

Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Design, development and Implementation of the Crafting the
Student Journey and Student Support Portals

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1 Background

The educational context of the UAE is undoubtedly undergoing improvements and positive transitions. The awareness of the challenges facing students in the country has necessitated the creation of approaches to overcome these issues. Already, the government has developed strategies such as scholarships intended to address the existing and emerging needs among students. However, it is clear that additional effort is necessary to combat specific student challenges that potentially curtail their journey and transition into successful careers. Similarly, the need for frameworks supporting students towards engagement in both educational and extra-curricular activities is evident.

The provision of support may emanate from the government or through the establishment of systems of peer support. In the face of advancing technologies, the development of information technology solutions has the capacity to address the student needs and ease the student journey into careers. Nevertheless, it remains clear that the current strategies towards addressing such issues are grossly inadequate and often limited to singular contexts. Individual universities may have such approaches in place, but a general framework that integrates the issues and solutions of all students in higher education institutions is conspicuously lacking. Therefore, the identification of such potential solutions and strategies towards overcoming conventional student challenges is an inherent part of efforts in the development of higher education.

1.1 Nature of Student Problems

The indulgence in development of solutions is inherently based on the understanding of the existent problems. Therefore, engagement of students in higher education contexts a focus group facilitated the elaboration of their most prominent issues. These issues include:

1.1.1 Choices

The students note limitations in course flexibility and limited information regarding the available electives. As such, students begin their courses unaware of potential alternatives they could pursue, remaining in this void due to minimal opportunities for collaboration with students in other courses. The lack of choice also displays in the form of difficulties navigating through opportunities for employment. While some continue to their Master's level studies, employment opportunities remain scarce for the graduates. Regardless of the searches being for paid employment or volunteer basis, the chances or choices available to students remain limited.

1.1.2 Process

Students also report challenges in the multiplicity of sites and platforms required to log their progress or achievements. Activities like registration for individual courses are separate from the platforms recording the pursuit of courses beyond the curriculum and even the progress in grading. The multiplicity decreases the synchronicity that is necessary for the maintenance of an efficient log. At the same time, the participation in activities beyond the main curriculum remains hindered by visibility issues. Club events are poorly funded, implying limited progress where such activities are concerned. Therefore, students lack adequate comprehensiveness in the range of activities and achievements that are part of their student journey.

1.1.3 Activity

The issue of funding continues across most student activities. Some continues such as class-related trips may require contribution by students from their personal resources. Similarly, the absence of institutional mechanisms tracking or unlocking funding for club or other extra-curricular activities within the institutional system vastly limits the capacity for indulgence in the activity. The aspect limits activities, which negatively affects the wholesome growth of the

student as well as imposes limitations on some potential contributions to their pursuits for employment.

2 Scope and Expected Deliverables

- a. The consultant will be required to
 - conduct an assessment of the current landscape, including available resources and gaps to be filled
 - global and regional benchmarking to identify the appropriate framework for the portals
 - design and implement the portals, including selection of suitable software, full functionality and creation of content.
 - test of the platform interfaces and carry out necessary corrective actions taken
 - provide operator services for at least the first year of operation

2.1 Design

Student Journey Portal

- a. The overall design should include key components such as academic tab, career tab, records, etc.

Crowd Funding Portal

- a. The overall design should include all necessary functionality of a crowd-funding portal that connects student cubs with alumni and private sector donors.

The interfaces for both portals should be appropriate for students in higher education, providing a smooth and practical user experience. All developed content should be in Arabic and English.

2.2 Expected Timeline

- a. The first prototype is expected within 8 weeks with the final product being completed within 15 weeks

3 General Conditions and Requirements

The following and the general requirements and conditions that must be satisfied by the consultant;

- a. A demonstration of the intended approach to delivery dependent on the scope and project requirements. The plan should feature the choice methodologies and underlying frameworks, the required resources and their justification, as well as the credential of the consultant and project team members.
- b. The consultant has a constant role of ensuring the deployment of skilled participants in the development of the program details as well as the eventual provision of operator services
- c. The constant assessment of existent legislation, policies, and mandates as they relate to the progress and implementation of the project within the education context.
- d. Provide a comprehensive plan for the entire project featuring the pricing of the individual functions, the services, phases, as well as the entire project and indications of any variations during the completion process.
- e. Delivery of the first completed system prototype within 8 weeks following the award
- f. Delivery of the final product within 15 weeks of the confirmation of the award
- g. Separate the technical and financial offers in the delivery of the proposal
- h. The consultant has the obligation to present their offer in absolute comprehensiveness, addressing multiple components of the project performance. therefore, the creation of partnerships towards presenting the offer is encouraged, but these should be clearly listed within the initial proposal

- i. The owner maintain the right to offer or recall the award subject to the terms of the contract, and the consultant is expected to constantly abide by the rules and expectations as set forth by the owner.

4 Criteria for Submission and Evaluation

- i. The financial and technical proposals are expected to be separate submissions, clearly marked and enveloped at the time of delivery
- ii. The evaluation phase is applies constant criteria for all the proposals as provided in the section. Bidders should thus apply the criteria towards the refinement of their proposals.
- iii. The owner holds the right to change the criteria for evaluation. Nevertheless, any such modifications will be adequately communicated to bidders.
- iv. The criteria for evaluation includes:
 - a. Relevant experience in similar fields or projects
 - b. The strength or performance of the reference projects included in the bid
 - c. The demonstration of understanding of the requirements of the project as well as the assessed/ perceived capacity to adequately address these requirements
 - d. Services proposed and deliverables projected under the proposal
 - e. The degree of comprehensiveness by the bidder (whether solely or in partnership)
 - f. The proposed methodology and framework methods, the approach to project management, and the capacity to offer operator solutions
 - g. Proposed timeline or adherence to expected timelines for project completion
 - h. The qualifications of the stated team members involved in the delivery of the project
 - i. The proposals for costs of the project completion
 - j. Terms of payment and consideration

5 Appendix

Appendix I: Proposal Format

Section 1: Executive summary

Section 2: Understanding of requirements

Section 3: Reflection of requirements in services proposed

Section 4: Preferred methodology and framework for project delivery across all phases

Section 5: Deliverables for each phase

Section 6: The project

- The project plan.
- The project organization structure
- Timeline/ schedule with indications of time per activity or phase.

Section 7: Financials proposal

- Detailed costs and prices reflecting most modest costs
- Include all expenses anticipated
- Classify costs according to phase and function
- Payment Terms and Conditions

Section 8: Qualifications

- CVs/Profiles of resources in the delivery of the project
- Similar project experiences- details
- Company profile (provide website if available)