

Management Council

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FOR eBooks, Audiobooks, and Digital Video for Purchase

General Information

The Management Council, acting in the interest of Ohio Information Technology Centers (ITCs) and Ohio PreK-12 schools, is soliciting information from interested parties for collections of eBooks, audiobooks, and digital video available for purchase, to be made freely accessible to all Ohio PreK-12 students, educators, and families through INFOhio, Ohio's PreK-12 Digital Library. Responses should outline titles offered, service level assurances, and costs. Specific response requirements are outlined herein.

The Management Council Point of Contact

John Mitchell
Management Council
8050 N. High Street, Suite 150
Columbus, OH 43235
Email: john.mitchell@managementcouncil.org
Web: <https://www.infohio.org/blog/item/request-for-information-for-ebooks-audiobooks-and-digital-video-for-purchase>

Request for Information Timeline

Request for Information Issued	04/25/2023
Round 1	
Vendor Inquiry Period Ends	05/31/2023
Vendor Responses Due	06/30/2023
Evaluation and Selection	07/15/2023
Round 2 (if funds remain)	
Vendor Inquiry Period Ends	08/31/2023
Vendor Responses Due	09/29/2023
Evaluation and Selection	10/16/2023
Round 3 (if funds remain)	
Vendor Inquiry Period Ends	11/29/2023
Vendor Responses Due	12/29/2023
Evaluation and Selection	01/15/2024
Round 4 (if funds remain)	
Vendor Inquiry Period Ends	02/29/2024
Vendor Responses Due	03/29/2024
Evaluation and Selection	04/15/2024
Final round (if funds remain)	
Vendor Inquiry Period Ends	05/31/2024
Vendor Responses Due	06/28/2024
Evaluation and Selection	07/15/2024
Response Expiration	09/30/2024

Management Council

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FOR eBooks, Audiobooks, and Digital Video for Purchase

Tax Exempt

The Management Council is a tax-exempt local government entity in the state of Ohio. Exemption certificates, if required, will be furnished upon request.

Management Council Business Environment

The Management Council is an Ohio Regional Council of Governments (COG). Principal membership of the Management Council COG consists of independent regional data centers known as Information Technology Centers (ITCs). ITC membership primarily consists of Ohio schools and other local governmental entities. Through member ITCs, the Management Council's collective service reach extends to approximately 1.8 million students and over 400,000 teachers, administrators, and support staff learning and working in over 900 public school districts, non-public schools, Career Centers, and Educational Service Centers in Ohio.

Funding Priorities

With an investment of funds made possible through Future Forward Ohio, which encompasses the state's strategic priorities for using federal funds to help students recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, INFOhio, a project of the Management Council, will increase access to quality instructional materials to accelerate learning and prepare students for future success. INFOhio transforms instruction and impacts learning by providing quality teaching and learning resources at no cost to Ohio's teachers and students. To support them in long-term initiatives, INFOhio will purchase a core collection of quality digital content that supports Ohio's Learning Standards and current state priorities.

For over 25 years, INFOhio has procured quality digital content for Ohio students, educators, and families through various funding sources, including state and federal funds.

The one-time funding of approximately \$3 million for the purchase of eBooks, audiobooks, and digital video is part of the investment of state activities funds made possible by the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (American Rescue Plan). While INFOhio will consider the purchase of collections that include minimal annual hosting or platform delivery fees, subscription collections or rotating collections for annual subscription will not be considered.

Priority subjects are available for download: [PurchaseSubjects.xlsx](#). The workbook contains two tabs—one with priority subjects for educators and one with priority subjects for students.

- Materials for educators: in general, INFOhio seeks titles published since 2017. Older publications may be accepted except for subjects where "Last 5 years only" is noted. For all subject areas, the educator focus should be PreK-12 rather than higher ed. Titles with more specific subjects than those listed may be considered.
- Materials for students: in general, INFOhio seeks nonfiction titles published since 2017. Older publications may be accepted except for subjects where "Last 5 years only" is noted. Titles with more specific subjects than those listed may be considered. Additionally, INFOhio seeks unabridged classics, which may include fiction, in high quality formats, preferably with read-aloud, translation, and other tools that add value. INFOhio also seeks titles that frequent summer reading lists or are used for class sets, which may include fiction, preferably with read-aloud, translation, closed-captioning, and other tools that add value. INFOhio will consider high-

Management Council

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FOR eBooks, Audiobooks, and Digital Video for Purchase

interest fiction titles that may be purchased without restriction on the number of circulations or simultaneous users.

INFOhio will prioritize titles that support Ohio Learning Standards:

<https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/OLS-Graphic-Sections/Learning-Standards>.

[Ohio law](#) does not permit the State Board of Education to adopt Health Education Standards, but does direct schools and districts to include health education and other related topics at various times throughout its K-12 curriculum. Responses that include materials with primary subjects related to romance, sex, sexuality, gender, or sexual education will be disqualified.

Specifications

In addition to the funding priorities, INFOhio seeks responses that meet the technology and instructional specifications below.

TECHNOLOGY AND INSTRUCTIONAL SPECIFICATIONS

1. Platform and items in collection(s) must allow for users to fully access materials simultaneously without limitation on the number of times a title may be accessed, viewed, downloaded, or circulated.
2. Platform and/or items in collection(s) permit authenticated Ohioans access to the content from various INFOhio web portals.
3. Platform and/or items in collection(s) support various authentication methods—including but not limited to referring URL, IP address, and embedded credentials such as an encrypted username/password.
4. Platform and/or items in collection(s) are accessible from any internet-enabled device—including but not exclusive to personal computers, laptop computers, Chromebooks, tablets, and smartphones/mobile devices.
5. Platform and/or items in collection(s) are compatible with all internet browsers—including but not exclusive to Chrome and Safari—using default installation settings and without additional system hardware or software components required on end users' devices.
6. Platform complies with the State of Ohio IT Policy on Web Site Accessibility (ITP-09), which includes compliances with W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.
7. Platform and/or items in collection(s) support integration with various Learning Management Systems (LMS).
8. MARC records are provided for individual items in collection(s).
9. Deep linking—authenticated linking to individual items in collection(s)—is supported.
10. Includes teacher and/or family support materials, documentation, or guides for effective use.
11. Platform and/or items in collection(s) include research-based tools—including but not exclusive to downloadable content, read-aloud, closed captioning, translation—that advance learning for all students.
12. Priority will be given to collections with features and/or tools that support differentiation, and a variety of learning needs and styles.
13. Items in collection(s) contain videos, animations, simulations, or interactives that support student learning.

Management Council

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FOR eBooks, Audiobooks, and Digital Video for Purchase

14. Platform and/or items in collection(s) allow for INFOhio to create collections, subcollections, playlists, bookshelves, etc. that contextualize the materials.
15. Platform and items in collection(s) do not require individual student or educator accounts or registration. Responses that require “rostering” will not be considered.
16. No personally identifiable student data is collected. Any data collected is used in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
17. None of the items in the collection(s) have primary subject headings (BISAC, LC, or other) related to romance, sex, sexuality, gender, or sexual education.

Instructions to Respondents

Inquiries

The Management Council will accept inquiries by email via the response address noted above until the designated date for each evaluation round. Answers to appropriate questions will be published at the web address noted above. If inquiries result in a constructive change to this request for information, an amended version will be issued. The Management Council reserves the right to determine if a response is warranted. The Management Council may, at its discretion, seek additional clarification from the sender. The Management Council may also, at its discretion, seek outside assistance in formulating a response.

Responses

Please submit responses by email to john.mitchell@managementcouncil.org. The subject of the email should be “INFOhio Digital Content Purchase”. Details about response requirements are in the “Qualifications and Evaluations” section of this request for information. Preference is for responses submitted in .XLSX (Excel) format with each item and its associated cost itemized. A template, which includes three tabs (cover, specs, itemized response) is available: [RFI ebooks audiobooks video template.xlsx](#).

It is strongly recommended that vendors submit responses for collections that do not exceed a maximum cost of \$250,000. Vendors are welcome to submit multiple responses for multiple collections. *Smaller collections of very relevant content that clearly align to priorities are preferable to large collections of content that loosely relate to priorities.* Responses that indicate a per head rate rather than a total cost will not be considered.

Responses to this request for information are due **by 4pm Eastern on the dates designated in the Request For Information Timeline** above. Vendors are encouraged to submit responses early as all responses will be reviewed quarterly with awards being made quarterly. Each timely response will be acknowledged. The Management Council reserves the right to reject any response not received by the indicated time and date. The Management Council is not responsible for any delays that may impede the timely delivery of any response. The Management Council may, at its discretion, extend the due date in consideration of events beyond the control of the Management Council or respondents, or for any other reason deemed to be in the best interest of the Management Council. The Management Council is not obligated to acknowledge, announce, or otherwise notify respondents or potential respondents of said extension.

Management Council

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FOR eBooks, Audiobooks, and Digital Video for Purchase

By submitting a response, a respondent represents to the Management Council that the response contained therein is open and binding for the respondent upon acceptance. The Management Council shall not be responsible for any cost or expense a respondent incurs during the preparation, qualification, or evaluation of a response to this request for information.

Provisions and Disclaimers

Awards

The Management Council reserves the right to award multiple recipients, reject any response, including that of the lowest-cost respondent, accept responses either in whole or in part, award contracts by individual items or by lump-sum total. The Management Council also reserves the right to waive any irregularities, defects, or omissions in any response should it be deemed to be in the best interest of the Management Council to do so. Such irregularities, defects, or omissions are deemed to be non-prejudicial to other respondents.

The Management Council may award contracts based upon initial responses without a discussion of such responses with other competing vendors. However, the Management Council may, at its discretion, elect to conduct oral presentations with selected vendors, request additional information, and/or conduct additional meetings with vendors still under active consideration. The Management Council is not required to provide all respondents with such an opportunity.

Final Determination

The Management Council will make final determination of award at its sole discretion upon careful consideration of any information as it may deem pertinent. Awards will be made with the objective of securing those identified services that will best serve the overall needs of the Management Council and its members in terms of quality, functionality, efficiency, compatibility, reliability, and cost effectiveness. The Management Council reserves the discretion to determine the relative importance of such criteria in the decision-making process.

Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure

All responses and supporting material become the property of the Management Council and are subject to public access. To the extent permitted by state and federal open records laws, the Management Council will make reasonable effort to maintain the confidentiality of information that the respondent clearly marks as requiring confidential treatment.

The Management Council may be willing to execute a non-disclosure agreement to protect designated information from disclosure as a public record. Submitting entities should request such a non-disclosure in writing at least five (5) business days prior to the submission of a response to this request for information.

News Releases

Respondents will at no time make any news or advertising releases pertaining to the request for information document for any purpose without the prior approval of, and in coordination with, the Management Council.

Management Council

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FOR eBooks, Audiobooks, and Digital Video for Purchase

Open Procurement

The sole purpose of this request for information is to communicate the interests of the Management Council in obtaining pricing for the goods and services listed herein and does not in any way obligate the Management Council to purchase said goods and services. The Management Council reserves the right to accept any item or collection of items proposed in any response, purchase more or less of each item or service at the unit price offered in the response, and negotiate with respondents regarding variations to the original request for information specifications which may be in the best interest of the Management Council.

Except for agreement(s) for any application(s) currently or previously supported by the Management Council or ITCs to provision services, the request for information is made without any previous understanding or agreement with any person, firm, or corporation making a response for the same purpose, and in all respects is fair and without collusion or fraud.

No person, including any member of the Management Council, or any officer, employee, or person whose salary is payable in whole or in part from the treasury of the Management Council, will knowingly be permitted to participate in the review process if they, a family member, or business associate would have any interest in the resulting contracts for supplies, materials, equipment, work, or services that would be prohibited by Ohio ethics laws or laws prohibiting an unlawful interest in a public contract.

Qualifications and Evaluations

Qualified Response Requirements

Vendors that choose not to complete and submit the [RFI ebooks audiobooks video template.xlsx](#) as their response should ensure their response includes the following:

1. A cover document of no more than 10 pages containing executive summary information that describes your company, contact information for the representative of the vendor who is authorized to negotiate and approve an agreement on behalf of the vendor, a description of the contents of the collection(s), and pricing for all components and services.
2. Response to the items noted under “Additional Qualified Vendor Requirements”.
3. A completed “Technology and Instructional Specifications” checklist noting availability of features described in this request for information.
4. An itemized list of materials, including their primary subjects and costs, included in the collection(s).

Additional Qualified Vendor Requirements

1. A list of current Ohio customers including ITC customers, Ohio public and non-public school district customers, and other Ohio K-12 education entities including Educational Service Centers and Ed Techs.
2. A brief description of the vendor’s commercial presence in the continental United States.
3. A brief description of the current US customer footprint.
4. Proof of financial stability of the vendor upon request. Such proof may include bank references, Dunn & Bradstreet ratings, credit report, etc. as necessary to establish financial stability.

Management Council

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FOR eBooks, Audiobooks, and Digital Video for Purchase

System Specifications Checklist

A checklist of Technology and Instructional Specifications is available on the “specs” tab of the [RFI ebooks audiobooks video template.xlsx](#).

Evaluation

The Management Council, or at their discretion, a committee of knowledgeable education professionals selected by the Management Council, will review all responses. The review and analysis of all responses to this request for information will be independent of any written or oral communications received prior to the request for information review process. Therefore, all responses submitted must be conclusive as outlined in this request for information document.