

Ann Arbor SPARK

MI STEM Forward Internship Portal

Prepared 12/7/2021

Request for Proposal

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

PURPOSE OF THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Ann Arbor SPARK and the MI STEM Forward Program funded by MEDC, are seeking a purpose-built web-based portal to facilitate a statewide internship matching program. The winning vendor will provide an intuitive, streamlined portal for students and employers to apply, submit job descriptions and applicant information, and make employment connections. This portal must gather all pertinent data about each applying company and potential intern. Then, after the intern and company are matched, the portal should also facilitate timesheet submission and payroll processes for the duration of the internship period.

It is also expected that the winning vendor will assist management with long-term planning to keep systems current and functional in the most cost-effective manner possible. Additionally, they will work with Ann Arbor SPARK staff to prioritize issues as they arise.

BACKGROUND

To increase the rate at which Michigan Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics ("STEM") college graduates find meaningful employment in Michigan, the MI STEM Forward Internship Matching program supports the placement, funding, and administration of student internships in STEM related positions with established, early stage and startup companies in Michigan. The efficiency and effectiveness of these placements are dependent on a user-friendly web-based portal for both companies and prospective interns to submit information, search through job postings and candidates, and establish communication. Once the intern is placed, there is also a requirement to have the timesheet and payroll processes automated and secure.

ADMINISTRATIVE

ANN ARBOR SPARK CONTACT

Any questions regarding this request for proposal should be directed to:

Name	Ben Ernst, Program Manager
Phone	(517) 672-0008
Email	ben.ernst@annarborusa.org

Or

Name	Nick Joblonski, Program Coordinator
Phone	(517) 285-3432
Email	nick@annarborusa.org

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Please submit your complete proposal, including all attachments, to:

ben.ernst@annarborusa.org

The subject line of the e-mailed proposal should read "Internship Matching Portal Submission".

All submissions must be received by the due date below.

DUE DATES

All proposals are due by 4:00 PM Eastern Standard Time on Friday, January 14, 2022.

ORIGINAL SIGNATURE

A scanned cover letter, signed by either the owner of the company, sole proprietor, or other representative authorized to bind the Vendor, must accompany every Response to the RFP in order for it to be considered.

PRESENTATION/INTERVIEW

Ann Arbor SPARK may ask a Proposer to come in for a presentation or interview.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Event	Date
1. RFP Distribution to Vendors	December 7, 2021
2. Proposal Due Date	January 14, 2022 4:00 PM ES Time
3. Bid Review	Between January 14- January 28, 2022
4. Anticipated decision and selection of Vendor	February 4, 2022
5. Anticipated implementation date	Mid to late March, 2022

GUIDELINES FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Award of the contract resulting from this RFP will be based upon the most responsive and responsible Vendor whose offer will be the most advantageous to Ann Arbor SPARK and the MI STEM Forward Program in terms of cost, functionality, and other factors as specified elsewhere in this RFP.

Ann Arbor SPARK and the MI STEM Forward Program reserve the right to:

- Reject any or all offers and discontinue this RFP process without obligation or liability to any potential Vendor,
- Accept other than the lowest priced offer,
- Award a contract based on initial offers received, without discussions or requests for best and final offers, and
- Award more than one initial contract for further reviewal processes.

The ideal proposal will contain several parts as set forth below. The Vendor will confine its submission to those matters sufficient to define its proposal and to provide an adequate basis for the evaluation of the Vendor's proposal.

Vendor's proposal in response to this RFP will be incorporated into the final agreement between Ann Arbor SPARK and the selected Vendor(s). The submitted proposals are suggested to include each of the following sections:

1. Executive Summary
2. Approach and Methodology
3. Management Deliverables and Reports
4. Detailed and Itemized Pricing
5. Appendix: References
6. Appendix: Project Team Staffing
7. Appendix: Company Overview

The detailed requirements for each of the above-mentioned sections are outlined below.

DETAILED RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This section will present a high-level synopsis of the Vendor's responses to the RFP. The Executive Summary should be a brief overview of the engagement and should identify the main features and benefits of the proposed work.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Proposer must respond to each task/deliverable in the Scope of Work section and include:

- The Proposer's overall support strategy/philosophy
- The approach Proposer will take to carry out the work objective
- Assumptions, i.e. requirements, risks, and expectations used to develop the proposal
- An explanation of the problem reporting and resolution process that describes the Proposer's support plan, including tiers, service levels, call escalation, the person(s) authorized to close problem reports, etc.

MANAGEMENT DELIVERABLES AND REPORTS

Include descriptions of any reports used to summarize and provide detailed information for managed services customers. Include sample reports as attachments to the proposal to provide an example of the types of reports that will be provided for this engagement.

DETAILED AND ITEMIZED PRICING

Include a fee breakdown based on your pricing model.

- What is the pricing model? Fixed fee, hourly rate, hybrid, other?
- What services are included in the pricing? Address specifically the following (and feel free to include anything not included in this list):
 - On-site time
 - Help-desk support
 - After hours support
 - Response time/problem resolution time
 - Travel time
 - Vendor management
 - Training
 - Regular in-person business review
 - Regular reporting on system health in business terms
 - Response to major system problems or outages

APPENDIX: REFERENCES

The final step in the proposal selection process will require three current corporate references for whom you perform similar work. At least one of the references should be comparable to Ann Arbor SPARK in size and requirements.

If you'd like to provide references in advance, please feel free to do so.

APPENDIX: STAFFING AND COMPANY OVERVIEW

Include a brief history, including year established and number of years your company has been offering managed services and/or applications support.

EVALUATION FACTORS FOR AWARD

CRITERIA

Any award to be made pursuant to this RFP will be based upon the proposal, with appropriate consideration given to operational, technical, cost, and management requirements. Evaluation of offers will be based upon the Vendor's responsiveness to the RFP, ability of the vendor to meet the needs of Ann Arbor SPARK and the MI STEM Forward Program and the total price quoted for all items covered by the RFP.

The following elements will be the primary considerations in evaluating all submitted proposals and in the selection of a Vendor or Vendors:

1. Completion of all required responses in the correct format.
2. The extent to which Vendor's proposed solution fulfills the stated requirements as set out in this RFP.
3. An assessment of the Vendor's ability to deliver the indicated services in accordance with the specifications set out in this RFP.
4. The Vendor's stability, experiences, and record of past performance in delivering such services.
5. Availability of sufficient high quality Vendor personnel with the required skills and experience for the specific approach proposed.
6. Overall cost of Vendor's proposal.

Ann Arbor SPARK and the MI STEM Forward Program may, at our discretion and without explanation to the prospective Vendors, at any time choose to discontinue this RFP without obligation to such prospective Vendors.

SCOPE OF WORK

REQUIREMENTS

The company awarded this RFP will work with the Program Manager and Program Coordinator for the MI STEM Forward Program to provide a fully functional, comprehensive portal to support the program's goals and objectives.

Online Program Portal

Student-facing

General

- Students interested in securing a STEM-oriented internship opportunity should find the portal easy to navigate and intuitive. To avoid "inaction due to overstimulation", the portal must keep unnecessary clutter to a minimum.

Design

- A student's first impression should be of a quick description of the program along with the potential for a few promotional videos or quotations (to be provided by and continually updated by the MI STEM Forward Program staff). Then, a simple "Apply Now" link should take the student to an application page.
- This application should include several pieces of information about the student including, but not limited to the following list. There should also be the ability to continually update these as needed:
 - First Name (written response)
 - Last Name (written response)
 - Email Address (written response)
 - Secondary Email Address (if necessary) (written response)
 - Phone Number, including area code (written response)
 - Current Street Address (written response)
 - City (written response)
 - State/Province (written response)
 - Zip Code
 - Headshot for display on student "tile"
 - Gender? (Male (including Transgender Male), Female (including Transgender Female), Prefer Not to Say) (optional)
 - Which ethnicity best describes you? (American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian-Indian, Asian-Pacific, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, White/Caucasian, Prefer Not to Say (written response). (Multiple choice)
 - Are you a veteran or active-duty military? (Multiple choice) Yes or No (Optional)
 - Do you have a valid S.S.N. (Social Security Number)? Yes or no (mandatory)
 - Are you a U.S citizen or authorized to work in the U.S.? Yes or No (mandatory)
 - Are you a non-U.S. citizen with authorization to work in the U.S.? Yes or no (mandatory)
 - Do you have permanent or temporary authorization to work in the U.S.? Yes or no (mandatory)
 - Do you need information from Ann Arbor SPARK to obtain the temporary authorization? NOTE that SPARK must be listed as the employer, and you are ONLY allowed to work for the dates authorized. Yes or No (mandatory)
 - Select all the regions in which you are looking for an internship using the numbered map as a reference. (Provided)

- Select which region best describes your current address, or out-of-state, using the numbered map as a reference. (Provided)
- In which industry(s) are you seeking an internship? (Multiple selection)
 - Advanced Automotive, Advanced Manufacturing, Advanced Materials, Agricultural Processing Technology, Alternative Energy, Homeland Security and Defense Technology, Advanced Information Technology, Life Sciences, Other (written response).
- Which sector of STEM are you most interested in for this internship opportunity?
 - S – Science (Biological, Medical, Agricultural, Environmental, etc.)
 - T – Technology (Software, Coding, IT, Programming, Computer Science, etc.)
 - E – Engineering (Mechanical, Civil, Manufacturing, Technician, etc.)
 - M – Mathematics (Analytics, Data Science, Financial Analysis, Market Research, etc.)
- Which college, university, or other academic institution do you currently attend or did attend within the past 12 months? (Written response)
- What is your current or past projected graduation year? (Written response)
- What is your major? (Written response)
- What is your minor (if applicable)? (Written response)
- What jobs or careers are you interested in? (Written response)
- Which company or companies would you most like to work with, if any? (Written response)
- What is your availability? Multiple choice (Full-time, Part-time, other (written response))
- Are you interested in remote work, if available? Multiple choice (Yes, no)
- Would you be open to staying in Michigan post-internship? Multiple choice (Yes, no)
- Upload your Resume. (mandatory)
- Please provide any relevant links that support your skills/capabilities (ex. website, portfolio, LinkedIn, headshot, etc.) (Optional)
- Once complete, SPARK should have the ability to Accept or Deny the application. If accepted, the student’s profile should be added to the talent pool database to be visible and searchable (by the various information gathered in the application process) to hiring companies.
- The student themselves then will have access to the “tiles” for each company’s approved job description. These tiles should be searchable as well by the information gathered in the company application process (outlined below).
- After 6 months of applying, the portal should automatically send an email to the student, prompting them to update their profile if they wish, re-validate their participation in the program for the next 6 months, or delete their account. Inaction should result in the student’s profile being removed from the portal.

Company-facing

General

- Companies interested in securing a STEM-oriented intern should find the portal easy to navigate and intuitive. To avoid “inaction due to overstimulation”, the portal must keep unnecessary clutter to a minimum.

Design

- A company’s first impression should be of a quick description of the program along with the potential for a few promotional videos or quotations (to be provided by the MI STEM Forward Program and continually updated). Then, a simple “Apply Now” link should take the company to an application page.

- This application should include several pieces of information about the company including, but not limited to:
- PART 1 Application for approval or rejection internally (email notification to mistemforward@annarborusa.org):
 - Legal name of company? (Written response)
 - Company alias name, if applicable? (Optional)
 - Company street address? (Written response)
 - City? (Written response)
 - State/Province? (Written response)
 - Zip Code? (Written response)
 - Company website, if applicable. (Optional) (Written Response)
 - Name of applicant applying. (First and Last name) (Written response)
 - Email address of applicant applying. (Written response)
 - Name of direct supervisor to student intern, if different from applicant applying. (Written response) (Optional)
 - Email address of direct supervisor to student intern, if different from applicant applying. (Written response) (Optional)
 - Company description. (Mandatory) (Written response)
 - Which SmartZone or Economic Development Organization are you a part of? (Written response)
 - Who referred you to this program? (Multiple choice and written response)
 - (SmartZone, Economic Development Organization (EDO), Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Michigan Venture Capital Association, MichBio, None, Other)
 - Please indicate which NAICS code best aligns with your industry sector. (Look up your NAICS code here: <https://www.naics.com/search-naics-codes-by-industry/>) (Written response)
 - Age of company in years? (Written response)
 - Which company size best describes you? (Choose one, FTE = Full Time Employee) (Small size (<50 FTE's), Medium size (50-499 FTE's), Large size (500+ FTE's). (Multiple choice)
 - How many intern positions are you planning on submitting to be part of the internship match program? (Numerical Written response)
 - Is the internship(s) to be completed in a workplace or done remotely? (Multiple choice) (Remotely, In a workplace, Hybrid)
 - Attach company logo (upload) (mandatory)
 - Upload any relevant documentation, portfolios, other items deemed permanent. (Upload)
- PART 2 Job Description(s) for approval or rejection internally (email notification to mistemforward@annarborusa.org):
 - Job description title. (Written response)
 - Copy/paste job description body. (Written response)
 - Do you currently have an intern in mind for this program? (Yes or no) (Multiple choice)
 - (If selected Yes) Intern's Full Name
 - Intern's Email Address (If selected yes) (written response)
 - Upload job description or relevant resources. (Upload button)
- **The company application process deviates from the process for interns in that we require companies to receive a referral before they are approved to have their job description made public. Upon completion of the company application, a notification should be sent to MISTEMFORWARD@annarborusa.org to confirm the "pending" application and prompt the program to either "approve" or "reject".**

- Upon approval, the company's profile should be added to the internship opportunity database to be visible and searchable (by the various information gathered in the application process) to potential interns.
- Also, upon approval of the company application. The company will now have unlimited access to PART 2 of uploading a job description for approval or rejection. That approval process should also be sent a notification to mistemforward@annarborusa.org for review.
- The company themselves then will have access to the "tiles" for each applied student. These tiles should be searchable as well by the information gathered in the student application process.

Both Sides of Portal:

- Both potential interns and companies (once approved internally) should have access to search the portal for good fits at this point.
- Clicking on the job opportunity/student application should give the user a more detailed view of the opportunity/student including access to additional documents, resumes, etc.
- There should be a mechanism for students and companies to establish contact with one another, either through a traditional "apply for this position" on the job description tile or a "contact this candidate" link on a student's tile. Each mechanism should generate an email response to the user, and an alert in the portal.

Post-Hiring Support

- Companies and students can communicate, interview, and come to hiring decisions independent of the portal. However, once the company communicates their intentions to hire a student, the portal should help to facilitate the next step of the onboarding process of connecting both the company/intern to SPARK. A 'HIRE STUDENT' button should be available that then pops up further questions which will be sent to mistemforward@annarborusa.org for next steps.
 - *The company and student information must be forwarded to the mistemforward@annarborusa.org email as reference. I.E. company name, students name and email address*
 - Further Questions that must be answered by the company:
 - Student effective start date (must be at least one week away from this emails date).
 - Student's hourly wage.
 - Indicate if will the student be full-time or part-time.
 - SUBMIT
 - An automated response with next steps (which can be continually updated by SPARK) will be sent to the company and student selected.

NEXT STEP – separate of portal

- SPARK will reach out to both student and company with internal documentation and legal documents that must be filled out.

NEXT STEP – Internally in the portal

- Once the student begins the internship, the portal must also provide a structure for sending and approving timesheets. These timesheets should be sent to the intern, the company manager on record (or otherwise input into the portal by SPARK), and the staff at Ann Arbor SPARK.
 - Timesheets are bi-monthly, new timesheet set out on the 1st and 15th of each month.
 - Each timesheet initiated but give a week for Company Manager to approve of intern's time (indicated by portal alert and email notification to the company email on file).

- Under each newly issued timesheet to the company/intern, an overview of remaining balance of funds is shown (as well as broken down by hours remaining based on inputted hourly wage)

Other Considerations

- In what instances would we incur extra costs?
- Proficiency in Microsoft and Apple environments, integration of the two
- What are the terms for canceling the support relationship? How much notice is required?
- Your company's onboarding plan?
- What is included in your proposal?
- What is *not* included in your proposal?

Rough visualization of the portal and workflow:

