




Illinois State Board of Education

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Chairman

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

To: Eligible Respondents
From: Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education 
Date: February 7, 2012
Subject: Request for Information (RFI): Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Learning Exchanges

General Information

Purpose of RFI: The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) recently received a federal Race to the Top (RTTT) Phase 3 grant from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). ISBE intends to use a portion of the grant funding (i.e., \$2,250,000) to support the development and implementation of content specific *programs of study* relative to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education in Illinois schools. Ultimately, ISBE plans to create up to nine (9) statewide *STEM Learning Exchanges* to support nine (9) critical STEM areas which are also referred to as *STEM clusters*. Each Learning Exchange will specialize in at least one of the nine identified STEM clusters by serving as a statewide network and resource repository for academic content, online professional development, data, collaboration tools, career development resources, work-based learning opportunities, and other resources available for real-time access to teachers, administrators, students, and others charged with improving outcomes and opportunities for Illinois students. Further information regarding the nine STEM clusters is provided in the *Background* section of this RFI.

The purpose of this RFI is to invite responses that will assist ISBE in establishing program specifications for the STEM Learning Exchanges as well as identifying levels of interest from qualified entities for providing services as described herein. ISBE will use the information to develop a Request for Sealed Proposals (RFSP) that will ultimately be issued to procure contracts for implementation of the STEM Learning Exchanges. ISBE envisions the establishment of one Learning Exchange for each of the nine (9) STEM clusters as identified in this RFI with three (3) to five (5) full implementation contracts being awarded and four (4) to six (6) smaller planning contracts being awarded to support the future implementation of Learning Exchanges in the remaining clusters. Eligible entities may apply to serve more than one STEM cluster.

Eligible Respondents: Not-for-profit organizations and governmental entities that currently have an interest in serving as a planning or implementation entity for a STEM Learning Exchange and have the necessary expertise to provide core functions as described in this RFI in one or more of the nine (9) STEM clusters are invited to submit a written response. Failure to respond to this RFI will not preclude qualified entities from applying to serve as an implementation or planning entity for a STEM Learning Exchange when the official RFSP is later published by ISBE in the spring of 2012. However, information obtained in response to this RFI will be used to determine the designation of clusters for either implementation or planning activities.

Illinois Pathways Initiative Launch Event: On February 9, 2012, the State of Illinois is sponsoring a launch event for the Illinois Pathways Initiative, as later described in this RFI. While information on registering for this event was made publicly available on ISBE's website, registration is currently closed due to space limitations. However, interested respondents may email the ISBE contact person identified in this RFI to obtain a recording of the conference. An overview of this RFI will be provided at the conference.

Response Deadline: Responses will be received by mail or in person in the Fiscal and Procurement Division of the Illinois State Board of Education until **4:00 p.m. CDT on March 16, 2012**. Mailed responses should be addressed and sent to the following address:

Sherri Sullivan
State Purchasing Officer
Fiscal and Procurement Division W-380
Illinois State Board of Education
100 North First Street
Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001

Submission Instructions: Responses must be submitted in two parts as indicated in the table below. Each subpart of the response must be packaged separately and clearly labeled with the RFI title and the respondent's name.

Parts	Components	Copies
I.	Narrative Response	Original and five (5) hard copies
II.	Compact Discs (CDs)	Four CDs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ Two (2) CDs including the Narrative Response in a Microsoft® Word file♦ Two (2) CDs including the Narrative Response in a PDF file

Contact Person: For more information on this RFI, contact Tammy Stone at tstone@isbe.net and courtesy copy Sherri Sullivan at ssulliva@isbe.net. All questions must be submitted in writing. Questions will be accepted up to five (5) business days prior to the due date of the response.

Please note that any written or oral communication received by the contact person that imparts or requests material information or makes a material argument regarding potential action concerning a procurement matter may be reported to the Procurement Policy Board as required by 30 ILCS 500/50-39. When an oral communication is made by a person required to register under the Lobbyist Registration Act (25 ILCS 170/1, *et seq.*) and received by a state employee, all individuals who initiate or participate in the communication may submit a written report to the state employee memorializing the communication and for reporting to the Procurement Policy Board.

Background

As part of the [Illinois Pathways Initiative](#), ISBE, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, the Illinois Community College Board, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, the Illinois Department of Employment Security, and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission created the Illinois Pathways Interagency Committee (IPIC) to implement educational reform initiatives that support structured pathways related to students' academic and career interests. The Pathways Initiative is intended to improve education, workforce, and economic development coordination to build more effective talent pipelines throughout the state. The STEM Learning Exchanges are central to IPIC's strategies for developing talent pipelines and are envisioned to provide curricular resources, assessment tools, and professional development systems necessary for local education agencies (LEA) to support students' academic studies and career interests. ISBE and other members of IPIC will work collaboratively to establish up to nine STEM Learning Exchanges organized around the nine STEM clusters as described below.

The Nine STEM Clusters

1. **Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources:** developing, producing, processing, distributing agricultural commodities and resources, including food, fiber, wood products, natural resources, horticulture, and other plant and animal products/resources;
2. **Energy:** developing, planning, and managing for the production of energy including renewable energy and clean coal technology and its distribution through smart grid technologies;
3. **Manufacturing:** managing and performing the processing of materials into intermediate or final products and related support activities;
4. **Information Technology:** designing, developing, managing, supporting, and integrating hardware and software systems;
5. **Architecture and Construction:** designing, planning, managing, building, and maintaining the built environment, including the use of green technologies.
6. **Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics:** planning, management, and movement of people, materials, and goods across all transportation modes as well as maintaining and improving transportation technologies;
7. **Research and Development:** conducting scientific research and professional and technical services including laboratory and testing services, and research and development services;
8. **Health Science:** planning, managing, and providing therapeutic, diagnostic, health informatics, and support services as well as biomedical research and development; and
9. **Finance:** working with securities and investments, business finance, accounting, insurance, and banking services.

The Illinois Programs of Study Model

Toward the goal of establishing effective STEM Learning Exchanges, the [*Illinois Career Clusters Programs of Study \(POS\) Model*](#) is recognized as a uniquely positioned and viable framework to promote career and college readiness for all learners. Accordingly, the POS model has been identified as the fundamental framework for establishing STEM Learning Exchanges as a way of promoting high school reform. Further information about the Illinois POS model is available in the [Programs of Study Guide 2009](#) posted at the Office of Community College Research and Leadership's website. Proposed POS models for each of the nine STEM cluster areas is available on the Illinois Pathways Initiative website found at www.illinoisworknet.com/ilpathways.

Programs of Study are sequences of courses and applied learning experiences organized around a career cluster, where students pursue a pathway of coursework, work-based learning, and connections to professional networks. POS incorporate a non-duplicative progression of secondary and postsecondary elements which include both academic and Career and Technical Education (CTE) content. The Illinois Career Clusters POS Model embodies program implementation no later than the ninth grade and continuing through at least two years of postsecondary education. POS include articulated opportunities for students to earn college credit (dual credit) in high school, an industry-recognized credential or certificate at the secondary/postsecondary level, and an associate or baccalaureate degree.

The STEM Learning Exchanges are conceptualized as statewide networks and resource repositories that will support the POS model by providing opportunities for learners to explore and choose a program strand related to their academic and career interests while gaining real-world skills and engaging in applied learning. The STEM Learning Exchanges will provide key resources and tools to local education agencies implementing STEM POS to promote learning and career development for students. Also, POS are designed to improve access and success for underrepresented populations in STEM fields, such as women, minorities, low-income students, and disabled students.

LEAs that receive funding from the RTTT Phase 3 award must agree to implement at least two STEM POS. The Learning Exchanges are intended to be in place to support this requirement.

Core Functions of STEM Learning Exchanges

The Learning Exchanges will be required to address the following nine core functions.

1. Provide e-learning curriculum resources, including on-line courses, assessments and feedback systems, reference materials, databases, and software tools. This will include coordinating with IPIC to incorporate Learning Exchange tools and resources into the Illinois Shared Learning Environment (“ISLE”), a technology platform currently being developed based on several existing public initiatives, such as the [Illinois Longitudinal Data System](#), [Illinois Interactive Report Card](#), [Illinois workNet®](#), and the [Illini Cloud](#).
2. Expand access to classroom and laboratory space, equipment, and related educational resources necessary to support programs of study through regional partnerships and other strategies.
3. Support student organizations and their major activities, including conferences, internships and professional networking experiences, competitions, and community projects that build leadership, communication and interpersonal skills and provide professional and peer support networks.
4. Provide internships and other work-based learning opportunities that connect students with adult mentors.
5. Sponsor challenges and project management resources for students to work in collaborative teams addressing real-world interdisciplinary problems.
6. Provide professional development resources for teachers and school administrators integrated and aligned across middle school, high school, and community college instruction, including externships, support for web-based networks, and integrated professional development for academic and CTE instructors.
7. Provide career development and outreach resources to expand awareness of cluster-related programs and careers to K-12 students.
8. Provide tools and resources to assist students and schools with implementing personalized education plans and transitions to post-secondary academic and training programs, including establishing course articulation and dual credit opportunities that are consistent with the Illinois Community College Board’s administrative rules and the Illinois Dual Credit Quality Act, 110 ILCS 27/1, *et seq.*
9. Review and report on performance of STEM programs of study through aggregate student data and assessments, including consideration of talent pipeline benchmarks established by IPIC, and work with school partners to continuously improve performance.

The STEM Learning Exchanges and POS are germane to the Illinois Pathways Initiative (www.illinoisworknet.com/ilpathways). The Learning Exchanges will be administered by ISBE in coordination with IPIC. IPIC will be responsible for prioritizing the cluster areas for the initial implementation of three to five Learning Exchanges and then determining the sequence in which the remaining clusters will be identified for planning, development, and implementation. In addition, IPIC will facilitate coordination and alignment of programs, policies, and technology platforms to support the activities of the Learning Exchanges and the implementation of STEM POS.

Fiscal Information

Interested respondents are advised that this RFI does not constitute any commitment by ISBE to follow any particular competition or procurement course of action. The RFI is for informational purposes only and will not result in an award of a grant or contract. A response to this RFI does not constitute a bid or proposal. The information provided in response to this RFI is considered the property of ISBE. Please note that ISBE cannot reimburse companies for any expenses associated with responding to this RFI; however, ISBE does appreciate your

organization's efforts and values your input. A response to this RFI is not required to submit a proposal in response to any future competition or procurement issued by ISBE relating to the subject matter of STEM Learning Exchanges.

STEM Learning Exchanges as Public and Private Stakeholder Partnerships

The STEM Learning Exchanges are envisioned as public-private partnerships including representatives from school districts, postsecondary institutions, businesses, industry experts, museums, research centers, and other community partners. Organized as collaborative communities, the STEM Learning Exchanges will be governed by and orchestrated through a public-private steering group consisting of stakeholder representatives. Each Exchange will be supported by a lead not-for-profit organization or governmental entity that will serve as the administrative and fiscal agent, receiving donations and funding from both public and private sources.

Designation of STEM Clusters for Planning or Implementation

Based on available funding, it is anticipated that as a result of this RFI three (3) to five (5) of the nine (9) STEM clusters will be identified by IPIC to implement content-specific Learning Exchanges in fiscal year (FY) 2013 (i.e., July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013). The remaining four (4) to six (6) STEM clusters will be identified for initial planning phases to support future Learning Exchanges. For purposes of this RFI, *implementation* and *planning* projects (i.e., contracts) are recognized separately and will be referenced accordingly. ISBE intends to select one not-for-profit or governmental entity to implement a Learning Exchange for each of the STEM clusters. IPIC will determine the priority and sequence of the STEM clusters to be implemented or planned as Learning Exchanges. Eligible entities may submit responses specifying their desire to represent one or more STEM cluster(s).

After receiving RFI responses, IPIC will designate three (3) to five (5) of the STEM clusters as the basis for implementing the first Learning Exchanges and four (4) to six (6) of the remaining clusters as the basis for planning future Learning Exchanges. IPIC will make its determinations based on following factors.

1. Completion of a statewide POS framework within each cluster area and IPIC's assessment of and consensus for selecting that framework;
2. State economic development objectives;
3. LEA prioritization of STEM clusters for POS implementation; and
4. Statewide public-private partner readiness for implementation, as assessed by IPIC, using information including, but not limited to, that received through this RFI.

A key factor in assessing statewide public-private partner readiness for implementation will be the level of support demonstrated for potential implementation entities or planning entities as demonstrated through responses to this RFI (i.e., letters of support).

Future Contracts

ISBE anticipates issuing an RFSP in April 2012 to procure services associated with the implementation of or planning for the nine STEM Learning Exchanges. Initial funding for the STEM Learning Exchanges will be made available by a federal RTTT Phase 3 grant awarded to ISBE by the U.S. Department of Education. Further information on ISBE's approved grant application may be found at <http://www.isbe.net/racetothetop/default.htm>.

A portion of the RTTT funds in the amount of \$2,250,000 will be used to award competitive contracts to support the Learning Exchanges. ISBE anticipates three to five contracts being awarded in the range of \$400,000 to \$500,000 each for the implementation of Learning Exchanges through FY 2015 (i.e., June 30, 2015). ISBE further anticipates four to six contracts being awarded in the range of \$40,000 to \$50,000 each for the planning of Learning Exchanges through the end of FY 2013 (i.e., June 30, 2013). Additional state or federal funding may be allocated to the Learning Exchanges, depending on the availability of funds, need for additional resources, and support for and success of the individual Learning Exchanges. Entities awarded implementation and planning contracts will be required to provide 100% cash or in-kind matching contributions to support the Learning Exchanges. Letters of support from potential partners must be attached to the responses to this RFI.

Contract awards may be used for the following activities:

- Salary and benefits of qualified staff members;
- Travel and travel-related expenses;
- Development of e-learning curriculum;
- Development and hosting of competitive statewide projects and problem-based learning challenges for Illinois high school students;
- Distribution of career development information;
- Professional development including materials and resources; and
- STEM externships.

Proposed Timeline

The following table outlines IPIC's anticipated planning and implementation timeline.

Timeframe	Activity
February 9, 2012	➤ Illinois Pathways Initiative Launch Event in Bloomington, Illinois.
March 16, 2012	➤ RFI responses due.
March 19, 2012	➤ ISBE publicly posts all responses to the RFI.
By April 23, 2012	➤ IPIC designates STEM clusters for planning and implementation of Learning Exchanges. ➤ RFSP issued for selection of implementation contracts and planning contracts.
June 20, 2012	➤ Proposals due.
August 2012	➤ Contracts awarded.
September 2012	➤ Contractors convene and commence planning activities.
September 2012 - January 2013	➤ Implementation contractors finalize three-year strategic plan and governance structure.
September 2012 - June 2013	➤ Planning contractors begin planning and implementation activities and cultivate stakeholder engagement.
January 2013	➤ Implementation contractors make Learning Exchanges available to stakeholders including integration of tools and resources with the ISLE.
July 2013	➤ IPIC adopts plan for continued and future implementation of Learning Exchanges.
July 2014 – December 2014	➤ Contractors prepare sustainability plans for the Learning Exchanges.

Response Narrative Requirements

The purpose of the RFI is to assist state officials with determining the extent of interest in establishing a STEM Learning Exchange for each cluster area and assessing statewide public-private partner readiness to support those Learning Exchanges.

Not-for-profit organizations and governmental entities are invited to submit responses containing the information specified below. Respondents may express interest for one or more STEM cluster areas. Respondents expressing interest in more than one cluster should address each such cluster separately in their response. Responses should not exceed three (3) pages per cluster area addressed, excluding attached letters of support.

Response Requirements

Responses should include the following information:

1. Statement of interest identifying the STEM cluster(s) for which the respondent is interested in serving as an implementation entity or a planning entity for a Learning Exchange.
2. Designation of a primary contact person, including title, address, phone number, and e-mail address.
3. A description of the respondent's organization.
4. A description of the organization's corporate status (e.g., not-for-profit, governmental, etc.). If the respondent is a not-for-profit organization, the respondent must indicate its federal tax-exempt designation.
5. A brief description of the respondent's experience and qualifications to serve as an implementation entity or a planning entity, including past and current activities within the cluster areas.
6. A brief description of the respondent's relationships with and support from stakeholders in the cluster area to serve as the implementation or planning entity for the STEM Learning Exchange in that cluster area. Letters of support should be attached.
7. Identification of any organizations or entities with which the respondent may subcontract for implementation or planning activities.

Anticipated Scope of Work

A Lead Entity (i.e., implementation of Learning Exchange) or Lead Planning Entity (i.e., planning of Learning Exchange) will organize and administer implementation and/or planning of a Learning Exchange in each STEM cluster area and conduct fundraising activities to increase the fiscal resources available for their Learning Exchange. Lead Entities will be responsible for developing a three-year strategic plan for the Learning Exchange, supporting implementation of a STEM POS in participating LEAs beginning in January 2013, participating in statewide activities across all of the Learning Exchanges, and serving as fiscal agent for both public and private funds. Lead Planning Entities will be responsible for undertaking initial planning activities and overseeing statewide stakeholder engagement to support future implementation of the Learning Exchanges and may be designated as Lead Entity after the planning year.

As shown in the *Proposed Timeline* section of this RFI, ISBE anticipates issuing an RFSP for selection of Lead Entities and Lead Planning Entities in April 2012. ISBE is providing information on the anticipated RFSP requirements and selection criteria in this section of the RFI to enable interested organizations to commence planning and proposal development activities prior to the issuance of the RFSP. However, ISBE may, at its sole discretion, elect to modify the proposed scope of work requirements and selection criteria in the final RFSP or otherwise alter its procurement course of action.

Lead Entities

The scope of work for Lead Entities will be provided in the RFSP expected to be released in April 2012, but is anticipated to include the requirements and activities described below.

1. **Provide 100% Cash or In-Kind Matching Contribution.**

Each Lead Entity will be responsible for providing a contribution equal to at least 100% of the amount of funding allocated to their Learning Exchange from Race to the Top funds. The contribution may be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions. In their proposals, bidders will be required to demonstrate firm commitments from contributors amounting to at least 50% of the required matching amount, and describe capacity and strategies for securing the remaining portion of the required matching amount. Firm commitments may include an agreement, commitment letter, pledge to contribute, or request for application from a philanthropic entity. Commitments must be specific to the STEM Learning Exchange.

2. Work Plan Requirements.

Respondents to the RFSP applying to serve as a Lead Entity will be required to provide a work plan describing in detail how the following scope of work requirements are proposed to be accomplished, including timelines, work locations, and proposed roles and responsibilities of the bidder and any partner entities.

A. *Establish the Organizational Structure of the Learning Exchange and Serve as Fiscal Agent.*

STEM Learning Exchanges are envisioned as public-private partnerships including participation by a variety of stakeholders representing the interests of school districts, postsecondary institutions, businesses, industry experts, labor unions, professional associations, local workforce investment boards, state governmental agencies, student organizations, museums, research centers, and other community partners. The Lead Entity will be responsible for organizing a collaborative community to support the Learning Exchange and establishing a governance structure in which the Lead Entity will serve as the administrative and fiscal agent for the Learning Exchange with participation by a public-private steering group consisting of representatives from the above-referenced stakeholders.

Each Learning Exchange will be developed and implemented with support from state and federal funds as well as private contributions. The designated Lead Entity will serve as the fiscal agent for the Learning Exchange and will be responsible for receiving and administering tax-deductible donations and other funding from both public and private sources.

B. *Develop and Implement a Three-Year Strategic Plan and Budget for the Learning Exchange.*

Lead Entities will work with public and private partners in their STEM cluster to build a network of resources and opportunities for students pursuing academic and career opportunities in that cluster and assist and support STEM programs of study in participating LEAs. Each Lead Entity will develop a three-year strategic plan and corresponding budget (through June 30, 2015) for the Learning Exchange and coordinate implementation of the Learning Exchange in accordance with that plan. The plan must specifically address the nine functions of Learning Exchanges, as described above in this RFI. Lead Entities will oversee implementation of the strategic plan and coordinate and administer the Learning Exchange and all associated activities through the end of their contract period with ISBE. Lead Entities may partner with other public and private entities, as appropriate, to accomplish the goals and functions of the Learning Exchange and implement the strategic plan.

C. *Develop a Sustainability Plan for Continued Operations beyond 2015.*

Lead Entities will be responsible for overseeing administration of the Learning Exchanges through June 30, 2015 and developing a plan for sustainable operations beyond that time. The sustainability plan should align with the original governance structure established for the Learning Exchange and provide continuing focus on the nine core functions of the Learning Exchanges. This plan should also address the progress of the Learning Exchange in meeting the goals and benchmarks established by IPIC in previous years and outline strategies for continued improvement. The plan must provide a sufficient basis for the long-term management and operation of the Learning Exchange, consistent with the identified goals and functions for Learning Exchanges. Lead Entities should also pursue contributions that exceed the minimum

required matching contribution and that will support the operation of the Learning Exchange beyond the contract term.

Lead Planning Entities

The scope of work for Lead Planning Entities will be provided in the RFSP, but is anticipated to include the following activities:

1. Provide 100% Cash or In-Kind Matching Contribution.

Each Lead Planning Entity will be responsible for providing a contribution equal to at least 100% of the amount of funding allocated to their Learning Exchange from Race to the Top funds. The contribution may be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions. In their proposals, bidders must be able to demonstrate firm commitments from contributors amounting to at least 50% of the required matching amount, and describe capacity and strategies for securing the remaining portion of the required matching amount. Firm commitments may include an agreement, commitment letter, pledge to contribute, or request for application from a philanthropic entity. Commitments must be specific to the STEM Learning Exchange.

2. Work Plan Requirements.

Respondents to the RFSP applying to serve as a Lead Planning Entity will be required to provide a work plan describing in detail how the following scope of work requirements are proposed to be accomplished, including timelines, work locations, and proposed roles and responsibilities of the bidder and any partner entities.

A. Undertake Pre-Implementation Planning Activities.

Each Lead Planning Entity will coordinate pre-implementation planning activities to lay a foundation for future implementation of a Learning Exchange in the designated planning cluster. Planning activities should include identifying a proposed governance structure for the Learning Exchange, identifying key tools and resources that will be necessary to implement the Learning Exchange and support the development of programs of study in participating LEAs, and devising strategies to attain the nine core functions of the Learning Exchanges, as described above.

B. Promote Stakeholder Engagement.

The success of the Learning Exchanges will be highly dependent on the development of public-private partnerships, and the participation of a wide range of stakeholders in the governance, development, and implementation of each Learning Exchange. Therefore, Lead Planning Entities will identify and engage stakeholders representing diverse interests in the planning process for the Learning Exchange. This should include involvement by individuals and entities representing the interests of school districts, postsecondary institutions, businesses, industry experts, labor unions, professional associations, local workforce investment boards, state governmental agencies, student organizations, museums, research centers, and other community partners.

Anticipated Selection Criteria

ISBE anticipates that responses to the RFSP, once issued, will be evaluated based on the following weighted criteria but advises potential respondents that the selection criteria are subject to change at ISBE's sole discretion.

1. Narrative Description

- ___A. **Matching Contribution:** Each Lead Entity and Lead Planning Entity is responsible for providing a 100% cash or in-kind matching contribution. Proposals must demonstrate firm commitments for at least 50% of the total contribution amount, as well as demonstrated capacity to provide the additional matching contribution during the contract term. Bidders that cannot demonstrate this requirement are not eligible for a contract award. Proposals that do not meet this criterion will not be further evaluated or scored.

- ___B. **Work Plan** (500 total points). The contractor's work plan will be judged against the scope of work, which will be outlined in the RFSP, and in accordance with the following criteria.

For bidders seeking to be designated as a Lead Entity:

- i. The bidder identifies a proposed organizational structure that is appropriate and effective and aligns with the public-private partnership structure identified by IPIC. The bidder describes roles and responsibilities for the Lead Entity and any partners, including strategies for governance and management of the Learning Exchange, that are likely to be effective and meet the identified criteria and goals. The proposal demonstrates that the bidder has sufficient fiscal and management capacity to undertake all activities described in the work plan, including, but not limited to, managing public and private funds. (150 points)
- ii. The bidder outlines key goals, activities, and strategies for developing the proposed plan for Learning Exchange implementation. The proposed strategic planning process will be effective for implementation of the Learning Exchange. The proposed strategic planning process addresses all nine functions of Learning Exchanges and describes strategies for planning and implementing the Learning Exchange to serve those nine functions. (250 points)
- iii. Proposed strategies for development of a sustainability plan for operation of the Learning Exchange beyond the initial contract term are likely to be effective and further the goals identified by IPIC. The bidder also identifies funding commitments, or effective strategies for obtaining contributions, that exceed the minimum required matching contribution or extend beyond the initial contract term. (100 points)

For bidders seeking to be designated as a Lead Planning Entity:

- i. Proposed strategies for planning the development of the Learning Exchange and its governance and organizational structure are likely to be effective and further the goals identified by IPIC. (200 points)
- ii. Proposed strategies for identifying and engaging a broad range of stakeholders in the public and private sectors are likely to be effective and further the goals identified by IPIC. (200 points)
- iii. The bidder demonstrates the ability to manage and administer public and private funds. (100 points)

- ___C. **Required Qualifications** (500 total points). A bidder's qualifications, including capacity, experience, and partnership support will be judged against the qualification requirements, which will be outlined in the RFSP, and in accordance with the following criteria.

There is evidence that the bidder:

- i. Identified key management personnel with the proper qualifications, credentials, and/or experience and the demonstrated knowledge, expertise, and capacity necessary to effectively plan or develop and implement the Learning Exchange in accordance with the identified goals and functions. (100 points)
- ii. Demonstrated sufficient partnerships and/or relationships with diverse supporting stakeholders in the public and private sectors to accomplish the identified activities and goals and demonstrated support from a broad range of public and private partners to serve in the role of Lead Entity or Lead Planning Entity, as applicable, for that cluster. The bidder provided detailed information, including strong and specific letters of support, about partnerships and relationships with stakeholders and supporting entities. (400 points)

2. Cost Proposal

The RFSP will require each bidder to submit a detailed cost proposal.