

Expression of Interest (EOI) for Technology Vendors

Project Reference Number: 2025/02/BNHS

Issue Date: March 7, 2025

Submission Deadline: March 25, 2025

1. Introduction

The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), a leading organization in biodiversity research and conservation, is developing a Digital Access Platform to provide tiered access to its extensive collection of biological and zoological specimens, as well as archival materials. This platform will include features such as public access to basic specimen details, exclusive member access to detailed information, and an online library for archival material.

We are seeking Expressions of Interest (EOI) from experienced technology vendors to assist in the design, development, and deployment of this platform. This EOI aims to identify potential partners with the relevant expertise to undertake this project.

2. Objective of this EOI

The purpose of this EOI is to invite technology vendors with proven expertise in data management, analytics, mobile application development, and cloud infrastructure to express their interest in collaborating with BNHS. Selected vendors will be invited to participate in a subsequent Request for Proposal (RFP) process, where detailed project specifications and requirements will be shared.

3. Eligibility Criteria

Interested vendors should demonstrate the following qualifications:

- **Experience:** Proven track record in developing data-driven platforms, especially in the fields of environmental research or geospatial analytics.
- **Technical Expertise:** Competence in technologies such as React.js, Python, Postgres, and cloud infrastructure.
- **Mobile App Development:** Experience in developing cross-platform mobile apps with offline capabilities.
- **Project Management:** Ability to deliver projects using Agile methodologies, with a focus on collaboration and timely delivery.

4. Submission Process

- **Deadline:** Submissions must be sent by March 25, 2025.



- **Submission Format:** Responses should be submitted electronically in PDF format to bnhsit@bnhs.org.
- **Subject Line:** Please include "EOI Submission – Technology Vendor – [Your Company Name]" in the subject line.
- **Questions & Clarifications:** Any queries related to this EOI can be directed to bnhsit@bnhs.org by March 15, 2025.

5. Evaluation Criteria

Submissions will be assessed based on:

- Alignment with BNHS's vision and project objectives.
- Relevant experience and technological capabilities.
- Proposed approach to the project.
- References and case studies of past successful projects.

Shortlisted vendors will be invited to participate in the RFP process, where detailed project requirements will be disclosed.

6. Confidentiality

All information provided as part of the EOI response will be treated as confidential. Vendors are also expected to maintain confidentiality regarding this process and any further communications.

7. Disclaimers

This EOI does not constitute a commitment to proceed with any specific vendor. BNHS reserves the right to modify or cancel this process at any stage. Costs incurred in the preparation of this EOI response are the responsibility of the vendor.

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Director

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Product Note: Virtual Museum for BNHS Conservation Materials

Overview

The BNHS Virtual Museum aims to provide convenient access to the organization's extensive collection of biological and zoological specimens to both the public and members of the BNHS. The platform will consist of tiered access to digitized specimen information, enabling users to explore and learn from BNHS's valuable collection.

Key Features

Tiered Access for Specimen Information:

- **Basic Details Access (Public):** All users will have access to basic information about the specimens, including common name, scientific name, collection date, low-resolution pictures/thumbnails, and locality. This allows for easy searching and browsing of the collection.
- **Detailed Information Access (Members Only):** Members of BNHS will have exclusive access to detailed information about the specimens, such as collector's notes, habitat information, photographs, and associated research data. This provides members with a deeper understanding of the specimens and supports their research and educational endeavors.
- **Payment Gateway Integration:** The platform will include integration with a secure payment gateway to facilitate membership subscriptions and access to higher-tier content. This ensures a seamless and user-friendly process for users to upgrade their access.

Benefits

- **Enhanced Access:** The platform provides enhanced access to BNHS's valuable collection of specimens, allowing researchers, educators, students, and the general public to explore and learn from these resources.
- **Member Engagement:** By offering exclusive access to detailed specimen information to members, the platform encourages membership and fosters a sense of belonging among supporters of BNHS.
- **Knowledge Sharing:** The platform facilitates the sharing of knowledge and research findings, contributing to scientific advancement and conservation efforts.
- **Preservation of Heritage:** By digitizing and making available specimen data, the platform helps preserve BNHS's historical legacy and makes it accessible to future generations.



Implementation

- The platform will be developed using robust and user-friendly technologies, ensuring seamless navigation and functionality for users.
- The frontend will be developed using **React Native**, ensuring a consistent and efficient user experience across platforms. All pages will be designed to be **responsive to mobile browsing**, providing an optimal experience for users on both desktop and mobile devices.
- Implementation will involve digitizing and organizing specimen data, creating user authentication mechanisms for member access, integrating a payment gateway for higher-tier access, and designing an intuitive interface for browsing and searching.
- To the extent possible, we will reuse open-source software rather than build from scratch. We have evaluated **Omeka** as the most-suited backend for the management of datasets. To the extent possible, we will use Omeka's APIs as the CMS for backend storage.

Future Enhancements

- Integration of interactive features, such as discussion forums and user-contributed content, to promote collaboration and knowledge exchange.
- Expansion of the collection through ongoing digitization efforts and acquisitions, enriching the platform's content and value.

Conclusion

The Virtual Museum represents a significant step toward democratizing access to valuable biological and zoological resources. By providing tiered access to digitized specimen information and integrating a payment gateway for higher-tier content, the platform supports research, education, and conservation initiatives while engaging and empowering members and the broader public.

