Board of Trustees of Community-
Technical Colleges

Request for Proposal:

Network Assessment & Consulting
(RFP) No. CCC-0602

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Project No. CCC-06-02

Date: November 13, 2005

Project: Network Assessment & Consulting

I. Introduction

The System Office of the Board of Trustees of Community-Technical Colleges is seeking a network consultant to perform a Network Assessment for the Connecticut Community Colleges (“CCC” or “System”). The primary objective of this engagement is to assess the local area networks at the 12 community colleges and the system office, as it relates to the established CCC policies/standards, Wide Area Network and industry standards.

The Connecticut Community Colleges are established under C.G.S. 10a-71 et.seq. The System, serving approximately 45,000 credit students and 42,000 non-credit students is the largest constituent unit of public higher education in Connecticut. It consists of twelve regional community colleges and a system office. Each community college operates as a separate college within the larger community college System. The responsibility for the administration and management of the System, including the oversight and control of financial operations, rests with the Board of Trustees (“BOT”). C.G.S. 10a-72 (b) (1) requires the Board to “make rules for the governance of the…colleges, determine the general policies of said colleges …and direct the expenditure of said colleges’ funds within the amounts available…”

Colleges and the BOT System Office are located throughout the State (20 locations), as follows:

- BOT/System Office
- Asnuntuck Community College
- Capital Community College
- Gateway Community College
- Housatonic Community College
- Manchester Community College
- Middlesex Community College
- Naugatuck Valley Community College
- Northwestern CT Community College
- Norwalk Community College
- Quinebaug Valley Community College
- Three Rivers Community College
- Tunxis Community College

Hartford
Enfield
Hartford
New Haven and North Haven
Bridgeport
Manchester and East Hartford
Middletown and Meriden
Waterbury and Danbury
Winsted
Norwalk
Danielson and Willimantic
Norwich (2 locations)
Farmington and Bristol
The particulars of the requested assessment follow in the body of this document. For additional information about the Connecticut Community Colleges, please visit our website: www.commnet.edu. Specific information pertaining to the Connecticut Community Colleges Information Technologies, including the IT Strategic Plan, can be found at www.commnet.edu/it.

Any awards from this RFP may be extended to participating members of the Connecticut Colleges Purchasing Group, a buying consortium in which representatives of public and private member schools join together to share ideas and purchasing contracts. See (CPG.net), CPG’s primary purpose is to establish publicly bid and awarded contracts for the benefit of all member institutions. CPG shared contract participation is voluntary. Any contract extension to the CPG is contingent upon acceptance by the awarded contractor.

II. Background

During the Spring/Summer of 1998, the colleges that make up the Connecticut Community Colleges had their Local Area Networks (LANs) audited. The audit was performed by a network consultant, with the purpose being to provide some insight as to the current state of the network infrastructure, specifically, to identify performance and reliability issues that could impact the ongoing implementation of a comprehensive suite of administrative information systems. The consultant report was presented to the Information Technology Policy Committee (ITPC) with findings (CCC LANs needed considerable work), recommendations (upgrades to the network: cabling, physical network infrastructure, active components, etc.), implementation plans and a cost estimate to begin upgrading the networks. In addition to the LAN findings, recommendations for upgrades to the Wide Area Network (WAN) were also outlined.

In the time since this study, the System and colleges have made major progress to improve the network infrastructure. Specifically, these included upgrades to the physical network (active & passive network components), cabling, network instrumentation, and network monitor/management software, for both the wide area network connecting the 12 colleges, and the individual colleges' local area networks.

In particular, colleges were to move into compliance with the Network Infrastructure Standards for structured cabling, as endorsed by ITPC. Once colleges were in compliance with the Network Infrastructure Standards, they were to continue to build upon that foundation by following the CCC IT policies/standards and industry standards. These standards and policies are described more fully later in this document.

III Requested Activities

A. The assessment activities that are expected of the network consultant are as follows.

NOTE: The listed activities are to be performed at all 20 CCC locations (see section I – Introduction, for the college locations).

- Review and make detailed recommendations to update the current CCC IT Policies, Standards and Procedures (www.commnet.edu/it/policy). (Refer to section VI, CCC Policies, Standards and Guidelines section found within this RFP).
- Evaluate compliance to CCC policies and standards at all CCC locations.
• Assess the network infrastructure at all CCC locations and provide recommendations to bring colleges into compliance with existing CCC or recommended industry standards.
  o Assess all telecommunications spaces (entrance facility or facilities, data center(s), and closets) to assure that they meet CCC standards. Collect as-builts or document layouts as needed.
  o Assess current HVAC and power capacity and analyze ability to support future needs.
  o Assess ability of current allocated space to meet future needs.
  o Assess design and implementation of distribution pathways (hooks, trays, conduit, etc.) to insure they meet CCC standards. Collect as-builts or document as needed.
  o Assess data communications cabling plant to insure that it meets CCC standards. Test a minimum of 5% of horizontal and 20% of backbone cabling to original installed ratings, at each installation and/or location.
  o Ensure active components meet CCC standards.
  o Ensure wireless implementations meet CCC standards.
  o Assess the network monitoring & management tools in place.
  o Network Instrumentation – collect, analyze & report on network performance statistics (utilization, errors, etc.).

• Review and assess core services and support staff.

B. In addition to the assessment, we are also looking for the network consultant to provide a list of network positions, along with hourly rates, to perform the following types of services on an as-need basis over the next five years:

• Assist in identifying other priority information technology initiatives based on the system and college strategic plans, beyond the upgrade of network infrastructure that should be considered by the Connecticut Community Colleges as future resources permit, including but not limited to academic information technology such as “smart classrooms”, expansion of campus wireless networks, and expansion of automated building systems technology.

• Provide follow-up network assessments on a periodic basis, following the delivery of the original report; such follow-up may be subject to a contract amendment to be negotiated at that time.

• Provide consulting services to individual colleges or the system office as needed to assist in the development and implementation of IT plans to address the report recommendations and other priority IT initiatives.

• Provide on-call information technology consulting services as required.

Note: At a minimum, the following types of professionals should be included in your list of positions. Specific roles & responsibilities must accompany each position listed, along with the associated hourly rates for the calendar years 2006 through 2010.
• Project Manager
• Consultant
• Engineer
• Technician

IV Deliverables

A detailed report, per college location, containing detailed findings of the assessment undertaken in accordance with part III A., recommendations for corrective actions, and a cost and time estimate to implement the recommendations. NOTE: Refer to Section V for the Network Infrastructure Assessment Goals.

• Include network drawings, and pictures of all telecommunication spaces.
• Findings and recommendations are to be delivered in both a written narrative report (hardcopy & digital format) and in a formal presentation.

V Network Infrastructure Assessment Goals

Compare and evaluate college network infrastructure using current IEEE/EIA/TIA standards, BICSI and other industry best practices. Areas to assess would include, but not be limited to the following:

Spaces

Telecommunications Entrance Facility
• Size – Room for growth, ease of access for troubleshooting or upgrades/installation
• Security – Authorized access, sign in policy, monitoring, level of protection
• Environment – Cooling/ventilation, risk of damage from collocated utilities
• Reliability – Backup systems (power, cooling/ventilation, redundant facilities)

Main Data Center
• Size – Room for growth, ease of access for troubleshooting or upgrades/installation
• Security – Authorized access, sign in policy, monitoring, level of protection
• Environment – Cooling/ventilation, risk of damage from internal/external sources
• Reliability – Backup systems (power, cooling/ventilation, lighting, redundant location)

Telecommunications Closets
• Size – Room for growth, ease of access for troubleshooting or upgrades/installation
• Security – Authorized access, sign in policy, monitoring, level of protection
• Environment – Cooling/ventilation, risk of damage from internal/external sources
• Reliability – Backup systems (power, cooling/ventilation, lighting)
Pathways

- Adherence to EIA/TIA standards and BICSI guidelines and best practices, for example: Hangers (general use of, CATx rating, spacing), separation/protection from interference (fluorescent lighting, motors, other EMI/RFI sources) and damage.
- Firestopping

Cabling

Horizontal
- All drops should meet minimum CAT5e
- Test drops to installed rating (CAT5e, CAT6)
- Number of drops per WA location (minimum 2 data/ 1 voice) and number of WA locations per functional area

Backbone
- Minimum MM fiber, minimum count per closet
- Hybrid cables to support future technology
- Redundant strands/paths

Grounding and Bonding

- Adherence to EIA/TIA standards and BICSI guidelines and best practices, for example: Test to confirm maximum 25Ohms resistance to ground from any point in system, bonding bar locations and sizes, wire sizes, use of two-hole lugs for main connections

Active Components

- Enterprise class equipment only, minimum 1Gbps backbone links, availability of spare ports, patch cable management

Administration

- Network monitoring, documentation, maintenance contracts, network security

VI CCC Policies, Standards and Guidelines

- CCC abides by BICSE standards.
- CCC – IT Policies can be found at: www.commnet.edu/it/policy
- CCC - IT Network policy can be found at: http://www.commnet.edu/it/policy/network-policy.asp

Once the bidder sends in a letter of intent, an internet link will be given for complete access to CCC’s Standards, Procedures and Guidelines.
VII Letter of Intent

To be considered for this RFP, a letter of intent shall be submitted by November 21, 2005. The letter of intent shall include the following:

- Company Name
- Address
- Contact person, title
- Telephone & fax numbers
- E-mail address
- Number of people attending mandatory bidders conference
- RFP reference title and number: “Network Assessment and Consulting - #CCC-0602”

Fax Letter of Intent to:

Douglas Ginsberg, Finance Officer
Board of Trustees of Community Technical Colleges
Fax (860) 566-1309

VIII Proposal Format

The proposal should be submitted in the format outline below.

Section I
Please provide the following information about your company and for any company to whom you expect to subcontract any portion of the contract:

1. The name and location of your company.
2. The number of years in business under this name.
3. Is your company a subsidiary of another corporation; if so what is the name of the parent company?
4. Rating of your company…S & P etc.
5. Provide a minimum of three references for which you performed similar work, listing contact names and telephone numbers. Higher education customers should be emphasized.

Section II
1. Detailed project plan on how you will accomplish the items described in the “Requested Activities (Section III) and the "Deliverables" (Section IV) portion of this document. This project plan must include a timeline, milestones, deliverables, project plan, etc.
2. The cost of the network assessment (Section III – A) project, broken up by the various sections highlighted in your project plan, must be included.
3. A listing of networking positions and associated hourly rates to provide additional services as outline in Section III – B of this document.

All bidders must certify their bid is good for a period of 120 days.
IX. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by an Evaluating Team against the following criteria, to determine which vendor is most qualified to meet the functional, quality, schedule and service needs outlined in the Required Activities and Deliverables sections of this RFP at the most competitive cost. In making the award, the following factors are key components to the decision process.

Each bid will be evaluated by a screening committee against the following criteria:
- Demonstrated ability and past experience to provide the services requested;
- References;
- Cost to perform the Network Assessment & Consulting;
- Receipt of all requested material within allotted time frame;
- Responsiveness to the request for proposal;

X. Competitive Process / Time Frames

The following is the time frames for this RFP:

1. Letter of Intent must be faxed by November 21, 2005. Please fax to Douglas Ginsberg (860) 566-1309. (Refer to section VII)

2. A web-site link will be given for access to all related policies and procedures to those that sent the “Letter of Intent”. (Refer to section VI)

3. Proposers may e-mail questions concerning the RFP to Douglas Ginsberg (dginsberg@commnet.edu) and CC Meg Niewinski (mniewinski@commnet.edu) through December 2, 2005.

All questions submitted before the mandatory pre-bidders conference will be answered during the November 28, 2005 meeting. All follow up questions will be taken until December 2, 2005. These questions and answers will be posted on CCC’s web-site (http://www.commnet.edu/finance/rfp.asp) by December 9, 2005.

4. A mandatory pre-bidders conference will be held on November 28, 2005 at 2:00 pm. This will be an informational format that will include a question and answer forum with CCC staff to help all potential contractors complete this RFP. The mandatory pre-bidders conference will be held at the following location: Community-Technical Colleges, 61 Woodland Street, Hartford, CT 06105 - Room 263.

5. RFP proposals are due in the System Office Finance Department by Monday, December 19, 2005; 2:00 pm. Please send all proposals to:

The Board of Trustees of Community-Technical Colleges
61 Woodland Street, 3rd floor, Suite 333-342
Hartford, CT 06105
Attn: Douglas Ginsberg
6. The Public Bid opening will occur on Monday, December 19, 2005 at 3:00 pm in room 331 at The Community –Technical Colleges – 61 Woodland Street, Hartford, CT 06105

7. The contract award recipient will be contacted directly and the results will be posted on CCC’s web site.

There shall be no discussion of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing proposers. Responsible qualified proposals shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion and revision of proposals.

XI. General Contact Conditions

Proposal submission must be in compliance with, and is subject to, the following requirements and conditions:

1. Bidders must conform to all instructions and conditions as outlined in this RFP.

2. The System is exempt from payment of excise, transportation, and sales taxes imposed by the federal government and/or the state. Such taxes must not be included in the costs.

3. The proposal must be signed by an authorized official. The proposal must also provide the Contractor’s name, title, address and telephone number for the individual(s) with authority to negotiate and contractually bind the vendor. The name and telephone number of the person to contact for the purpose of clarifying the proposal content should also be provided.

4. Proposals submitted will be considered as binding commitments that may be included, by reference, along with this RFP into any signed contract with the proposer.

5. The proposal package must provide a minimum of three recent references that may be used to determine the vendor’s capability and responsiveness.

6. Submission:

   a. Bidders are requested to submit one original and 6 copies of the proposal.

   b. The RFP responses must be in the form of a written proposal, and received by the office of the Board of Trustees on or before Monday, December 19, 2005 at 2:00 pm in a sealed envelope with the following information on said envelope:

      (1) The RFP reference title and number: “Network Assessment and Consulting” - # CCC-0602”
      (2) Bid due date – December 19, 2005
      (3) Name and address of the vendor
c. Submit proposals to:
The Board of Trustees of Community - Technical Colleges
61 Woodland Street, 3rd Floor, Suite 333-342
Hartford, CT 06105
Attn: Douglas Ginsberg

7. The Public Bid opening will occur on Monday, December 19, 2005 at 3:00 pm in room 331 at The Community –Technical Colleges – 61 Woodland Street, Hartford, CT 06105.

XII Terms & Conditions

1. Any contract awarded as a result of this RFP must be in full conformance with statutory requirements of the State of Connecticut.

2. All proposals in response to this RFP are to be the sole property of the State of Connecticut, and subject to the provisions of section 1-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes (Freedom of Information).

3. Any product, whether acceptable or unacceptable, developed under a contract awarded as a result of this RFP is to be the sole property of the State of Connecticut unless stated otherwise in the RFP or contract.

4. Any price offerings from vendors must be valid for a period of 120 days from the due date of vendor Proposals.

5. Any alleged oral agreement or arrangement made by a vendor with any agency or employee will be superseded by the written agreement.

6. The System reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFP, prior to the due date and time, if it is in the best interests of the System.

7. The System reserves the right to reject, at its sole discretion, the proposal of any vendor.

8. The System reserves the right to correct inaccurate awards resulting from its clerical errors.

9. By responding, the vendor implicitly states that the proposal is not made in connection with any competing vendor submitting a separate response to the RFP, and is in all respects fair and without collusion or fraud. It is further implied that the vendor did not participate in the RFP development process, had no knowledge of the specific contents of the RFP prior to its issuance, and that no employee of the System participated directly or indirectly in the vendor’s proposal preparation.

10. Vendor shall bear all costs associated with Vendor’s response to this request for proposal including the costs of any presentations and/or demonstrations (if required).
11. Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities

The contract to be awarded is subject to contract compliance requirements mandated by Section 4a-60 and 46a-68j of the Connecticut General Statutes; and, when the awarding agency is the state; Section 46a-71(d) of the Connecticut General Statutes.

CCC may require the Contractor to supply the following factors to comply with State requirements:

a. The Contractor’s success in implementing an affirmative action plan;
b. The Contractor’s success in developing an apprenticeship program complying with Section 46a-68 to 46a-68 of the Connecticut General Statutes, inclusive;
c. The Contractor’s promise to develop and implement a successful affirmative action plan;
d. The Contractor’s submission of EEO-1 data indicating that the composition of its work force is at or near parity when compared to the racial and sexual composition of the work force in the relevant labor market area; The EEO-1 data form is available at the following site, www.state.ct.us/chro/metapages/contractCompliance/cc_forms/employInfo.pdf; and

e. The Contractor’s promise to set aside a portion of the contract for legitimate small contractors and minority business enterprises, where applicable. (See Section 40-60g – 4a-60j of the Connecticut General Statutes.)

12. Executive Orders of the Governor, State of Connecticut

Bidders are advised that the contracts for this project shall be subject to:

• Executive Order No. Three regarding nondiscrimination promulgated June 16, 1971, and to the guidelines and rules of the State Labor Commissioner implementing said Executive Order;
• Executive Order No. Seventeen, promulgated February 15, 1973, requiring contractors and subcontractors to list employment openings with the Connecticut State Employment Service;
• Executive Order No. Sixteen, promulgated August 4, 1999 regarding Violence in the Workplace Prevention Policy.
• Executive Order No. Seven a, promulgated August 15, 2005 regarding State Contracting.

Said documents are incorporated herein and made a part hereof as though fully set forth herein.
XIII. INSURANCE

A certificate of Commercial General Liability Insurance which provides coverage while performing services must be submitted to the System prior to commencement. The insurance certificate shall provide coverage in the amount of $1,000,000 combined single limit per occurrence for bodily injury, personal injury and property damage. Coverage shall include Premises and Operations, Independent Contractors, Products and Completed Operations, Contractual Liability and Board Form Property Damage coverage. If a general aggregate is used, the general aggregate limit shall apply separately to the project, or the general aggregate limit shall be twice the occurrence limit. Worker’s Compensation and Employers Liability is required and needs to meet statutory coverage that complies with the compensation laws of the State of Connecticut. This coverage shall include Employer’s Liability with minimum limits of $100,000 each accident, $500,000 Policy Disease Limit, $100,000 each employee. Policies shall list the State of Connecticut, its officers, officials, employees, agents, Boards and Commissions and shall be named as Additional Insured. The coverage shall contain no special limitations on the scope of protection afforded to the System and the State of Connecticut. The vendor shall assume any and all deductibles in the described insurance policies.

XIV. Rights Reserved To the State

The State of Connecticut reserves the right to award in part, to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part, and to waive technical defects, irregularities and omissions if, in its judgment, the best interests of the State of Connecticut will be served.