

This Question and Answer document has been altered to combine questions that were of a similar nature and to remove information that would identify potential vendors. The responses provided in this document may differ from the information provided during the Webinar by the presenters; however, this document is to be considered the most accurate information. The content was reviewed collectively by the RFP support team to provide the most accurate information possible. The first section of the Questions and Answers provided below is specific to the OER Platform RFP Overview Webinar, and the second section of Questions and Answers were taken from inquiries that were submitted within a few days prior to, and after, the Webinar that were deemed beneficial to share with potential vendors.

OER Platform Questions and Answers

Question Details		
#	Question	Answer
1	Will the curated OER content be licensed using Creative Commons licensing schema?	Content hosted on the platform should have a licensing attribution that ensures the content is usable and shareable. A faculty member can choose to use an alternative to Creative Commons - or they could opt to import something that has a different type of license. Most commonly, the licensing schema will be Creative Commons, and all OER developed using ZTC Degree Program funds is required to have the CC-BY Creative Commons license, if permissible.
2	Is there a standardized Library System used throughout the California Community Colleges? If so what is the ILS used?	Yes - it is Alma D. Here is the link: https://ccclibraries.com/lsp/almad
3	What are the conflict of interests in identifying references from people within the sphere of influence of the Chancellor's Office or the Burdenfree task force.	Members of the BFIM task force can be asked for references. This is not a disqualifying factor. We do encourage vendors to check with intended references prior to identifying them in the RFP to ensure the individual agrees to be a reference.
4	Beyond Cool4Ed, are you anticipating a need to connect into other OER repositories (OpenStax, OER Commons, Merlot, etc.)? Or, are you open to including the OER content from those other repositories directly within the new CA Community Colleges repository?	We want to ensure that content that is already hosted on other systems can be identified through this platform with a directory or referatory feature. A user should have the capability in this new platform to import externally hosted OER so it can be edited and updated.
5	Re: hosting for ancillaries and homework systems. What types of ancillaries do you intend to build and host? Do you have cloud hosting or streaming media vendors you already use? Do you have existing software tools in use across CCC that are licensed or widely used for making things like presentations/slideshows, databases, question sets, etc.?	The platform should have the capability to share access to any OER ancillaries as they evolve within higher education. Yes, we do have storage for streaming and recording media (3C Media https://www.3cm mediasolutions.org/). The platform should have the ability to find this externally hosted media.
6	What is your expectation re: homework system(s)?	The vendor shall host openly licensed content, ancillaries, and a homework system. Vendor shall describe its recommended approach for designing, building, implementing, and sustaining homework systems.
7	Re: importing existing OER: Do you envision the import function to be handled by the vendor, or for the vendor to provide tools for platform end-users to do self-service content import (or both)? Can you provide a representative list of the types and format of resources that you might expect to import?	The vendor should provide tools for the platform end-users to conduct self-service content imports. The RFP states that the platform should facilitate importing existing OER into the platform for adoption or adaptation (i.e., import static OER into the platform for modification). However, if the vendor wishes to propose a solution that can fulfill this function, then this would be a significant feature.

8	Re: "the OER Platform must provide searchable functionality serving as a reference source that supports search and acquisition of the materials from those external platforms/systems": Which external platforms and systems do you expect the platform to support search and acquisition for? Which of these systems have public, well-documented APIs? Which of these systems already use open standards or are committed to interoperability and/or partnership?	The platform should have a searchable functionality that allows external resources to be found through use of cataloging by key words, tags, etc. The information from external platforms should have the ability to be identified when meta data is added through a directory feature. It is not expected that this platform have APIs with all other systems already in existence. Desired features noted in the RFP are that the proposed platform have interoperability with Cool4Ed and with Alma D. Interoperability with course/learning management systems is required (please see below).
9	Is there a requirement to be interoperable with the various SIS's (PeopleSoft, Banner, Colleague, etc.)?	No - this is not a requirement. But interoperability via a streamlined mechanism for importing OER into a course management system (e.g., Common Cartridge export capability) is required.
10	From Section 4.2: Metadata tagging for easy discoverability: Can you provide more detail about desired metadata taxonomies/schemas you'd like to support? Cool4Ed has 'academic disciplines' & 'C-ID or Course' for example.	The vendor needs to have the ability to allow searches for meta-data taxonomies and schemas. This should include, at minimum, the field of study, C-ID, CalGETC designation, etc.
11	From Section 4.5: Collaborative workspaces / project tracking: Are you envisioning that the OER publishing platform also provide you with project management software or community collaboration software and related comms tools? Are there already common collaboration tools in use within the system that might be a preferred default to the OER platform providing something new?	Yes, we are envisioning that the platform provide a project management collaboration tool for shared OER work. No, we do not currently have a common collaboration tool.
12	From Section 4.7: Ratings/reviews/feedback mechanisms: Do you expect ratings/reviews to be curated or managed and if so, by whom? Do you expect the vendor to curate ratings/feedback, or should tools be available for authors/network managers to curate and manage social validation & feedback?	We do not expect that the vendor curate or manage ratings/reviews of OER. We are seeking that authors, network managers, and OER end-users be provided the functionality to provide feedback, ratings, and reviews of available OER in the platform. In cases where feedback is found to be inappropriate or deemed to be non-constructive, we do intend for the vendor to have the ability to remove such ratings or reviews upon notification from the Chancellor's Office or recognized organizations that are identified as OER leaders by the Chancellor's Office
13	From "Additional Desired Features and Functionality": for both the CA state Library Services Platform and COOL4ED: Can you provide any more details about the metadata ingestion and integration desired for this? Maybe a followup to the original metadata question I asked.	The selected vendor will be provided with the meta data template to be able to support ingestion of OER with data tags. For Alma D (library platform https://ccclibraries.com/lsp/almad), we will also seek to work with the vendor to support this integration.
14	Is there a requirement or preference for AI agents to be intrinsic for search, curation, and mixing of content for faculty?	There is not a requirement for AI agents to be involved in the platform; however, this integration can be proposed as part of the solution.
15	Does the system have a shared identity provider for SAML integrations?	We do not have a shared identity provider for SAML integrations.
16	Is there a preference for any one of the hyperscalers for housing the repository? (AWS, Microsoft Azure, GCP, OCI)?	We did not specify a preference. We ask that the vendor provide their preference and explain the reason for their selection.
17	Re: live training -- is there a preference for either in-person vs. virtual trainings?	There is not a requirement for either in-person or virtual trainings; however, virtual trainings have the ability to reach more participants who may not have access to travel funds or opportunities.
18	My business is a registered California S-Corp, would this fulfill the license requirement?	No, the S-Corp is a tax classification. A business license allows a vendor to conduct regulated business in CA.
19	Can you give more details about the level of itemization for the cost analysis?	Our interest is for our proposal review process to be able to identify the costs associated with deliverables based upon the salaries and related benefits for development (if applicable), software costs, hosting/cloud costs, and expected maintenance/upgrades for the platform. We also want to understand the timeline for costs related to platform deliverables according to when features will "go live."

20	The RFP references a Print on Demand feature. How do you envision how the platform will interact with campus bookstores in order for campuses to stock quantities in bulk for students who want a print copy?	We have not identified how the platform will interact with bookstores. This is a local college process and mechanisms for how this interaction can take place can vary across colleges. Some colleges contract with 3rd-parties, and some colleges manage in-house stores or print shops. We are interested in possible approaches to this feature.
21	Is HECVAT light sufficient to satisfy the HECVAT requirement?	A HECVAT light is allowable. We also understand that any newly designed platform will not be able to provide a HECVAT (or a VPAT) until after the platform is developed. We do reserve the right to request a full HECVAT at a later time, if deemed necessary.
24	If you do not have a business license but are operating as a sole proprietor with a team of contractors is that okay, or will I need to obtain a business license?	Our legal team informed us that a vendor must acknowledge they are in good standing with the State of California by attaching a copy of its valid business license with the RFP. As such, a valid CA business license is required.

Additional Submitted Questions and Answers

Question Details		
#	Question	Answer
1	Can you clarify the scope of the "Text-to-speech capability" (200.2 page 9)?	WCAG AA 2.1 outlines speech-to-text guidelines. Our interest is to know the vendor's capability to meet the text-to-speech standards: for text, for non-text images, other media, etc.
2	Can you clarify the scope of the support for multiple-languages (200.2 page 9)?	Our interest is to know how the vendor will meet this criterion. Will the platform display the language only? Or, will the platform able to provide additional features like spell-check or other interactive features? We are seeking what the vendor can provide regarding this need.
3	Regarding the ability to Download Materials for offline use, which materials and is EPUB/PDF good enough or some other mechanism (100.3 page 7)?	The vendor should identify the solution they are prepared to provide. It is not expected that interactive or multimedia components that are available online would still be accessible when a resource has been downloaded for offline use.
4	To what extent is the SCORM/xAPI desired to have access. Presumably with homework/assessment (200.6 page 8).	We need to ensure that content can be moved across systems for usability (e.g. from platform to Canvas). Additionally, we're interested to see how a platform will be able to track access to materials in the platform (did the student access it? How many times? Etc.) Ability to monitor student progress within a homework system would be a beneficial feature. Our desire is to know how the vendor can track and provide information regarding students' access to materials.
5	What is the scope of the "OER Showcase" for each campus (100.0 page 6)? Is a single entry on a single website that hosts that specific campus's OER sufficient or does that have to be single websites for each campus?	It is desired that there be a navigable area where developed materials can be found, by college, and can allow resources to be accessed by others. We are interested to know how the vendor proposes to meet this criterion.
6	Clarification on the Hosting Environment, specifically the "Deploy on private tenant space" requirements (400 page 12). The multiple deliverable aspect of the RFP (OER texts, OER ancillaries, OER homework etc) naturally extend over multiple servers so this is hard to address given the scope of the RFP.	The intent is that the vendor be responsible for the hosting of the content that is uploaded to the platform because the Chancellor's Office will not provide space for the platform or content. We are interested to know how the vendor will host content and ensure that resources and infrastructure necessary for supporting the platform will be handled by the vendor. It is understandable that cloud-based servers or multiple localized servers may be the solution, and we want to know that this space (or spaces) will be guaranteed and the responsibility of the vendor to keep available to users.
7	This isn't a comment in the required feature but references in the introduction: "Referral database (aka "referatory" or "directory") guiding users to available OER or freely available online resources not housed in the Platform, such as large multimedia files and complete courses." What is the scope of this referatory mode? Which referatories is the selection committee thinking about (Page 2)?	The goal is not to require all resources that exist to be imported into the selected platform if they already have a standing location; however, if a faculty member or college department wishes to provide access to an already "stored" resource that is on a different system, we want the vendor to provide a mechanism that allows users to discover that resource if they have provided a link and the description data so it can be to be discoverable on the external platform. Also, it is our intent that the vendor provide a mechanism by which the discovered OER on a different platform can be imported into this new platform for editing and republishing.

8	What is a “learning pathway” in this context (4.B. page 14)?	A learning pathway is a collection of courses that lead to a certificate or degree outcome. The purpose is to provide holistic OER options to that cover a full “major” or required classes for a degree or certificate rather than users only being able to select single courses at a time. This is an additional desired feature, and we are interested to know how a vendor propose that this desired feature could be met.
9	While not explicitly mentioned in the RFP, it is assuming the homework system is to be freely available to all faculty and students in the CCC system. The predicted grown of the homework system under these conditions (i.e., doubling of student usage each year) will result in a major expense (taking close to 100% of the bid amount.) Is it fair to have an explicit maximum to the number of students that can use the home work system for free to limit the financial costs to a reasonable value given the project RFP financials?	Yes, this is something that we would want to know from a proposing vendor. The limitation can be mentioned in the proposed solution to requirements, and there is an “other information” section where options can be provided which can address issues of significant scalability.
10	The structure of the RFP suggests most of the development efforts are to be addressed in year 1, it is expected that additional development efforts will be requests (e.g., expanding the homework system for different fields). Is that not supposed to be included in the bid or should ongoing development efforts be explicit in the bid over the duration of the 5.5 years.	The goal is to provide the greatest amount of functionality within the first year; however, development to meet additional criteria beyond the first year can be considered. We would want to know the amount of implementation that can take place in year one and also the expected feature development in the subsequent months (or years) in the development process - if necessary. This should be included in proposal and also noted in the Timeline area. It is expected that the vendor will fulfill the terms of the contract within the provided timeframe and budget.
11	Re: homework systems and question banks: We'd prefer, wherever possible, to understand and support existing tools and systems already in use across the CCC. Homework systems are a large and sometimes complicated category with different meanings and uses across many different disciplines -- ranging from proprietary courseware platforms to open source tools like OLI's Torus, IMathAS, and WeBbWork. On the topic of question banks: It's our understanding that all CCC schools use Canvas as their LMS. Canvas provides the capability to create question banks and administer secure summative assessment already, and can make openly licensed courses (and course content like question banks) available to other users via Canvas Commons. Can you tell us more about your expectation re: homework systems and question banks for the purposes of this RFP?	<p>All CCCs have access to Canvas as their LMS. While the colleges all presently all use Canvas, many faculty in certain disciplines find that the Canvas tools do not meet their homework needs. The expectation is that the vendor would have the capability to support openly-licensed homework systems comparable to those that students commonly pay for in disciplines like math, economics, and accounting.</p> <p>In addition, the RFP describes the following as required functions and capabilities for assessments and homework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customizable question types: Multiple-choice, short answer, fill-in-the-blank, essay, drag-and-drop, and coding exercises. • Allow for questions to be copied and remixed. • If a desired assessment approach is not accessible, the platform will enable authors to include alternatives or incorporate a redirect. • Question Banks: Allow users to create, import, and organize reusable questions. • Capability to develop new question types and/or technology needed for specific discipline needs. • Multimedia Integration: Support images, videos, and audio in questions. • Required Assessment Functionality/Options (as appropriate): Randomization (shuffle questions and answers) automated scoring, customizable feedback, partial credit, rubric-based grading • Mobile support: Fully responsive web design or a dedicated mobile app for iOS and Android.

12	Re: question types and assessment functionality/options: "Coding exercises" and "Rubric-based grading" seem different in type and kind from other question types and assessment options listed, as they often require a human's subjective judgment rather than automatic grading (i.e. to evaluate divergent solutions or to define and apply a rubric to a complex assignment). Canvas already support Rubric-based grading for their Assignments, for example. Can you say more about your expectations and needs for this question type and mode of assessment when it comes to your OER publishing platform?	The RFP includes coding exercises and rubric-based grading as required functions and capabilities for assessments and homework. The need arises from the thousands of courses and faculty in diverse disciplines across the CCCs, focused on meeting the needs of students preparing for transfer as well as for employment in emerging industries.
13	Re: "Oral assessments": It reads as though you want to be able to administer oral assessments via your OER publishing platform. This seems slightly unusual to us, as these would typically be administered in person or via a learner's LMS. Can you clarify the desired objective here?	The goal is to replace tools that are commonly purchased by students or by colleges with tools that are openly-licensed. Examples of this would be Flipgrid and VoiceThread.
14	Re: the requirement to "Give each CCC college the ability to showcase OER developed by that college": Is there a preference for central administration of all CCC content (with distributed support) vs. each college having their own specific instance of the publishing platform?	The RFP does not require that each college have their own instance of the publishing platform, but rather seeks recommendations from bidders on how to provide colleges with the opportunity to showcase their OER. Providing each college their own instance of the publishing platform could comprise a recommendation. It is desired that there be a navigable area where developed materials can be found, by college, and can allow resources to be accessed by others via searching by a specific college's OER submissions. We are interested to know how the vendor proposes to meet this criterion.