

**North Olympic Library System
E-Rate BEN 145263
Program Year 2024-25
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)**

Title	Due Date
New Firewall Equipment Plus License Renewal on Existing Firewall	February 23, 2024, at 5 p.m. Pacific Time

Submit bids and direct questions to:

Contact: Claire O’Flaherty Christnacht, Consultant, E-Rate Expertise, Inc.

claire@erateexpertise.com (253) 320-0664

SCOPE OF PROJECT:

North Olympic Library System (NOLS) seeks to purchase a new firewall with licensing and support. The FortiGate firewall model FG-601F (or equivalent) has the specifications needed by the library. Bidders should submit pricing for the FortiCare Premium and FortiGuard Enterprise Protection License SKU FG-601F-BDL-811-12 (or equivalent) which has the required features to support the library’s needs, but the library may work with the winning vendor to determine the best licensing plan for this purchase. Installation is not needed for this project.

In addition, NOLS seeks a 1-year license renewal on their existing FortiWeb firewall that provides unique services and will also remain in service next year. The desired product number for this license is FC-10-V0404-934-02-12 (or equivalent). The Library may need to work with the winning vendor to synch this license term up to the E-rate program year.

The library intends to purchase 1 firewall unit with licensing in 2024-25 and up to a total of 5 firewall units during the contract term. There is no guarantee of the total sales.

Annual licensing renewals will be purchased during the term of the contract, but the library may also choose to purchase multi-year licenses at any time during the term. Licensing purchases would be allowed for the existing FortiWeb firewall plus any new firewalls purchased through this contract for a total of up to 6 licenses.

This RFP process has the following disqualifying factors and bids that do not meet these requirements will not be evaluated: 1. Recycled or refurbished products will not be considered, 2. Generic or auto generated bids that were not specifically created as a response to this RFP will not be considered, and 3. Vendors must have an E-rate Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) and be up to date on annual certifications.

BID REQUIREMENTS:

1. Bids should include the unit price for each of the products listed above in this RFP. After the winning bid has been selected, the Library will work with the winning vendor to finalize the models and quantities that best meet the Library's technical and financial needs. Final models and quantities will be consistent with the scope of this RFP and will provide equivalent functionality of the products listed above. An updated quote with the required models and quantities may be requested to be used for contracting and E-rate application purposes. Given the current economic issues with product supply and demand, equivalent substitutions depending on product availability may be necessary to fulfill orders.
2. For comparison purposes, please provide the costs for 1-year, 3-year and 5-year licenses for each of these products. Indicate whether the licenses are a Right to Use type license that is required for the products to function, or if the licenses are Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections type licenses that provide technical support and software upgrades, etc.
3. Bids should indicate if any items are not eligible or are partially eligible for E-rate funding. If the item is only partially eligible for E-rate funding, provide the eligibility % with bid. Fully 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. Product configuration and installation are not requested at this time but may be requested for future orders.
5. Bids should include an estimate for shipping costs, if any, and if they are not included in the bid, the Library cannot be invoiced for these costs. Please include the estimated lead time between order date and delivery date.
6. Include a copy of your company's standard contract for these products/services (if any).
7. 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 with their USAC SPAC/Form 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 proposal/quote, the terms outlined below and elsewhere in this RFP, and additional terms provided by the vendor and agreed upon by the Library.

1. **Start/End Date:** The official start and end dates for the contract would coincide with the Category 2 purchasing period for the E-Rate program year of July 1st to September 30th. 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 it for one additional year.

3. **Addendums:** This RFP and the final winning bid will be considered Addendums to the contract and the provisions will be applicable unless specifically negated in the contract.
4. **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.
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.
6. **Optional Purchases Beyond Initial Quantity:** The library may choose to purchase additional units outside of the E-rate program and may do so at the prices agreed upon in this contract. Any additional purchase options are not a guarantee of sales.
7. **Secure Networks Act:** Library will not accept any equipment or services produced, provided by, or containing parts, from any company, including parents, affiliates, or subsidiaries thereof, that the FCC has designated as a national security threat to the integrity of communications networks or the communications supply chain pursuant to 47 CFR 54.9(a). A list of covered communications equipment and services can be found on the FCC's website at <https://www.fcc.gov/supplychain/coveredlist>. The list will be updated as necessary, and proposers have the responsibility to check for updates and ensure that all products and services in quotes and final contracts are compliant.

BID PROCESS, EVALUATION & CONTACT INFO:

Bidding Process Information:

1. The 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. 25 Points Capacity of products meet Library's needs and are compatible with existing systems
3. 20 Points Positive Prior experience with the Library
4. 15 Points Completeness, quality, and reliability of the proposal
5. 10 Points Compliance with E-rate rules and prior E-rate experience

Disqualifying Factors:

This RFP process has the following disqualifying factors and bids that do not meet these requirements will not be evaluated:

1. Recycled or refurbished products will not be considered.
2. Generic or auto generated bids that were not specifically created as a response to this RFP will not be considered.
3. Vendors must have an E-rate Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) and be up to date on annual certifications.

Contact, Submittal & Misc. Information:

1. **The bid deadline is February 23, 2024, at 5 p.m. Pacific Time.** Any responses received after 5:00 p.m. on the due date of this solicitation will be considered non-responsive and will not be included in the scoring process.
2. Questions regarding the RFP should be submitted in writing to Claire O’Flaherty Christnacht at claire@erateexpertise.com within 14 days after the 470 has been issued. Answers will be posted on the library’s website and on the 470 form within 5 business days after the questions deadline.
3. Bids should be submitted electronically to Claire O’Flaherty Christnacht, claire@erateexpertise.com and to Shane Miller smiller@nols.org before the bid deadline.
4. All RFP documents, including instructions, bid formats, Q&A, updates, etc. will be uploaded to the original E-Rate 470 form on the E-rate EPC system and will also be posted on the library’s website at: <https://www.nols.org/bids-requests/>
5. To confirm library branch addresses, please see <https://www.nols.org/locations-hours/>