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**STATE OF INDIANA**

**Request for Information 25-83659**

**Indiana Department of Administration**

**On Behalf of the**

**Indiana Department of Education**

**Solicitation For:**

**NextGen SIG Prioritized Expert Partners**

**Response Due Date:**

**May 5, 2025, by 3:00 PM ET**

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Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

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**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION 25-83659**

# INTRODUCTION

This is a Request for Information (RFI) issued by the Indiana Department of Administration (IDOA) on behalf of the Indiana Department of Education regarding the NextGen SIG Prioritized Expert Partners.

It is the intent of IDOA to solicit responses to this Request for Information in accordance with the specifications contained in this document and associated attachments. Neither this RFI nor any response (proposal) submitted hereto is to be construed as a legal offer.

**The State may elect to limit participation in any future competitive solicitation to vendors that respond to this RFI.**

# BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE of the RFI

Despite more than a billion-dollar investment by the United States Department of Education, the school

improvement grant program has historically failed to generate substantive and sustainable outcomes for

students.1 These efforts have been characterized by a lack of substantive systemic reforms, instead focusing on

programmatic efforts to improve student outcomes. After over 20 years of intentional focus on the country’s

lowest-performing schools with little or no widespread impact, we are obligated to take a different approach.

Pursuant to this new approach to improving student outcomes, the IDOE invites expert school transformation

partners to join the state’s efforts to support eligible schools develop and implement school

transformation/redesign plans that strive to reimagine the traditional educational system in the image and

needs of today’s students. Interested expert partners will be listed as approved prioritized expert partners for the [Next Generation SIG program](https://docs.google.com/document/d/10aS5BvbIq4fuYjLIafqZj8Z02zTJaj6S/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=111650329231649612234&rtpof=true&sd=true) on the IDOE website and promoted by IDOE to eligible applicants.

Indiana schools identified as Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and Targeted Support and

Improvement (TSI) are eligible to apply for the Next Generation SIG program which includes up to $300,000

dollars per school to support a planning year and up to $3,000,000 per school to support a three-year

implementation period. Expert partners will engage with district and school leaders to support planning and

implementation of school transformation plans by providing guidance in various areas to maximize the

likelihood for success.

**Guidance**

IDOE seeks to identify expert school transformation partners, locally and across the country, to support the

design and implementation of transformative plans to reimagine our current educational delivery system.

Qualified expert partners will possess deep knowledge and expertise related to the history of the American

public school system, laws and regulations that have historically contributed to the system that exists today, and contemporary regulations/barriers that support and sustain a system that does not meet the diverse needs of

21st century learners. The expert partners will also possess deep knowledge including but not limited to:

(1 Dragoset, 2017)

1. Federal & State Funding: Possess a deep understanding of federal and state funding policies, including regulations governing these funds necessary to provide strategic consulting about how funding can be leveraged to support a new model for educational delivery that prioritizes the needs of the contemporary student.
2. Federal, State & Local Laws/Regulations: Possess a deep understanding of federal, state, and local laws/regulations, including flexibilities embedded within them, in order to help partner school corporations, navigate perceived constraints in service of a transformative plan that prioritizes the needs of the contemporary student. These laws/regulations include, but are not limited to, instructional time requirements, curriculum/diploma requirements, employment/collective bargaining requirements, teacher compensation policies, and school operations (facilities, transportation, etc.).
3. School Performance & Accountability: Demonstrate an understanding of how school accountability has shaped the educational system we have today and possess the skills necessary to craft a compelling approach to monitoring school performance in support of a novel educational delivery model.
4. Standard School Corporation Operations & Organization Structures: Demonstrate a working theory of why schools are organized the way they are, what operational efficiencies the current system creates. Support school corporations to navigate existing operational infrastructure and restructure the organization in service to a new, more student-centered educational delivery model.
5. Teacher/Principal Licensure & Responsibilities: Possess a deep understanding of existing state and federal laws/regulations related to teacher and principal licensing, including, but not limited to, how these policies have historically limited transformation and innovation of America’s educational system. Demonstrate understanding of past efforts to strengthen teacher and principal career ladders, reimagine the teaching profession and implement distributed leadership models.

Expert partners need not have specific expertise in specific programmatic components of school

transformation efforts (curriculum, teacher effectiveness, school leadership, date-informed practices, etc.).

However, qualified expert partners will demonstrate an understanding of how systemic barriers have historically

inhibited efforts to improve outcomes and limited the impact of past programmatic school improvement

efforts. Quality partners will demonstrate knowledge and expertise in establishing the conditions for

transformation and may serve more of a ‘general contractor’ role when it comes to identifying and deploying

technical experts to implement specific components of the plan.

IDOE welcomes responses from a range of entities. However, all applicants must be registered with and in

good standing with SAM.gov.

While the IDOE will not create an exclusive list that limits which expert partners with which a school can

work, a list of IDOE-endorsed partners, along with the details on the services they provide, will be provided to

district and school leaders eligible for the Next Generation SIG program and posted on the IDOE website.

# RESPONSE FORMAT AND ATTACHMENTS

Respondents should submit responses to the RFI describing how they will meet the specific requirements of this RFI, and the deliverables included within. All narrative responses must be provided to the State in Microsoft Word format. Respondents must structure their response according to the sections outlined below to facilitate the State’s review of the responses. **THE TOTAL RESPONSE SHOULD NOT BE MORE THAN 5 PAGES IN LENGTH.** In no more than five (5) TOTAL pages, please respond to each of the sections below. High quality responses will address the questions concretely, providing examples and research to support the claims made within each response. Respondents are encouraged to review all the sections prior to responding and consider their entire response as a wholistic document and not a series of mutually exclusive responses to independent inquiries. Please provide all references and citations as footnotes within the response. If the respondent expects the IDOE to incorporate details from supporting research in the evaluation of the response, a hyperlink to an accessible online copy of the document must be provided in the citation.

**Part A: What are the key details of your organization?**

* Legal form of the respondent’s business organization.
* Organization name.
* Organization address.
* Organization contact person, contact email, and phone number.
* Industry (e.g., Technology, EdTech, Curriculum Development, etc.)
* Size of the organization (e.g., # of employees, revenue, etc.)

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**Part B: What are the key strengths of your organization?**

Highlight your organization's unique strengths and capabilities that can contribute to K-12 educational transformation. Specifically, how can your organization's unique strengths be harnessed to create innovative solutions for K-12 classrooms, empowering both students and educators?

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**Part C: What is your organization’s theory of change?**

Despite the tireless work of educators, communities, and historic investments from government officials, research consistently shows that past efforts to improve outcomes for historically underserved students have fallen short of aspirations. Describe your organization’s theory of change as it relates to transforming educational opportunities for students and communities not effectively served by the current system.

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**Part D: Clearly articulate one systemic barrier in K-12 education your company addresses (e.g., policy, structural limitation, equity gaps, etc.).**

How will your solution address the identified problem? Explain why your solution is unique and effective compared to existing approaches.

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**Part E: What prior experience does the organization, or key figures, have leading systemic transformation within the K-12 environment?**

Provide examples (no more than three) of how the organization or key members of the organization who will contribute to any projects stemming from this response have facilitated systemic transformation within the K-12 space. Quality responses will provide a concrete challenge that was addressed through this work, successes and lessons learned, and how this experience applies to the goals and objectives of the Next Generation SIG.

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# RFI TIMELINE

The following timeline is only an illustration of this RFI process. The dates associated with each step are not to be considered binding.

***Anticipated RFI Dates:***

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| **Activity** | **Date** |
| Issuance of RFI | April 3, 2025 |
| Deadline to Submit Written Questions (3:00PM Eastern Time) | April 11, 2025 |
| Response to Written Questions/RFI Amendments | April 18, 2025 |
| Due Date for Submissions (3:00PM Eastern Time) | May 5, 2025 |

# QUESTION / INQUIRY PROCESS

All questions/inquiries in regards to RFI 25-83659must be submitted in writing via email using **Attachment A**, Questions and Answers Template, by the deadline of **April 11, 2025 by 3:00PM ET** to [rfp@idoa.IN.gov](mailto:rfp@idoa.IN.gov). The email subject line should contain the following phrase:

**“REQUEST FOR INFORMATION 25-83659, QUESTION AND INQUIRIES.”**

Following the question/inquiry due date, IDOA will compile a list of the questions/inquiries submitted by all Respondents. The responses will be posted to the IDOA website as soon as possible. Only answers posted on the IDOA website will be considered official and valid by the State. No Respondent shall rely upon, take any action, or make any decision based upon any verbal communication with any State employee.

Please note that Kevin March is the State’s single point of contact for this RFI. **Inquiries are not to be directed to any other staff member of the IDOE.** Such action may disqualify respondent from further consideration in this RFI and any subsequent RFP process.

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFI, or if additional information is necessary for a clearer interpretation of provisions of this RFI prior to the due date for submissions, an addendum will be posted on the IDOA website.

# CLARIFICATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

The State reserves the right to request clarifications on information submitted to the State. The State also reserves the right to conduct discussions, either oral or written, with the Respondents. These discussions could include requests for additional information, requests for cost information or technical requirements response attachment revision, etc. Additionally, in conducting discussions, the State may use information derived from the responses submitted by competing Respondents only if the identity of the Respondent providing the information is not disclosed to others. The State will provide equivalent information to all Respondents which have been chosen for discussions.

The Procurement Division will schedule all discussions. Any information gathered through oral discussions must be confirmed in writing.

# CONFIDENTIALITY

It is important to note that all information submitted in Respondent’s proposals to this RFI will be kept confidential and will not be made available to the public unless this RFI does not result in the release of a solicitation at a later date. If a solicitation results from this RFI, then the information contained in the proposal submissions for this RFI must be made available to the public once the resulting solicitation has been awarded and the protest period has ended.

Respondents are advised that materials contained in proposals are subject to the Access to Public Records Act (APRA), IC 5-14-3 et seq., and, after award, the entire solicitation file may be viewed and copied by any member of the public, including news agencies and competitors.

Please note citing “Confidential” on an entire section is not sufficient. The Public Access Counselor (PAC) provides guidance on APRA. Respondents are encouraged to read guidance from the PAC on this topic as this is the guidance IDOA follows:

* [18-INF-06; Redaction of Public Procurement Documents Informal Inquiry](https://www.in.gov/pac/informal/files/18-INF-06.pdf)

Respondents claiming a statutory exception to the APRA must indicate so on a separate attachment labeled “**Confidential Documentation Listing**”. That document should include the following information:

* List all documents where claiming a statutory exemption to the APRA;
* Specify which statutory exception of APRA that applies for each document;
* Provide a description explaining the manner in which the statutory exception to the APRA applies for each document.

**When claiming confidential information, respondents should submit two versions of their response:**

1. A confidential version (for the State’s review and evaluation)
   1. Confidential Information must be clearly marked in a separate folder.
2. A redacted version (for public records requests)

If the Respondent does not identify the statutory exception, the Procurement Division will not consider the submission confidential. The State also reserves the right to seek the opinion of the PAC for guidance if the State has doubts the cited exception is applicable.

Prices are **NOT** confidential information.

# RESPONSE SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Firms interested in providing information to IDOA should submit responses via email to [rfp@idoa.IN.gov](mailto:rfp@idoa.IN.gov). All responses must be received no later than **May 5, 2025 by 3:00PM ET.** The subject line of the email submission must clearly state the following:

**“RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR INFORMATION 25-83659”**

Any information received after the due date and time may not be considered.

No more than one proposal per Respondent may be submitted.

Tempaltes outlined in this document should be returned in their native file format.

The State accepts no obligations for costs incurred by Respondents in anticipation of being awarded a contract.