

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

RFP for Biometrics-Based Identity Management System

Project# 13-14

April 23, 2013

To: All Prospective Respondents

From: Houston Community College, Procurement Operations

Subject: Informational Letter # 1 – The following questions were received in Procurement Operations within the time period specified in the solicitation document Request for Proposals (RFP) for a Biometrics-Based Identity Management System (Project# 13-14).

Question # 1:

How many students on an annual basis will be using this technology?

HCC Answer:

Approximately 40,000 unduplicated students at the most.

Question # 2:

When does HCCS want to implement and go-live with the selected solution?

HCC Answer:

This fall- 2013

Question# 3:

How many users and computers are you planning to incorporate?

HCC Answer:

About 40,000 users at the most, however some students have more than one computer and students may also use HCC computer labs. HCC has no control over the number of computers used.

Question # 4:

Can you clarify what is meant by "without the student knowing of the identity verification system being in place in advance"? Do you mean that the system is running and completing an ID check behind the scenes and without student's knowledge, or, the student will not know when they will be challenged to perform an ID check?

"System must be capable of performing periodic and/or on-demand identity verification during the delivery of course content, not just during login, final exams, etc. Please describe how your system achieves this without the student knowing of the identity verification system being in place in advance."

HCC Answer:

We mean that the student will not know in advance when they will be challenged to perform an ID check.

Question # 5:

Will preventing cheating also be an important factor in the selection process? Example, web based proctoring of online exams?

HCC Answer:

Yes, the main goal is to prevent someone other than the enrolled student from participating in the class; The most common example of this is a student asking someone else to take a test for him/her. As for online exam proctoring, it is not required.

Question # 6:

What is the expected launch date to go-live with the selected solution?

HCC Answer:

Fall 2013

Question # 7:

If necessary, when will oral presentations take place?

HCC Answer:

Oral presentations, if needed, will be scheduled after the initial evaluation is conducted. The time frame is approximately around the end of May or the first weeks in June.

Question # 8:

Please confirm if "Moodlerooms Joule" is the only application that requires biometric identity authentication?

HCC Answer:

Moodlerooms Joule is the main application. Within Joule many plugins and/or modules are available. HCC also uses Respondus LockDown Browser for many exams. Explain how your solution works.

Question # 9:

Is "Moodlerooms Joule" a web-based application, if yes, is it accessible via internet from outside the HCC network?

HCC Answer

Yes, the Joule product is accessible via the Internet and is being hosted by Moodlerooms offsite. Students may access Joule on-site or outside the HCC network.

Question # 10:

How does "Moodlerooms Joule" application currently authenticate users?

HCC Answer:

Local database and LDAP

Question # 11:

Does "Moodlerooms Joule" provide API's that we can integrate the biometric solution? If not, are they willing to work with use to create one?

HCC Answer:

Joule is an enhancement to basic Moodie core by Moodlerooms. Moodlerooms considers it proprietary.

Basic Moodie plugins work with it. That is the API. The source code for basic Moodie is available.

HYPERLINK "<http://moodle.org>" <http://moodle.org>} for Plugin API and source code and a lot more.

Note: Moodie version numbers 1.9x (to be retired Jan 2014) and ver. 2.3.x up to mid Summer 2013 then Ver. 2.4.x. HCC will be using two production servers from Summer 2013 to Jan 2014

Note: Because HCC is using the Joule hosted by Moodlerooms, all plugins and code changes must be approved by Moodlerooms before HCC will accept delivery. Phillip Miller is the contact person at Moodlerooms for product development - pmiller@moodlerooms.com

Question # 12:

Are you looking for more complex biometric solutions like face recognition, signature recognition or retina scan?

HCC Answer:

Anything that works, but price is 30 percent of the RFP criteria.

Question # 13:

Is there any component of application development and who is doing that?

HCC Answer:

We do not currently know of any.

Question # 14:

Is this a finger-print identification or a verification project? Does the user need to enter a userID or pin?

HCC Answer:

A: It could be, but price is 30 percent of the RFP criteria.

B: The student will log into Joule with a user ID and PW, but this system should challenge the student at a later time while in the course, like starting or during an exam.

Question # 15:

What is the response time that is expected?

HCC Answer:

From challenge to student's response: 1 to 20 seconds. *Short enough to prevent the person at the computer from getting the real student in to the room to do whatever is needed to validate in time. But long enough so the real student at the computer is not rushed.*

From Student's response to continuation: 5 to 15 seconds. Remember this might be a timed exam.

Question # 16:

Do you have back-end hardware specifications (or do we get to propose what kind of servers and how many we need)?

HCC Answer:

The back end hardware is not specified. Remember the cost of backend hardware does add to the cost of implementation so it has to be considered.

Distance Education at HCC uses Linux and Mysql and other open source software. Requiring Microsoft software (OS, DB or ...) will increase costs of implementation.

Question# 17:

What type of PC's /Laptops do you have?

HCC Answer:

The HCC student computer labs use Dell PCs and some Macs. Students may have almost anything, PCs (XP though 8) or Macs of all ages and brands. The only requirement is that they work with Moodle. Note HCC does not supply students with laptops or workstations to take home. Most students own their laptop or workstation and/or use one at work. With Joule 2.x and up mobile devices may also be used. If your product supports this, it will be a plus.

Question # 18:

Does the school recommend any particular devices for incoming students? Or for students needing to access this online application?

HCC Answer:

We recommend that the student use a computer with up to date browsers installed.

Question # 19:

Would the school be willing to recommend laptops with embedded fingerprint readers?

HCC Answer:

No

Question # 20:

Are there open/documented API's to work with for the online application?

HCC Answer:

Yes, see answer to Question 11.