ACARA seeks expressions of interest (EOI) from suitably qualified and experienced organisations and/or consortia for a School Satisfaction Survey Tool to collect analyse and report on survey responses nationally from students and parents, and school staff.

ACARA may or may not proceed to a Request for Tender for this work. ACARA reserves its right to approach the market in future for one or more of the options set out below, or a different model. Organisations and consortia that submit expressions of interest for this work will be approached in the event that ACARA decides to proceed with this work.

Agency: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)

Closing Date: 5:00 (EST), Friday 2 September 2011

Contact Officers: Alison Jaffee
02 8098 3192
alison.jaffee@acara.edu.au

Lodgement of Response to EOI: procurement@acara.edu.au
INTRODUCTION

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is responsible for the development of rigorous, world class Australian curriculum from Foundation to Year 12 starting with the learning areas of English, mathematics, science and history, and followed by work in the areas of languages, geography and the arts and other learning areas identified in the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (2008).

To complement the development of an Australian curriculum, ACARA is also responsible for developing and administering a national assessment program aligned to the national curriculum that measures students’ progress, and the provision of information, resources, support and guidance to the teaching profession.

ACARA developed and maintains the My School website, www.myschool.edu.au, which provides a profile page for almost 10,000 Australian schools and is populated from a data repository created by ACARA which holds national schools data aimed at supporting school level performance reporting.

ACARA reports to, and is directed by, the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA; shortly to become the Standing Council on Education and Early Childhood)

BACKGROUND

School satisfaction surveys were included among the performance indicators that ministers have agreed to as part of the data to be collected for national school level reporting. Accordingly, ministers agreed to the development of a common national parent/student/staff satisfaction survey that can be administered at the school level.

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) has been requested to investigate the feasibility of a national satisfaction survey of parents, staff and students to enable nationally comparable satisfaction information to be published on the My School website in future.

ACARA will be reporting to ministers in October on options, risks and detailed costing for the delivery of such a national school satisfaction survey tool.

Feedback on potential costs emerging from the EOI process will inform ACARA’s advice to ministers. Subsequent national implementation of a school satisfaction survey will then be subject to ministerial approval. If approved, is anticipated that the inaugural survey for student and parents will be conducted in August 2012.

PURPOSE OF THE SCHOOL SATISFACTION SURVEY TOOL

The purpose of the School Satisfaction Survey Tool is to collect survey responses nationally from students and parents (phase one) and then staff (phase 2). It is anticipated that responses will be collated, analysed and reported through an online system. The system will include comprehensive administrative and metrics functionality to conduct the surveys.

This survey tool should contain a complete survey management system, that is, from survey creation to survey reporting, with appropriate data storage and security.
THE AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL LANDSCAPE

There are approximately 10,000 schools Australia-wide that educate over 3.5 million students.

While some schools provide education from foundation (first year of school) through to year 12, schools are generally classified as either primary schools or secondary/high schools. Depending on the state or territory, primary school may include year 7 and in others, secondary may commence at year 7. School are classified as being in the Government, Independent or Catholic sector.

SURVEY TARGET GROUP

The population being surveyed consists of:

- students from year 5 upwards, in all school sectors
- school parents of students from foundation to Year 12
- potentially staff.

THE SURVEY TOOL

The tool will be web based, platform independent, robust and scalable, secure for both access and data storage, and will have a metrics system to undertake data analysis and generate reports at the school, jurisdiction/sector and national levels.

The survey tool will create and deliver the surveys online (on ACARA’s instructions in regard to survey questions) and allow for collection of both online and hard copy (paper) responses from students, school parents (and subsequently staff) to be integrated into the online component and stored in a central and secure environment. (Paper responses will be collected and scanned and integrated into the tool.)

The tool will manage password and username generation and distribution, and include email functionality.

METHOD OF SURVEY DELIVERY

Three options have been identified for distribution of the surveys for students and parents. In all of these options there may be a need to work closely with states, territories and sectors as some may proceed with an embed/add on to existing survey options. The three options are:

Option 1: online only

Overview of Functionality

ACARA’s requirements for the survey tool are for a system to create, publish, analyse surveys and then maintain the surveys. This will be a web-based system that is platform independent, robust and scalable. The features need to include as a minimum:

- Operate on the most popular web browsers and operating systems.
- W3C compliance.
• It must be intuitive, with clear procedures and options management, and simple to use.
• The survey participant has a private URL to get access to a particular survey. This URL contains a token parameter with a (long enough) value that is a hash which is unique for one participant and one survey.
• Multi-lingual option - accessible in the participant’s preferred language, this is a desirable but not essential feature (ACARA would provide translations).
• Scalable performance: the system must be able to scale to 500 multiple concurrent connections (this may occur after delivery of a number of emails). The tool must be capable of managing 5,000,000 responses annually, spread over 10,000 schools.
• Data independence (both physical and logical) – the data stored must be independent of the Relational Database Management System.
• Upgradable: the system must support upgrade of its database schema.
• User management capacity to include the addition and deletion of users and allocation of roles to users.
• Manage password and username generation and distribution.

The system will have as a minimum:

- Functionality to enter, edit, export/import questions in multiple formats (multiple responses styles), group, delete and categorise items into groups.
- Survey logic including skipping, branching, randomizing and mandatory status of items. Validation and filtering of all fields.
- Online delivery with paginated screens and navigation tools. Capable of delivering to 25,000 survey centres.
- Results analysis in both numerical and tabular form. Tool to have capability to weight, filter, manipulate percentages and absolute values, segmentation and derive values, errors and confidence intervals. Full statistical analysis of results, distribution reports, cross tabulation, expected and indexed values. Full complement of reporting and displaying tools.
- Results can be exported to other software packages for manipulation – Triple S, SPSS SAV format, Office products.
- Secure, robust database storing all responses.
- Provide progress reports of the collection process at school, jurisdiction, system and national level.
- Collate and analyse the response in both tabular and graphic form.
- Complete metrics system reporting on survey progress at unit level and up to administrative (overview) level. Statistical reporting on individual surveys, to survey centres, to state level and nationally. All tables, charts and statistics stored for each survey.
- Complete online help and support.

Software/Hardware specifications

- JavaScript-enabled browser such as Firefox or Internet Explorer (5.5 or later).
- A Pentium processor.
- ISIS compatible scanner.
Option 2: Paper version only

Overview of Functionality

The paper version of the survey form will be one page, double-sided. The process and indicative costs for distribution, collection and scanning of the survey forms will need to be included in the response to the EOI.

The system will have as a minimum:

- Simple Survey Design Wizard: to create the questionnaire and selecting a response scale using plain paper.
- Complete layout manager with customisable logos, fonts, graphics, and branding.
- Scanning functionality to collect and collate all response into recognised formats.
- Results analysis in both numerical and tabular form. Tool to have capability to weight, filter, manipulate percentages and absolute values, segmentation and derive values, errors and confidence intervals. Full statistical analysis of results, distribution reports, cross tabulation, expected and indexed values. Full complement of reporting and displaying tools.
- Results can be exported to other software packages for manipulation – Triple S, SPSS SAV format, Office products.
- Secure, robust database storing all responses.
- Provide progress reports of the completion of surveys at school, jurisdiction, system and national level. Administrative layers/levels that provide survey completion rates for schools and individual survey specific metrics is essential.
- Collate and analyse the response in both tabular and graphic form.
- Complete metrics system reporting on survey progress at unit level and up to administrative (overview) level. Statistical reporting on individual surveys, to survey centres, to state level and nationally. All tables, charts and statistics stored for each survey.

For the both the student and parent survey, the number of printed forms could range from 5 to 100 for up to 10,000 schools.

Option 3: Integrated version

Overview of Functionality

This version will integrate all the features and functionality required in option 1 and 2. This will require a multimodal data collection option to use both paper and web or paper and a handheld device, for example, a smart phone, for surveys and the ability to create multiple versions of the same survey, publish the survey to modality options and analyse them both together.
SUBMISSION

Your response to the EOI must identify which option(s), your organisation would undertake if tasked with this work and provide indicative costs. All options can be included in the response but must be identified in the response separately.

In summary, ACARA is seeking a response to the expression of interest for a School Satisfaction Survey Tool to collect and report on survey responses nationally from students and parents (phase one) and school staff (phase two).

In your response to the Expression of Interest, you will

• Provide indicative costs for a web-based survey only (as per option 1 above), providing an overview of technologies to be employed;

• Provide indicative costs for a paper survey (as per option 2 above), providing an overview of approaches to be adopted, or

• Provide indicative costs for both web-based and paper-based surveys, providing an overview of technologies and approaches to be adopted (as per option 3 above).