



# THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

### Website Design, Development, and Maintenance Services for the Energy Policy Institute Air Quality Life Index

**RFP Release Date:** March 7, 2022

**Proposal Due Date:** March 21, 2022

**Submit Proposals To:**

Elizabeth Ambrose: [ambrose@uchicago.edu](mailto:ambrose@uchicago.edu)

Ben Rissman: [barissma@uchicago.edu](mailto:barissma@uchicago.edu)

Vicki Ekstrom High: [vekstrom@uchicago.edu](mailto:vekstrom@uchicago.edu)

## 1.0 PROPOSAL INVITATION, BACKGROUND AND SCOPE

*The Air Quality Life Index, or AQLI, is an award-winning, first-of-its-kind initiative that produces data-driven, frontier research on air pollution's impact on human life expectancy and communicates that research to policymakers, media and citizens around the world through an engaging digital platform.*

*Developed by the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago (EPIC), the AQLI is based on cutting-edge research by EPIC's director Michael Greenstone that quantifies the causal relationship between human exposure to air pollution and reduced life expectancy. Combining this analysis with highly localized, satellite-derived air pollution measurements yields unprecedented insight into the true cost of air pollution in communities around the world. Through a virtual platform, users anywhere on Earth can zoom in to their community and understand the effect of the air they breathe on their health through the metric that matters most: life expectancy. Equipped with this data, policymakers and members of the public can determine the benefits of policies to reduce pollution and take informed action.*

*The AQLI's virtual platform is fully available in English, Hindi, and Mandarin Chinese. Its data has been used to produce detailed pollution analyses for countries around the world in local languages, including Urdu, Indonesian, Thai and more. These findings have been used to brief senior government leaders in some of the most polluted countries, and have received coverage from more than 300 media outlets, reaching more than 1.1 billion people globally in both top-tier and local outlets across print, digital, television, and radio platforms. Since its launch in 2018, the AQLI has featured prominently in air pollution discussions around the world and has played a role in clean air policy developments in multiple countries.*

Visit the AQLI website: [aqli.epic.uchicago.edu](http://aqli.epic.uchicago.edu)

*The University of Chicago ("University") seeks proposals from qualified Suppliers to provide digital design and development to expand, enhance and maintain the AQLI's existing digital platform ([aqli.epic.uchicago.edu](http://aqli.epic.uchicago.edu)). The University will look to the Supplier to improve the functionality and useability of the site, as well as provide a fresh perspective and innovative ideas to add to how data is presented and consumed, especially on the Index page. This may include enhancements but not a full site redesign. The Supplier must have a development team with a high degree of technical skill to manage large quantities of complex data, as well as strong design capacity to produce creative, cutting-edge data visualization products. Because the site currently runs using the following programs, familiarity—if not proficiency—is required: Topojson, Geojson, Shapefiles, QGIS, Javascript, D3 Javascript library, Node.js, JQuery, Pantheon. The chosen Supplier will work closely with the director of the AQLI, as well as EPIC's communications director.*

*In addition to the above, the scope of work includes:*

- *Conducting browser and device testing and accountability. This includes ensuring the website functions at an appropriate speed throughout the world on both web and mobile sites, that multi-language sites operate accordingly, and that different versions of the Index and reports are available according to IP address to account for distinct country boundaries related to geo-political concerns.*
- *Carrying out an annual update of the Index. AQLI provides the raw data in CSV form. The Index is currently built using WordPress, Javascript, D3, and updated using Node.js tools. The University would consider adjustments as advised by the Supplier.*
- *Providing an initial usability/UX assessment, as well as continuous monitoring and reporting of website analytics; altering design and development strategies according to the analytics in consultation with the AQLI team.*
- *Being available to troubleshoot as needed and conduct routine CMS updates & security patching.*

*The University is not liable in any manner or to any extent for any cost or expense incurred by the Supplier in the preparation, submission, presentation or any other action connected with proposing or otherwise responding to this RFP. Such exemption from liability applies whether such costs are incurred directly by the Supplier or indirectly through the Supplier's agents, employees, assigns or others, whether related or not to the Supplier.*

*In submitting a proposal, your company agrees that all materials associated with, attached to, or referenced by your proposal will become the property of the University and may be incorporated into a subsequent contractual agreement between your company and the University in an order of precedence as follows: (1) Contract Terms and Conditions; (2) Statement of Work; (3) Proposal Response; and (4) RFP.*

*Your response to this RFP confirms an understanding that this is not a contract or offer of business by the University.*

*We are looking to sign a multiyear agreement with the selected Supplier.*

## 2.0 SUBMISSION DIRECTIONS

### 2.1 Intent to Respond

The “Intent to Respond” Form, Appendix A, must be completed and received by Financial Services by the date set forth in Section 3.0. Receipt of the form will ensure that Supplier will receive copies of any additional information or addenda.

### 2.2 Rights Reserved by the University and Restrictions on RFP Process

- The University reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, including by way of example only and without limitation, any proposal that does not contain all the requested information.
- The University reserves the right to negotiate with any Supplier considered qualified or to make an award without further discussions. University highly recommends Supplier’s initial proposal reflect Supplier’s terms most favorable to University.
- The University reserves the right to waive any irregularity in any proposal received.
- The University reserves the right to negotiate with any Supplier and to arrive at its final decision and/or to request additional information or clarification on any matter included in the proposal.
- The University retains the right to select, request further information from, and negotiate with respondents it deems qualified for this project. The University also reserves the right to reject any quotations submitted and to terminate negotiations at any time without incurring liability.
- The University reserves the right to select the most responsive Supplier without further discussion, negotiation, or prior notice.
- The University may presume that any proposal is a best-and-final offer.
- The University reserves the rights to award in part, in whole, or not at all.
- The University will not pay for any information requested nor is it liable for costs incurred by any Supplier in responding to this request.
- Any discussions with University personnel, other than as listed in this document, regarding this RFP while the RFP is in progress (from the time Supplier receives this RFP until final award is made) are strictly prohibited. Such contact and discussion may result in disqualification of Supplier’s proposal.
- The University is the sole owner of all data and information contained within the Request for Proposal document and accompanying attachments. Supplier shall use this information exclusively to prepare a proposal. Supplier should not disclose this information to any other firm or use it for any other purpose unless required by law or legal process.
- Supplier proposals will be opened and reviewed at the convenience of University; there is no public opening.
- All proposals submitted become the property of University and they will not be returned.
- The website services delivered will be conformant with the [University's Digital Accessibility Policy](#). The standard the University is using is [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1, Level AA](#)

### 2.3 Proposal Submission

The proposal must be submitted as follows to the address on the front cover:

- (1) Email entire proposal to Elizabeth Ambrose ([eambrose@uchicago.edu](mailto:eambrose@uchicago.edu)).

### 2.4 Additional Submission Directions

- All information provided by the University in this RFP is offered in good faith. Individual items are subject to change at any time. University makes no certification that any item is without error.
- Any questions regarding this RFP must be directed, in writing, to Elizabeth Ambrose. All questions must be submitted by email to [eambrose@uchicago.edu](mailto:eambrose@uchicago.edu) per the timetable in Section 3.0. Questions submitted after the deadlines may not receive a response by the University.
- Supplier may withdraw a proposal prior to the closing time. After the due date, submitted proposals constitute an offer by Supplier and shall remain irrevocable for a period of 180 days.
- Late responses will not be accepted.

### 3.0 PLANNED PROCUREMENT SCHEDULE

The planned procurement schedule is as follows:

Milestones	Dates / Details
RFP Issue Date	March 7 2022
Submission of Written Questions	March 14 2022
Submission of Intent to Respond Form	March 14 2022
Proposal Due Date	March 21 2022 (by 3:00 pm CDT)

Selected suppliers may be required to make oral presentations. Failure of Supplier to conduct a presentation on the date scheduled may result in rejection of Supplier’s proposal.

University reserves the right to change this schedule as needed.

### 4.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following evaluation criteria will be used to determine the Supplier that best meets the needs as outlined in this RFP:

- Overall vision for the site including innovative design and content features
- Experience designing responsive sites for complex data visualizations
- Project team experience in UX, design, and CMS
- Full service capability in-house or through preferred vendors including all aspects of the project
- Ability to meet the requested information and the RFP requirements
- Quality of references and relevance for performing similar work
- Hourly rates for website design, development and ongoing maintenance
- Conformance to the University’s Terms and Conditions
- Ability to meet the following standards: [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1, Level AA](#)

## **5.0 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION FORMAT**

Supplier shall organize the RFP response according to the below outline:

### **6.1 Executive Summary**

Please provide an overview of your firm's services and technical capabilities.

### **6.2 Client Case Studies and References**

Please provide the information as outlined in Appendix B.

### **6.3 Exceptions to the RFP**

This RFP and any subsequently offered contracts will be governed by the laws of the State of Illinois. Any and all applicable valid executive orders, federal, state or local laws, ordinances or rules or regulations shall apply to any contract if and when offered and are deemed incorporated herein.

### **7.4 Supplier Profile and Capabilities**

Provide detailed response to the requirements questionnaire provided as Appendix C.

### **7.5 Confidentiality Agreement**

Please provide a signed copy of Appendix D.

**APPENDIX A**

**INTENT TO RESPOND FORM**

**MEMORANDUM TO BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED PER DEADLINE IN RFP**

The undersigned hereby acknowledges that they are a duly authorized agent of Supplier listed below. This acknowledgement confirms their interest in responding to this Request for Proposal and further acknowledges that they have read and understand the RFP requirements and Agreement considerations regarding this RFP.

Additionally, Supplier agrees that all its proposal documents and responses to this Request for Proposal will at the option of the University of Chicago, become a legally binding and essential portion of the final Agreement between Supplier and the University of Chicago.

The undersigned, for him/herself and on behalf of Supplier and its owners, directors, officers, affiliates and employees, agrees to undertake, at its sole cost and expense, and waives any right to compensation, damages or claims of any kind against the University of Chicago, its affiliates, officers, directors, employees and agents, in connection with the pre-proposal meeting or the RFP, whether or not Supplier is awarded an Agreement.

The undersigned, for him/herself and on behalf of Supplier, represents and warrants that neither the undersigned, nor to the knowledge of the undersigned, Supplier or any officer, director, owner, employee or agent of Supplier, has not, and covenants that none of the foregoing shall, communicate, act in concert, or enter into any agreement with any other firm or other person or entity in any manner that would constitute collusion, "bid-rigging," fixing prices or otherwise restraining freedom of competition in connection with the subject matter of the RFP.

Name of Firm \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone and Extension \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: Elizabeth Ambrose  
Senior Buyer, Financial Services  
The University of Chicago  
Financial Services  
6054 S. Drexel Ave Suite 300  
Chicago, IL 60637  
773-702-5990  
[eambrose@uchicago.edu](mailto:eambrose@uchicago.edu)

## APPENDIX B

### REFERENCE FORM

Provide case studies and information for five (5) references for clients where you provided your services within the past three (3) years. Please provide references that most closely reflect the type of high data visualization capacity required by the Air Quality Life Index and also that demonstrate experience in constructing a WCAG conformant, accessible website.

**(Use Separate Form for Each Client Listed)**

#### GENERAL BACKGROUND

Client Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Client Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone & Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Project End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Revenue: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Employees on the Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Website URL: \_\_\_\_\_

Website CMS: \_\_\_\_\_

#### PROJECT OVERVIEW & SCOPE

#### OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

**Note:** University will conduct the reference calls without participation from the suppliers.



## APPENDIX C

### REQUIREMENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

- What ideas do you have to improve the functionality and design of the site, as well as specifically the Index map? Please provide cost estimates.
- What new elements would you suggest to expand how data is presented and consumed within the Index? Please provide cost estimates.
- What experience do you have producing and managing web and mobile sites to run at a fast speed in foreign countries, including in the developing world? Please include examples.
- What experience do you have with multi-language sites and sites that contain elements unique to country IP addresses? Please include examples.
- What experience do you have managing heavy volumes of complex data and forming robust data visualizations from this data? Please include examples.
- What experience do you have in ensuring a high degree of accessibility (in compliance with WCAG 2.1 AA), especially regarding data visualizations? Please include examples.
- What is your testing process? Please provide details on functional testing, browser compatibility testing (including browser versions tested), security testing, and ongoing protocols to test and monitor site performance.
- What is your turnaround time to troubleshoot problems as they arise?
- Who would be part of the team dedicated to this account? What are each of their roles and the expertise that they bring?
- What is your plan for client communication during the process? Please describe the frequency, format, types of communications (e.g., status reports, meetings, and calls), and tools for communication (e.g., email, Slack, etc.).
- What are the hourly rates for each member of the team?

## APPENDIX D

### CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

During the RFP submission, award process and throughout the Agreement term, SUPPLIER may have access to and become acquainted with various trade secrets, consisting of management, financial, and operational materials, and methods and processes, and compilations of information, and records and specifications of University, which are owned by University and which are regularly used in the operation of University's business. SUPPLIER acknowledges such information is secret and confidential and that University disclosed the same to SUPPLIER. SUPPLIER shall not disclose any such secrets, directly or indirectly, or use them in any other way either during the RFP submission and award process or at any time thereafter, except as required in the course of its performance in accordance with this RFP or an Agreement resulting from this RFP. All files, records, documents, drawings, specifications, equipment, and similar items relating to business at University, whether prepared by SUPPLIER or those acting on behalf of SUPPLIER, shall remain the property of University and shall be treated in a confidential manner by SUPPLIER so as to safeguard its proprietary nature.

"Confidential Information" means non-public information regarding the University of Chicago. SUPPLIER may use Confidential Information only for the purposes of responding to this RFP or in the performance of an Agreement resulting from this RFP and shall protect such Confidential Information from disclosure to others, using the same degree of care used to protect its own confidential or proprietary information of like importance, but in any case using no less than a reasonable degree of care. SUPPLIER may disclose Confidential Information received hereunder to its employees who have a need to know, for the purpose of responding to this RFP or for the performance of an Agreement resulting from this RFP, and who are bound to protect the received Confidential Information from unauthorized use and disclosure under the terms of a written agreement. Confidential Information received from University shall not otherwise be disclosed to any third party without University's prior written consent.

The restrictions of this article on use and disclosure of Confidential Information shall not apply to information that University transmits that:

- (a) Was publicly known at the time of communication thereof;
- (b) Becomes publicly known through no fault of SUPPLIER subsequent to the time University transmits it;
- (c) Was in SUPPLIER's possession free of any obligation of confidence at the time of the transmission thereof; provided, however, that SUPPLIER promptly informs University in writing to establish SUPPLIER's prior possession;
- (d) Is developed by SUPPLIER independently of and without reference to any of University's Confidential Information or other information that University disclosed in confidence to any third party;
- (e) Is rightfully obtained by SUPPLIER from third parties authorized to make such disclosure without restriction; or
- (f) Is identified by University as no longer proprietary or confidential.

All Confidential Information disclosed (including information in computer software or held in electronic storage media) shall be and remain University property. All such information in tangible form shall be returned to University promptly upon written request or the termination or expiration of an Agreement resulting from this RFP, and shall not thereafter be retained in any form by SUPPLIER.

Authorized Signature

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_