



Request for Quote / Proposal

Exterior Play Pad Area
Design, Fabrication, & Installation

January 2025

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Background | 3 |
| Mission & Vision | 3 |
| Project Summary & Deliverables | 3 |
| Project Timeline | 4 |
| Goals & Objectives | 4 |
| Design and Project Management Service | 5 |
| Fabrication and Installation Services | 5 |
| Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility | 5 |
| Request for Proposal Process | 6 |
| Proposal Guidelines & Evaluation | 7 |
| Proposer Experience and Qualifications | 7 |
| Information Required | 8 |
| Eligibility Questions & Information | 8 |
| Waiver | 8 |
| Withdrawal of Proposal | 8 |
| Non-Responsive Proposals | 9 |
| Rejection of Proposals | 9 |
| Non-Discrimination | 9 |
| Terms and Conditions | 9 |
| Estimated Budget | 10 |
| Pricing | 10 |

Background

The Connecticut Science Center opened its doors in Hartford, Connecticut, in 2009. Now more than ten years later, the Connecticut Science Center features more than 165 hands-on exhibits, a 3D digital theater, an immersive *Butterfly Encounter*, and outdoor *Science Plaza*, a stunning sixth-floor *Rooftop Garden*, four educational classroom style labs, plus daily LIVE science programs and a range of special events, and endless ways for children, teens, and adults to explore science.

The implications for Connecticut's science education is promising. The Science Center offers exciting tools to help educators and parents bring textbooks to life. Creating unforgettable experiences with science motivates students and visitors of all ages to enthusiastically embrace science at school, at home, and in their communities.

With an attraction of this magnitude, exhibits rivaling the most unique in the world, programs with the potential to become national models, partnerships with a range of educational organizations, and involvement from global business leaders and benefactors, the Science Center is Connecticut's premier destination for informal science learning and is well on its way to becoming the state's foremost Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) resource.

Mission and Vision

The Connecticut Science Center is dedicated to inspiring lifelong learning through interactive and innovative experiences that explore our changing world through science.

We strive to be a pillar of Connecticut and a beacon for science. To accomplish this, we need to be the trusted cultural treasure of Connecticut, an educational destination and a resource that contributes to quality of life, a promoter of Connecticut's culture and standing as a place of innovation, and a generator of opportunity and economic activity.

Our Strategic Vision is rooted in the founding ideal that science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) must be for everyone, on their terms. This begins with simple but powerful concept that STEM must be inviting, accessible, and relevant to the individual for it to be meaningful enough to explore. The Connecticut Science Center, which is expressly created to remove real and perceived barriers that too often discourage the embrace of science, is unrelenting in our commitment to the core strategy of approachability and inspiration. Looking forward, this necessitates new-generation experiences at the Science Center itself, paired integrally with digital tools that deliver extended learning and participation in real science throughout our communities.

Project Summary & Deliverables

The Connecticut Science Center seeks to engage a Contractor/Firm for the design and installation of approximately 2,500 - 3,300 square feet of roof terrace outside the southeast corner of the building for a children's play space. The space will be accessed directly from the museum's "KidSpace" as part of the museum experience and not open to the public. In addition to creating a beautiful and engaging space, the design of the area shall respond to several specific concerns including safety (falls/roof edge), security (restricted access for the general non-paying public), means of egress, acoustics, structural load management imposed on the roof top plaza by play equipment, planting, and guard railings.

Design features will include a sensory garden, play equipment, seating, wall/window graphics, tall railing/wall along the south edge of the roof, and other devices to block sound from adjacent interstates, and updated playground surfaces.

The exterior playscape will be designed to complement the natural world and urban greenway of the existing Plaza. The playground structures will be visually themed with flowers, plants and insects and offer interactive learning through the playscape elements. The goal is to maximize the fencing and glass areas to create placemaking, playability, safety, and inclusivity. The interactives will focus on the physical interactions of crawling, climbing, grabbing, sorting, balance, and light & shadows.

The playscape will provide an environment that is intentionally designed to provide brain-building experiences for children through an array of learning experiences that can be engaged independently by different abilities or purposefully supported by adults.

The Design, Fabrication, and Installation must be in compliance with all State and Federal playground requirements.

Project Timeline

The timeline will be determined in consultation with the selected Contractor with a completion date of April 1, 2026. We will look to the selected Contractor to help build out a detailed conceptual design, schematic design and installation schedule based on the outlined tasks of the project including acoustic fencing, rooftop structural requirements, egress needs, approved surface materials, and drainage requirements.

Goals & Objectives

The Connecticut Science Center is committed to improving learning experiences for young children and families by creating an informal outdoor learning environment that builds on our popular indoor exhibition, *KidSpace*. The project fosters hands-on, experiential learning for our youngest visitors. We intend to create a rich, immersive experience that supports unstructured play, connects young children and their caregivers to the natural world, and inspires the curiosity to explore the world around them, improving their abilities to support play-based learning.

The new outdoor space will be a vibrant, nature-themed environment adjacent to the CSC's existing pollinator gardens. It will serve as a key early childhood educational addition to the CSC, offering interactive features that support free play and fosters STEM learning for young children. This project will enhance CSC's existing visitor experience and advance the institution's strategic goals, broaden learning opportunities for young children, and strengthen the Science Center's contributions to a larger statewide commitment to playful learning.

This space will be directly accessible from the museum's *KidSpace* and enhance the play area for children under 7. This project addresses a critical need in Connecticut's education landscape through effectively integrating play-based learning and early childhood science education. In July 2024, the State of Connecticut passed new legislation mandating play-based learning in pre-K and elementary classrooms, embracing an educational approach long championed The Connecticut Science Center.

Design and Project Management Services

The awarded contractor will provide the following:

- Lead exhibit development and design working sessions with Connecticut Science Center staff and, through regular communications and meetings, to further refine the physical form of the playscape exhibit, content, and the visitor experience.
- Develop and regularly update the playscape and facility cost breakdowns of the total fixed budget, to be used as a decision-making tool.
- Provide copywriting for all playscape graphic panels and labels.
- Maintain a list of image rights, scripts, and component lists.
- Produce preliminary (or, “proof-of-concept”) prototypes of interactive components and visitor experience possibilities, as needed.
- Produce construction drawings, as needed, for installation and fabrication.
- Provide Connecticut Science Center with structural engineering requirements for the installation of a playscape. This includes a rooftop membrane, finished playscape surfaces, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, component installation, lighting, and fire safety systems.
- Produce print-ready graphics for the area as itemized in the approved component list and created with the final agreed upon style and brand templates.
- Specify all equipment, materials, and seating elements to be used in the designated playscape area.

Fabrication and Installation Services

- Produce final prototypes engineered to evaluate feasibility, effectiveness, safety, durability, and/or maintainability of unique playscape elements.
- Procurement and fabrication of all components according to the approved playscape final detail design and meet all State and Federal specifications. Fabrication will also include integration of any graphics, equipment, and hardware for the completion of each element.
- Produce and install finished graphics according to the approved component list and graphic templates.
- Provide staff necessary to complete work, including an onsite Supervisor for oversight of all installations, and coordinate the schedule with Connecticut Science Center’s facilities and design staff members.
- Provide Connecticut Science Center with documentation of all equipment, mechanisms, wiring diagrams, part numbers, colors, materials, etc., used in the playscape.
- Finished areas will include interactive playground components, seating, certified protective surfacing materials appropriate for a playground area, a defined egress pathway, acoustic management, fencing to limit public access, sensory garden area approved for a rooftop plaza, outdoor and component graphics, and copywriting.
- Provide Connecticut Science Center with maintenance manuals for all interactive components.
- Train Connecticut Science Center staff in the routine, preventative maintenance of all components.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility

The Connecticut Science Center is an influential and exemplary leader in creating equitable engagement and access to STEM learning opportunities and STEM careers. We realize this vision with the proficiency and experience of our diverse team, supported by research and insight from our community and partners within the STEM ecosystem. We share the advantages that STEM affords to individuals and communities as beneficiaries.

Request for Quote / Proposal Process

The request for proposal (RFP) process will work as follows:

1. RFQ/P will be posted to the Connecticut Science Center website <https://ctsciencecenter.org/about/rfp/>
2. A copy of the RFQ/P can also be obtained electronically by emailing Patty Faulds, Vice President of Programs & Visitor Experience at pfaulds@ctsciencecenter.org
3. RFQ/P will officially open for bids 12:00pm/Noon/EST on February 4, 2025 and will remain open for bids until 5:00pm/Est on March 18, 2025.
4. Questions about this RFQ/P will be accepted until 12:00pm/Noon/Est on February 24, 2025, and must be submitted in writing to Patty Faulds. All questions and corresponding answers will be posted to the RFQ/P page on the Science Center's website <https://ctsciencecenter.org/about/rfp/> for all potential bidders to review. Responses to all questions will be posted by 3PM on February 26, 2025. The Connecticut Science Center is not responsible for any emails that are rejected, lost or undelivered.
5. Any updates or changes to this RFQ/P will be posted to the RFQ/P page on the Science Center's website. Any potential bidder is responsible for monitoring this page for updates until the proposal deadline.
6. Interested bidders must notify their intent to submit a proposal to Patty Faulds, Vice President of Programs & Visitor Experience at pfaulds@ctsciencecenter.org by February 20, 2025, to schedule a site visit.
7. A pre-proposal site visit will be scheduled individually for all potential bidders to tour the building, ask follow-up questions, or glean more insight into the scope of the project.
8. All bid proposals are due in full by 5:00pm/EST on March 18, 2025. Any proposals received after the deadline will not be considered.
9. After the RFQ/P process closes, the Connecticut Science Center will review all proposals submitted based on the "Proposal Guidelines & Evaluation" criteria outlined in this RFQ/P and will invite selected companies to participate in an interview and presentation. Following the interview/presentation period the Science Center will select a company to proceed with and award the project to.
10. All bids should be sent directly to the contact below either electronically or by mail (or both). If sending a hard-copy proposal, please also include a thumb drive with the electronic copy as well. All bids, regardless of how they are being delivered, must be received by 5:00pm/EST on March 18, 2025. The Connecticut Science Center is not responsible for any mailed or emailed proposals that are rejected, lost, or undelivered.

Patty Faulds
Vice President of Programs & Visitor Experience
Connecticut Science Center
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Hartford, CT 06103
pfaulds@ctsciencecenter.org

Proposal Guidelines & Evaluation

All bid proposals are due in full by 5:00pm/EST on March 4, 2025. Any proposals received after will not be considered. The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the company submitting the proposal. The price you quote should be all inclusive. If your price excludes certain fees or charges, you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.

If the execution of work to be performed by your company requires the hiring of subcontractors, you must clearly state this in your proposal. Sub-contractors must be identified and the work they will perform must be defined. In your proposal, please provide the name and address of any subcontractors. The Science Center will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of subcontractors but does retain the right to refuse the subcontractors you have selected.

Evaluation of Proposals

The Connecticut Science Center will focus its evaluation of all proposals based on the following criteria in addition to other requirements as outlined in this RFQ/P document.

1. Overall proposal suitability: proposed solution(s) must meet the scope, requirements and needs included herein and be presented in a clear and organized manner.
2. Organizational experience: Bidders will be evaluated on their overall experience pertaining to this project's scope.
3. Previous work: Bidders will be evaluated on their knowledge of and demonstrated work experience.
4. Value and Cost: Bidders will be evaluated on the proposed cost of their solution(s) based on the work to be performed in accordance with this project's scope. The lowest bidder may not necessarily prevail as we are ultimately looking for the most qualified bidder that can clearly demonstrate technical ability and previous experience to complete a job of this scope and scale.
5. Technical expertise and experience: Bidders must provide detailed descriptions and documentation of staff technical expertise and experience that directly relates to the scope, requirements, and needs included herein. This includes being able to demonstrate examples of previous experience working with integrated security systems.

Proposer Experience and Qualifications

Each Proposer submitting a proposal should include, but not be limited to, the following information:

- The name of the Proposer and its location
- A brief history of the Proposer and the services offered.
- Must have at least five (5) years' experience in design, fabrication, procurement, and project management.
- Demonstrate technical capabilities and ability to perform required services in a timely manner.
- Illustrate how and when consultation with the Science Center will be done to provide the best implementation process possible.
- The name of at least three (3) clients who may be contacted for references.
- Indicate the present level of professional and general liability or other insurance coverage.
- Include any other information that would aid in the evaluation of the Proposal.

- The Science Center reserves the right to request additional information, which, in its sole opinion, is necessary to assure the Proposer's competence.

Information Required

- Describe your company's background, services, size, and history as these factors are relevant to the work.
- Describe your company's staffing and approach to this project.
- Provide a detailed description of your proposed process for the performance of the services.
- Describe your team's experience performing similar work for large clients.
- Identify the person who will be the lead project manager and primary contact for this project and any other person you identify as "key" participants on the project development team.
- Identify any subcontractors (name and business address) you intend to use for this engagement and describe the services to be performed by each subcontractor.
- Provide at least three (3) client references for whom your company performed similar work as requested by this RFQ/P.

Eligibility Questions & Information Relating to Proposer's Firm

- Within the past three (3) years, have there been any significant developments in your company such as changes in ownership or restructuring? Do you anticipate any significant changes soon? If so, please describe.
- Is there any potential conflict of interest issues posed by your company's performance of the work on behalf of the Connecticut Science Center?
- Has your company or any of your company's partners/employees been disciplined or censured by any regulatory body within the last five (5) years? If so, please describe the relevant facts.
- Within the last five (5) years, has your company, or a partner or employee of the company, been involved in litigation or other legal proceedings relating to the provision of professional services? If so, please provide an explanation and the status or disposition of the matter.
- In the past five (5) years, have any clients terminated their working relationship with your company? If so, please provide a brief statement of reasons.

Waiver

By submitting a proposal, the Proposer agrees to waive any claim it has, or may have, against the Science Center and its agents, representative, or employees, arising out of, or in connection with, the administration, evaluation, or recommendation of any proposal; waiver of any requirements under the proposal document or the contract documents; acceptance or rejection of any proposals; and award of the contract.

Withdrawal of Proposal

A request to withdraw a proposal must be made in writing and filed with the Connecticut Science Center.

Non-Responsive Proposals

Any Proposer that fails to respond to any request for information may be deemed non-responsive and its proposal may not be considered for the award.

Rejection of Proposals

The Connecticut Science Center reserves the right to (a) terminate the proposal process at any time; (b) to reject any or all proposals; and (c) to waive formalities and minor irregularities in the proposals received. The Science Center further reserves the right to conduct a pre-award survey of any Proposer under consideration to confirm any of the information furnished by the Proposer or to require other evidence of managerial, financial, technical, or other capabilities, the positive establishment of which is determined by the Science Center to be necessary for the successful performance of the contract. The Connecticut Science Center further reserves the right to cancel or amend this RFQ/P at any time and will attempt to notify recipients accordingly.

Non-Discrimination

The selected Proposer shall comply, and shall require its agents, employees, directors and/or assigns to comply, with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations in regard to nondiscrimination in employment because of race, creed, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, sex, gender, marital status, age, medical condition, pregnancy, disability, or any other prohibited basis.

Terms and Conditions

The Connecticut Science Center will negotiate contract terms upon selection, and a project will be awarded upon signing of a letter of intent or agreement/contract, which outlines terms, scopes, budget, and other necessary items. The provision of this RFQ/P and the contents of the successful responses are considered available for inclusion in final contractual obligations.

This request for proposal is subject to the rights reserved by the Science Center, included, but not limited to the Science Center's right to:

- Withdraw and/or cancel this RFQ/P at any time before the final award of the contract.
- Request clarification and/or additional information from any or all Proposers.
- Amend any term or requirement of this RFQ/P at any time before the award of a contract (Proposers may amend their Proposals, as directed by the Science Center if the Science Center materially alters or amends the RFQ/P after submission of the Proposals).
- Alter any key dates or deadlines to this RFQ/P.
- Award the work, in whole or in part, to one or more Proposers with or without interviews or negotiations.
- Reject any proposal that does not strictly conform to the requirements of this RFQ/P.
- Conduct an interview with any, all or none of the Proposers to aid the evaluation process.
- Negotiate potential contract terms with any Proposer.

The Connecticut Science Center is not liable or responsible in any way for any expenses incurred in the preparation of a Proposal in response to this RFQ/P.

Estimated Budget

This is a fixed price, lump-sum contract, which will include all reimbursables. The exhibit budget is estimated to be between \$500,000 - \$750,000, which includes design fees, and all costs associated with implementing, fabricating, and installing the design. If the cost to implement the design exceeds this number, the winning exhibit design firm will redesign the exhibit until it comes in at/under budget.

The scope of the work will include: exhibit content development, exhibit design, including preparation all drawings for fabrication, graphic production, and facility impact; engineering costs associated with the design (both for the exhibit elements themselves and also any engineering required for exhibit infrastructure purposes); copy writing, exhibit fabrication, graphic production, signage, lighting, engineering costs associated with the design, shipping costs, installations costs and warranty costs. The fabrication will include a small number of specialty repair parts and specialty consumables (if applicable) for the first year of operation.

If additional work is requested and falls outside the original project scope, include hourly rates to cover specified tasks.

Pricing

Be a lump sum purchase price inclusive of Conceptual Design, Schematic Design, Detail Design, and installation.