such as EDU or K12 SKUs), please include them in your bid with a comparison of the levels of support and the E-rate eligibility.
5. A vendor may bid on only the products, only the installation or both. Please indicate if your company can install products that are sourced from another vendor and also if your company plans to subcontract the installation to another vendor. Bids for installation should be separate from the products. The winning vendor will have the opportunity to revise the quotes based on the final models and quantities selected as noted above. The Library will also work with the vendor to adjust the quotes for ineligible products or locations. The library staff may also choose to install the products without vendor assistance.
6. Itemize estimated range for shipping costs, if any, based on library's projection for initial purchase quantity. **Please include estimated lead time between order date and delivery date.**
7. Include a copy of your company's standard contract for these products/services (if any).
8. Please indicate if your company has successfully sold this equipment before as part of the E-rate program and your number of years of experience with the E-rate program. Vendors should include their E-Rate SPIN number in their bid and confirm that they are current on their 2022 SPAC/473 requirements. Failure to maintain E-rate SPIN eligibility requirements could result in contract termination. Vendor must be willing to do either SPI or BEAR methods of reimbursement and the Library will select the reimbursement method, unless the BEAR method is required per E-Rate early purchase rules (see Item 1 in Contract Terms).

VENDOR CONTRACT TERMS:

The new contract for these services will include a copy of the vendor's final proposal/quote, the terms outlined below and elsewhere in this RFP, and additional terms provided by the vendor and agreed upon by Library.

1. **Start/End Date:** The official start and end dates for the contract would coincide with the Category 2 purchasing period for the initial E-Rate program year of July 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023. However, E-rate rules also allow for

purchases to be made between April – June prior to the start of the program year if the equipment is needed early, for example to ensure dependent services can be functional at the start of the program year. If the Library purchases products/services in this allowable period prior to the start of any program year, the Library will pay the full invoice price and will seek the E-rate reimbursement through the BEAR process after the Funding Commitment has been received and the program year has officially started.

2. **Term:** The Library seeks a 5-year contract with the option to automatically extend for an additional 1 year.
3. **Non-Appropriation of Funds:** The contract may be canceled or not renewed in the event of loss of federal E-rate, State or Library funds.
4. **Optional Purchases Beyond Initial Quantity:** Additional optional units may be purchased during the term of this agreement to meet future demand, to accommodate new branch openings or branch relocations/remodels, as part of an equipment replacement plan or for similar but currently unknown reasons that support the Library's mission. Future purchases may be for updated models with the equivalent functionality and do not require a new contract. Note that the quantities listed are not a guarantee of sales.
5. **Price Updates:** If the market supports a price reduction after the initial term, the library will exercise price reduction options, if any are available, as an amendment to the original contract. Similarly, the library recognizes that market conditions, inflation, and other factors beyond the vendor's control could increase the pricing of the products during the term of this contract and reasonable changes may be made via updated quotes and amendments.

BID PROCESS, EVALUATION & CONTACT INFO:

Bidding Period Information:

1. Bids are due 28 days after the posting of the 470 form. Bidding period may be extended at the library's discretion if necessary to conduct a competitive bidding process.
2. The Library reserves the right to request additional information and/or a Best And Final Offer (BAFO) during this bidding process as responses are compared and evaluated.
3. The Library reserves the right to reject all proposals and to not pursue this project at this time.
4. Responders are required to read and understand all information contained within this entire RFP package. Submitting a bid constitutes complete understanding and compliance with the terms and conditions in this RFP.

Evaluation criteria for selecting the winning bid:

Proposals will be judged on the following criteria:

1. 30 Points Price (Most heavily weighted criteria)
2. 20 Points Products meet Library's needs and are compatible with existing systems
3. 15 Points Efficiency factors such as ability to provide sales and installation of all products in scope
4. 15 Points Vendor Qualifications such as experience with products, proximity to Library, and prior experience with Library
5. 15 Points Completeness and quality of bid (includes all items requested)
6. 5 Points Compliance with E-rate rules and prior E-rate experience

Disqualifying Factors:

1. The library is not considering recycled or refurbished products in this bidding process and this requirement is a disqualifying factor for the evaluation of bids.

Contact, Submittal & Misc. Information:

1. Interested bidders should provide their contact information to claire@erateexpertise.com in order to receive notifications, updates and Q&A regarding this RFP.
2. Questions regarding the RFP should be submitted in writing to Claire O'Flaherty at claire@erateexpertise.com within 21 days after the 470 has been posted to ensure that responsive information can be disseminated to all interested bidders.
3. Proposers should submit an electronic version of their proposal to Claire O'Flaherty, claire@erateexpertise.com with a copy to Shane Miller, smiller@nols.org by 5 p.m. on the due date which is 28 days after the posting of the 470 form.
4. All RFP documents, including instructions, bid formats, Q&A, updates, etc. will be uploaded to the original E-Rate 470 form and also posted at <https://www.nols.org/bids-requests/>
5. For library branch addresses, please see <https://www.nols.org/locations-hours/>