Request for Proposals:  
Integrated Library Systems,   
Discovery Platforms, and Related Products

March 7, 2022

Ocean State Libraries (OSL) seeks responses from library vendors who provide products, services, and support for integrated library systems (ILS), discovery platforms, and related products as outlined in this request for proposals (RFP). Respondents are encouraged to read this proposal carefully to understand the requirements for the RFP and the elements of a successful submission.

# Products and Services

1. Integrated library systems.
2. Discovery platforms.
3. Related products, e.g.,
   * Cover images, reviews, read-alikes, and other content enrichment.
   * SMS and telephone notifications.
   * Online library card applications with secure identity and address validation.
   * Other ILS or discovery feature enhancement.

# About Ocean State Libraries

OSL is a nonprofit library consortium in Rhode Island. Its members include all 48 public library systems in the state, one private school library and the Rhode Island Office of Library and Information Services. OSL provides service and support for a shared ILS, digital resources, and technology support to its members. Its current ILS contract ends June 30, 2023.

The current ILS environment of OSL includes:

1. Cloud-hosted Sierra from Innovative Interfaces:
   * 350,000 patron records
   * 1.1 million bibliographic records
   * 3.6 million item records
   * 40,000 volume/holdings records
   * 4.5 million annual circulation transactions
2. Cataloging via OCLC Connexion with early explorations of Baker and Taylor’s BTCat.
3. Syndetics online catalog enrichment from ProQuest.
4. iTiva phone notifications from illion Digital Tech Solutions.
5. SMS notifications from Shoutbomb.
6. Capira mobile app from OCLC.
7. Ebooks, digital audiobooks, and streaming media from OverDrive.
8. A variety of electronic resources made available via AskRI.org as well as those purchased by OSL and individually by libraries.
9. A mix of barcode and RFID item identification and a mix of EM and RFID item security.
10. OSL does not currently have a full discovery platform.

# Timeline

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date | Activity |
| March 7, 2022 | RFP released. |
| March 2022 | Q&A. Email questions are welcome. OSL will also meet with many potential respondents at the Public Library Association Conference. Contact [rpalermo@oslri.net](mailto:rpalermo@oslri.net). |
| April 22, 2022 | Q&A. OSL will publish a summary of all questions asked alongside answers. |
| April 30, 2022 | RFP Responses due to [rpalermo@oslri.net](mailto:rpalermo@oslri.net). |
| June and July 2022 | Presentations. OSL will invite presentations from select respondents. |
| September 16, 2022 | Final decisions. OSL members will vote to select products and services and will direct OSL to enter negotiations. |
| October through June 2023 | Implementation planning and preparation. |
| July 1, 2023 | Go live. |

# OSL Contact

All communications related to this RFP including questions and final responses should be submitted via email to:

Renée Palermo

Systems Director

[rpalermo@oslri.net](mailto:rpalermo@oslri.net)

# Elements of a Successful Response

Respondents are encouraged to address the following items in their responses in the order shown below. Please answer all questions that apply to your products/services and elaborate on all yes/no questions as appropriate.

## 1. Cover Sheet

1. **Types of products included in the response.**
   1. Integrated library system.
   2. Discovery platform.
   3. Related products.
2. **List of products included in the response.**
3. Provide a brief description of product(s) included.
4. **Company information.**
5. Company name, address, phone, and website.
6. Primary contact name, email, and phone.

## 2. General Questions

1. **Company background.**
   1. General background information on company.
   2. History of support for the product(s) included in the RFP response.
2. **Product information.**
   1. Detailed product description(s).
   2. What are the unique or defining features of your product(s) compared to similar products available?
3. **Patron privacy.**
   1. Describe what data is held on library patrons, how this data is kept secure, and what measures are in place to allow patrons to manage their information.
   2. Products selected must conform to R.I. General Law 11-49.3, Rhode Island Identity Theft Protection Act of 2015. Confirm that your product is in compliance with the law and discuss how your company will assist OSL in its compliance – generally and in the event of a breach.
4. **Interoperability.**
   1. Describe the capability and limitations of the product(s) to work seamlessly with 3rd party vendor products via standard protocols, APIs, or other means as applicable.
5. **Service, training, and support.**
   1. What is your structure for account administration, technical support, ongoing product development?
   2. What is the process for submitting and corresponding on helpdesk tickets, the average time for resolution, and the process for escalation?
   3. How will OSL and its members have a voice in ongoing product development?
   4. How will ongoing training be made available to OSL and its members?
   5. What is the process and frequency for routine software releases? Describe the process of quality assurance for new releases.
   6. Describe content or feature enhancements deployed within the past year.
   7. What is your capacity for special projects? Describe a few special projects you have done for other customers?
6. **Equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA).**
   1. Discuss your company’s commitment to EDIA.
   2. Include as an appendix a detailed voluntary product accessibility template (VPAT) that outlines the accessibility of your product(s) and compliance with federal laws and regulations that pertain to accessibility.
   3. Describe how your company addresses accessibility in ongoing product development.
   4. Describe how your product supports patron names that are different from legal names.
   5. Describe how your product will help OSL to reach people who speak languages other than English.
   6. Is a Dyslexia-friendly font available to both staff and patron users of the product?
7. **Security, reliability, resiliency, and responsiveness.**
   1. Describe your IT environment and how you maintain secure, reliable, resilient, and responsive access. If available, please include an SLA as an appendix in your response.
   2. How do you protect and backup systems and customer data?
   3. Do you have a plan to restore service to customers in the event of an outage or cybersecurity incident? How often do you test this plan?
   4. Does your product support multi-factor authentication (MFA) for customer logins?
8. **Marketing.**
   1. Describe your support for custom PR and marketing collateral at implementation.
   2. Describe your support for ongoing PR and marketing collateral.
   3. Describe if and how the product can provide a customized experience for each library system in the consortium. This may include, for example, branding, local library content, or messaging customized for each library.
   4. Is there an interface for children?
   5. Is your product “location-aware” with, for example, the ability to promote locally available items based on IP address or device location services?
9. **References.**
   1. Supply two references for similar organizations with similar implementations of your product(s).
10. **Implementation and ongoing support team appendix.**
    1. Provide detailed information about the staff who will be responsible for providing implementation services and ongoing support, including ongoing product development.
11. **Implementation plan and timeline appendix.**
    1. Outline the steps and timeline to launch your product(s) to achieve a successful transition by July 1, 2023.
12. **Other appendices.**
    1. Respondents may choose to share additional documentation not otherwise outlined in this RFP to help OSL members make the best choice. Brevity is encouraged and appreciated!
13. **Cost proposal appendix.**
    1. Provide a detailed cost proposal for your product(s) or service(s).

## 3. ILS Product Questions

1. **Administration.**
   1. Is the staff interface delivered via desktop software, Web, or both?
   2. Does your product have the capability for related off-site and/or mobile staff transactions via a mobile client or web interface?
   3. Does your product have the capability for bulk updates to patron, bibliographic, holding and item records?
   4. Does your product have the ability to create book carousel widgets for display in the catalog and/or a web page? Is it possible to create carousels that (1) are criteria based with live search results from the catalog and (2) contain hand-picked titles?
   5. What data will and won’t transition to your system from our current ILS?
   6. Does your product have the ability to easily “close” a library location in the event of a building renovation or unexpected event? Describe how staff can defer requests, electronically move and/or extend hold shelf pickup dates, and re-route items currently in-transit to a closed location.
   7. Describe how staff permissions are managed, including granularity of assigning permissions based on staff levels and functional areas.
   8. Are changes to records kept in an audit log with the staff member and time of change? Are there limitations to this logging?
   9. Describe the capabilities of the ILS to provide authentication using the SIP2 standard and/or other means?
   10. Discuss the presence and use of statistical fields, e.g., item audience-level, patron municipality, bibliographic format, etc., that are available in the system. OSL will likely require custom fields and mapping during a transition. Include information about system limitations that you have encountered during other migrations.
2. **Cataloging.**
   1. Describe the process of using Z39.50, custom load tables, API protocols, templates, macros, etc. to create, edit, and delete the following record types:
      1. Bibliographic records
      2. Item records
      3. Acquisition records
      4. Volume/holding records
   2. Are spell-check and find/replace available in records?
   3. Describe the interoperability with cataloging utilities such as OCLC Connexion and Baker and Taylor’s BTCat.
   4. How does your ILS handle skip characters in the 245 field for articles when the material is in a non-English language, e.g., le, la, les, l’ in French?
3. **Circulation.**
   1. Describe the ability to search for patron records. What information is searchable?
   2. Describe the ability to perform offline circulation in the event of an outage.
   3. Describe the process for handling damaged and missing-parts items upon check-in.
   4. Does your product have the ability to define types of items that may be placed on hold but only for local pick-up and not to go in-transit for delivery.
   5. Does your product have the ability to define types of patrons that may place holds on items from their local library but no other libraries?
   6. Describe the capability for patrons to place holds on specific volumes of a given work.
   7. Does your product have an audit trail for patron messages including failed delivery, open rates, etc.?
   8. Describe any feature that enables linked patron records, e.g., for families or caregivers.
   9. Describe holds management in detail including both staff and patron functions such as freezing holds, redirecting pick-up locations, changing pick-up dates, etc.
   10. Describe the ability for staff to place holds on multiple copies of items for library programs.
4. **Public catalog.**
   1. Is the catalog mobile-responsive, allowing access to all features?
   2. Are autocomplete, spelling, or other search suggestions built-in to the search feature?
   3. Discuss the relevance engine in your ILS product along with local customizations that can be made. OSL is interested in relevance that is based upon the elements of the bibliographic record as well as availability in the item record. How can OSL tweak relevancy criteria?
   4. Can a patron search by UPC, ISBN, or ISSN?
   5. How does the catalog respond when a search returns no results or there are misspellings?
   6. Does the system allow for the secure online payment of overdue fines, lost item fees, etc.?
   7. Describe how patrons can share items and lists of items with friends, classrooms, etc.
   8. What browsing features are available to patrons?
5. **Reporting.**
   1. Fully describe the reporting capabilities of your product and how it provides proactive, predictive, responsive, and actionable tools and reports that drive decisions, staff workflows and service functions.
   2. Are there canned reports and/or dashboards?
   3. Can reports be customized?
   4. Can reports be scheduled?
   5. Can staff and libraries easily keep private, share, and copy reports?
   6. Is it possible for OSL to use SQL to query the database and to make updates?

## 4. Discovery Platform Questions

1. What technologies does your product use to search records from the library catalog and other products, e.g., indexing, federated search APIs, screen scraping, etc.? Discuss the implications.
2. Discuss the relevance engine in your discovery product along with local customizations that can be made. How can OSL tweak relevancy criteria based on source, type of content, availability, etc.?
3. If applicable, discuss FRBR and how your product uses FRBR to merge records into an easy-to-use record display for patrons. What are the implications for cataloging? Discuss different examples of implementation in other customers and the impact on the accuracy of search results.
4. How does the product enable patrons to explore content using subject and name headings?
5. Can the discovery platform work with all AskRI.org databases? If not, list the exceptions and the reasons why those products would not be accessible via the discovery product.

## 5. Related Product Questions

1. Discuss the ability to validate identity and address as part of the library card application process.
2. Discuss the ability to provide a list of recommended titles that are similar to a given title displayed. Also, discuss the ability to prioritize available titles in a recommended titles list.
3. Discuss the database coverage for cover images with particular attention to audiovisual content.
4. How can a patron make suggestions for the addition of items to the library’s collections? What is the end-to-end workflow?
5. Does the product allow for patron ratings and reviews? Discuss privacy implications. How are these managed?

## 6. Video Response

Respondents to this RFP are strongly encouraged to submit a video response(s) that addresses the following items as appropriate. These responses are focused on routine activities and mission-critical functionality.

1. **Integrated library systems. (< 75 minutes)**
   1. **Administration.**
      1. Create a user and assign permissions.
      2. Adjust relevancy criteria.
      3. Perform bulk updates on patron, bibliographic and item records in both fixed and variable-length fields.
   2. **Cataloging.**
2. Create a new bibliographic record via Z39.50 and attach an item record.
3. Create a new original bibliographic record and attach an item record.
4. Create a new volume/holding record and add an issue/edition.
5. Create a new original bibliographic record using a template.
6. Load and process a batch of MARC records.
7. Verify headings in a MARC record.
8. Create and use related macros and templates.
   1. **Circulation.**
      1. Create a patron record.
      2. Search for a patron record when the barcode is unavailable.
      3. Check out an item.
      4. Check in an item (with and without a hold).
      5. Check in a damaged item.
      6. Renew an item for a patron.
      7. Place a hold for a patron.
      8. Create and use related macros and templates.
      9. Issue a refund.
   2. **Collection maintenance.**
      1. Generate and print spine labels, individually and in bulk.
   3. **Online documentation.**
      1. Highlight available online documentation and other related helpful tools that are available to library staff.
   4. **Reporting.**
      1. Create and export reports of patron, authority, bibliographic, holding, and item records that highlight available search criteria and export options and that best showcase the features of the reporting tool. Suggested reports include:
         * Bibliographic records with no items attached.
         * Subject authorities with no linked records.
         * Items IN-TRANSIT too long (more than 3 weeks).
         * Items that haven’t circulated in 3+ years.
         * Patrons without activity (to include checkout and third-party authentication) in 3+ years, with no checkouts, and less than $10.00 in fees/fines.
         * Unfilled holds/requests older than 3 months on available items.
         * Link maintenance.
9. **Discovery platform. (< 45 minutes)**
   1. Adjust branding and custom content.
   2. Add electronic resources.
   3. Adjust settings for FRBR.
   4. Adjust settings for relevancy and content source priority.
   5. Add special features such as book carousels or advertisements for library programs.
10. **Related products. (< 30 minutes)**
    1. Provide a brief product overview that highlights important features.

# Response Format

The response to this RFP should be submitted as follows. A link to download the files would be appreciated given the likely large size of the video file.

1. **General Response PDF.**
   1. Answers to questions.
   2. Implementation and ongoing support team appendix.
   3. Implementation plan and timeline appendix.
   4. VPAT appendix.
   5. Service level agreement appendix.
   6. Other appendices.
2. **Cost Proposal PDF.**
3. **Video Response(s).**

# Evaluation

The evaluation will commence in three stages as follows:

* + 1. OSL working groups will review RFP responses as they pertain to their functional areas. OSL has six working groups that are open to all interested staff of OSL and its member libraries. They are:
       - Cataloging.
       - Circulation.
       - eZone (ebooks, digital audiobooks, and streaming media).
       - Marketing and Communications.
       - Reference.
       - Technology.
    2. OSL will request presentations and follow-up from select respondents based on feedback from the working groups.
    3. OSL will connect with customer references for promising responses to the RFP.
    4. OSL will draft a list of recommended products based upon the feedback of the working groups. Recommended products will be shared with all members including written and video responses as well as links to view the public interface at other libraries.
    5. The list of recommended products will be accompanied by a rubric that rates products based upon their responses as follows:
       - 10% Demonstrated ability of the company to provide ongoing support.
       - 10% Compliance with accessibility laws and regulations and ongoing commitment to accessibility.
       - 10% Cybersecurity and system features to ensure patron privacy and system reliability and responsiveness.
       - 10% Feedback from references and other consortium partners.
       - 20% Answers to product specific questions.
       - 20% Video responses.
       - 20% Cost proposal.
    6. OSL member library directors will review complete responses, including pricing, for recommended products along with feedback from working groups, OSL staff, references, and other consortium partners. They will make the final decision on the suite of products that will be selected.

OSL reserves the right to reject any and all bids, or parts thereof, to waive any defects or irregularities in the bids received and to accept the bids or parts thereof deemed to be most favorable to OSL.

OSL reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to award all, part, or none of this contract.