REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

Evaluation of the Implementation and Impact of the IB Middle Years ‘Next Chapter’ Programme

PROJECT OVERVIEW

About the International Baccalaureate Organization

The International Baccalaureate (IB) is a non-profit educational foundation, motivated by its mission to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. The organization has built a hard-earned reputation for quality, high standards and pedagogical leadership in the field of international education, encouraging students across the world to become engaged world citizens who are active, compassionate and lifelong learners.

Founded in 1968, the IB currently works with more than 3,968 schools in 144 countries to develop and offer four programs to over a million students aged 3 to 19 years. The organization also provides professional development workshops for more than 70,000 teachers and administrators annually.

Project Background

Over the past decade IB programmes across the world have grown substantially. Current projections estimate 10,000 authorized schools and 2 million IB students by the year 2020. To support the growth and development of the organization’s programmes, the IB Research Department commission studies that seek to identify the impact and value of an IB education. As part of this agenda, the current project will:

i) Examine the implementation of the revised IB Middle Years Programme in IB World Schools to identify success practices and challenges, including in different school and country contexts;

ii) Establish baseline data and relevant performance measures for ongoing monitoring of programme progress and outcomes;

iii) Analyze and synthesize a range of data sources to provide a summative evaluation of programme effects.

Additionally, an important overarching goal for the project is to produce an evaluation framework that could be used as part of the continuous review cycle undertaken by each of the International Baccalaureate’s four education programmes.

This document provides further details about the IB Middle Years ‘Next Chapter’ programme and outlines the study’s goals, budget, and timelines. Vendors should note that in this document terms such as ‘MYP Next Chapter’, ‘revised MYP’, and the acronym ‘MYP NC’, are used interchangeably.
The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme

The IB Middle Years Programme (MYP), for students aged 11 to 16, provides a framework of learning which encourages students to become creative, critical and reflective thinkers. The programme consists of eight subject groups (including languages, humanities, sciences, mathematics) integrated through five interactive areas providing global contexts for learning. The MYP emphasizes intellectual challenge, encouraging students to make connections between their studies in traditional subjects and to the real world. It fosters the development of skills for communication, intercultural understanding and global engagement, qualities that are essential for life in the 21st century. The MYP is designed to accommodate the demands of most national or local curriculums and, like all IB programmes, seeks to support the social, emotional and physical well-being of students. More than 1100 IB World schools globally offer the MYP.

In 2010, the IB reviewed the design of the MYP with the aim of providing a structure that more clearly enables students to be successful in further IB studies while also facilitating schools in combining the MYP with the requirements of national/state systems. The new design, referred to in this RFP as ‘MYP Next Chapter’ (MYP NC), creates an innovative, concept-based and appropriately assessed programme for students that fully reflects the IB principles of teaching and learning. Further information about the major changes introduced by the MYP Next Chapter are outlined in Appendix A. General information about the MYP can be found at https://www.ibo.org/myp/.

PROJECT GOALS

Research Objective

This Request for Proposals document issued jointly by the Singapore and Hague branch offices of the International Baccalaureate invites interested vendors to submit proposals for a complex longitudinal study comprising of:

- A comprehensive multi-year programme evaluation of the revised International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme and,
- The development of a detailed evaluation framework.

Multi-year programme evaluation

The multi-year programme evaluation will consist of three interlinked components: i) an implementation evaluation of the MYP Next Chapter; ii) the establishment of baseline and other measures for continuous programme monitoring, and; iii) a summative evaluation to ascertain if intended programme effects, associated with new and revised aspects of the MYP, have been achieved. Each of these three key components of the project are described below.

1) Implementation Evaluation: Consistent with standard definitions of implementation evaluation (Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman, 2004; Patton, 2008), the study will examine IB processes, and school practices, that facilitate successful implementation of the MYP NC, or which require improvement or further support. Using data collection methods such as those suggested on pages 5-6, this aspect of the project will examine MYP programme documentation, as well as other information and assistance provided to IB World schools, and establish the degree to which these are facilitating the effective implementation of MYP Next Chapter. Close attention will also be given to contextual and other factors that assist or inhibit school receptiveness and
capacity to implement the revised MYP. Moreover, the study will document productive adaptation of the MYP Next Chapter by schools, while also identifying if areas where curriculum fidelity must be maintained are not being implemented in ways that accord with the *MYP: From Principles into Practice* (2014).

The dual aims of this component of the project is to inform the ongoing establishment and improvement of MYP Next Chapter through timely feedback to relevant IB departments, as well as to identify promising practices and key lessons that will support the successful implementation of the MYP Next Chapter in IB World Schools. Vendors should note that attention must be directed to both existing MYP schools that are transitioning to MYP NC and schools that are implementing MYP NC for the first time. Further sampling considerations are noted on page 7.

*Approximate timeframe of this aspect of the study: 2015-2016*

**ii) Baseline Data and Performance Monitoring:** The second major component of the multi-year programme evaluation will establish appropriate instruments to gather baseline and performance data that will be used in the final summative phase of the project. This aspect of the study will also continue the project’s examination of implementation activities and contextual factors that are supporting or hindering outcomes and overall programme effectiveness. More specifically, this component of the project will monitor changes in pedagogical practices and teacher collaboration associated with new MYP requirements and features including (but not limited to): ‘Unit Planning’; ‘Approaches to Teaching; the teaching of ‘Interdisciplinary Units’, and; ‘eAssessment’. Data will also be collected to monitor levels of student engagement in the MYP NC, document changes in academic outcomes linked to revised aspects of the MYP NC, and record the experiences of students when transitioning from the MYP to Diploma Programme. Moreover, the research will examine outcomes stemming from the alignment of assessment criteria across all subject groups and revision of general grade descriptors. As mentioned previously, this second phase of the evaluation study will continue to provide the IB with ongoing information regarding facets of the revised MYP that are supporting or inhibiting implementation effectiveness. Additionally, it is expected that during this stage of the evaluation IB will be provided with an overall picture of implementation progress.

*Approximate timeframe of this aspect of the study: 2015-2017*

**iii) Outcome Evaluation:** The final component of the multi-year programme evaluation will consider the overall outcomes achieved through the International Baccalaureate’s implementation of MYP Next Chapter. It is anticipated that this summative aspect of the study will involve establishing the extent to which MYP schools perceive MYP NC revisions and additions to have been worthwhile changes to the IB Middle Years Programme. For example, this may include the extent to which schools:

- Have found the revised MYP to be less restrictive and more flexible;
- Judge the MYP NC to be more explicit regarding ‘Unit Planning’, ‘Approaches to Teaching and Learning’ and ‘Concept-based teaching’;
- View structural changes in curriculum planning to have enhanced, enabled or inhibited teacher collaboration;
- Have implemented subject group flexibility;
- Value the introduction of e-Assessments and changes to ‘MYP Project’ moderation requirements;
- Indicate that there is a better alignment between the MYP and Diploma Programme;
- Have been able to integrate the MYP framework with local/state/national curriculum;
- Report that there is improved parent understanding of the MYP.
Furthermore, performance measures and data collected in the previous stage of the study will be used to provide an evidence base of programme effects. Vendors should note that it is a specific requirement of this stage of the multi-year programme evaluation that an analysis be undertaken identifying changes in Diploma Programme scores (and for individual Diploma subjects) of former MYP students for cohorts of graduating students in the years 2015 to 2018. As with all components of the multi-year programme evaluation, it is expected that the collection and analysis of data for this aspect of the project will encompass different school and country contexts.

**Approximate timeframe of this aspect of the study: 2017-2018**

**Evaluation framework**

A further goal of this project is to generate an evaluation framework, drawn from the activities, processes and experiences of the MYP NC multi-year programme evaluation, which could be used as a guide for future evaluations of other IB programmes. To develop this tool, the successful vendor will document processes and procedures undertaken during the course of the project and create a manual that summarizes and organizes the different steps and decision points of carrying out implementation/outcome evaluations of International Baccalaureate programmes.

**Research Questions**

Research questions for this project may include but are not limited to the following:

**Programme Implementation**

1. What are school perceptions of the MYP Next Chapter?
   - Are schools generally receptive to the changes that have been introduced to the Middle Years Programme?
   - What is schools’ overall satisfaction with the revised MYP?
2. How have changes in MYP NC affected planning, teaching and assessment practices?
3. What facilitates school success, or acts as stumbling blocks, when implementing the revised MYP?
   - To what extent do schools perceive curriculum materials and related supports provided by the International Baccalaureate to be aiding MYP NC implementation?
     i. Do teachers find MYP NC curriculum materials to be useful and of high quality?
     ii. Do teachers view MYP NC curriculum materials as providing appropriate guidance on what MYP students are expected to know and learn?
   - What activities do schools initiate of their own accord to support MYP NC implementation?
4. Are there additional forms of support, or different ways of assisting schools’ adoption of the MYP NC, that would better facilitate programme implementation?
5. Which school contextual factors appear to have the greatest bearing on implementation success?
6. Are changes or refinements needed to aspects of the MYP Next Chapter to maximize successful programme implementation?

**Baseline Data and Performance Monitoring**

7. To what extent is the MYP NC being embedded successfully in IB World Schools?
   - Is further curriculum support or refinements to the programme needed?
8. To what degree is maturation of the MYP NC in schools maintaining programme fidelity?
   - Are there examples of productive programme adaptation by schools?
   - Are there particular school contexts where maintaining programme fidelity is more difficult to achieve?

9. What evidence is there that modifications and additions to the Middle Years Programme Next Chapter are having desired effects?
   - What are appropriate data sources and instruments to monitor student, teacher and school outcomes attributable to the Middle Years Programme Next Chapter?

10. Are any unanticipated outcomes attributable to changes associated with Middle Years Programme Next Chapter emerging?

**Programme Impact**

11. What outcomes has the Middle Years Programme Next Chapter achieved?
   - Which aspects of the revised MYP have had the greatest impact on students, teachers and schools?

12. Do MYP NC outcomes vary for different schools and groups of students?

13. Which changes to the MYP NC do schools perceive to have been most successful?

**Attention should also be given to:**

14. Are there successful practices and lessons learnt through the project that can inform future evaluations of IB programmes?

**PROJECT DESIGN**

To ensure that all components of the multi-year programme evaluation, and evaluation framework, closely reflect organizational needs it is a mandatory requirement of this project that it is conducted in a highly interactive manner. As such, it is expected that practices and tenets of responsive evaluation approaches such as Patton’s Utilization Focused Evaluation (2008) will be a feature of all aspects of the project.

Regarding the project design, as a general guide, the vendor is expected to employ appropriate mixed-methods approaches to obtain and analyze both quantitative and qualitative data in order to address the study’s key questions in a comprehensive manner. Relevant procedures and methods for this project include:

- Upon project signing early discussion and activities should focus on fully clarifying and documenting the purpose and needs underpinning the evaluation. This early stage should also be used to make clear the roles and responsibilities of the evaluation team and IB staff. Efforts will also be directed to setting out reporting formats and reporting timelines that will have maximal use for the IB and other identified stakeholders.

- In tandem with the above activities, the successful vendor will review relevant MYP documentation and undertake key informant interviews with IB staff to establish specific details regarding the modifications and additions that distinguish the MYP NC from its predecessor programme. This will include setting out the aims and expected outcomes of the MYP NC and involve the collaborative development of a programme logic model of the revised Middle Years Programme. The programme logic model will be developed to ensure there is a shared understanding between the evaluation team and IB regarding the
goals, objectives and underpinning assumptions of the MYP NC, and support the identification of relevant outcome data and measures.

- Next, the implementation evaluation will be undertaken through a combination of both a large-scale survey and data collection that is more idiographic in nature. For example, using a mixed methods explanatory sequential design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007) a school questionnaire administered with MYP coordinators could be used initially to address Research Questions 1 through to 6. Subsequently, qualitative methods such as interviews and focus groups could then be used to more fully interpret survey results, explore school contextual factors in depth, and develop rich descriptions of implementation success factors and area that are proving to be problematic. For instance, survey results that reveal school concerns with a subject group could then be explored further with school-based interviews. Important points to underline for this and all aspects of the project are that IB MYP schools exist in a wide-range of private and public education settings, and different educational and cultural contexts, which must be reflected in data collection, analysis and reporting. Moreover, while a formal report on the implementation evaluation is required for this phase of the study, it is expected that feedback loops will be established by the vendor to ensure that relevant information is continuously provided to IB to maximally support implementation effectiveness.

- The second major phase of the project, involving ‘baseline data collection and performance monitoring’, will consist of data collection that occurs in parallel with the implementation evaluation, and additional activities that take place after the implementation evaluation. Drawing on a review of MYP NC documentation, and the development of a programme logic model in the initial stages of the project, the successful vendor will design original instruments, or select appropriate previously validated questionnaires, to gather baseline data that will facilitate programme monitoring and later provide a comparison for assessing MYP NC impacts. It is envisaged that initial data collection will happen concurrent to the implementation evaluation (and it will be required that the selection of specific programme ‘attributes and effects’ for measurement occurs in consultation with IB). Regarding activities for this phase of the study that will happen after the implementation evaluation, data collection will also be undertaken to ascertain the extent to which embedding and maturation of MYP NC in IB schools is occurring successfully, and to identify if further modifications to MYP Next Chapter are required. Initial monitoring and reporting of changes such as to pedagogical practices and student outcomes will also take place.

- The outcome component of the multi-year evaluation will occur in approximately the fourth year of the project (2018) and combine together data gathered from the previous two phases of the study, and include additional rounds of data collection. For example, in this summative phase of the project an analysis will be undertaken against baseline and other data collected in earlier stages of the project to illuminate changes in schools, and outcomes for teachers and students, which have occurred since the introduction of MYP NC. Furthermore, interviews and surveys with MYP coordinators and Heads of School will be undertaken to establish the overall satisfaction of these key stakeholders with the revised Middle Years Programme. User-focused reports will be submitted by the vendor in a variety of formats that maximize understanding, interpretation and use by a range of identified stakeholders.

- Lastly, the successful vendor will be expected to document the processes, activities and learnings that take place throughout the entire project to develop an evaluation framework tailored specifically for the International Baccalaureate that could be used as part of the continuous review cycle undertaken by each of the IB’s four education programmes. It is stressed that the framework must be designed so that it is accessible and may be readily used by IB staff.
Please note that the vendor is expected to consult with the IB research department in the development of the final evaluation plan and choice of data collection instruments (questionnaires, interview questions etc), as well as the identification of an appropriate sample of IB schools for participation in different aspects of the project. For example, school selection will need to encompass: state supported and independent schools; schools that have been authorized for different time periods, and; schools that also offer the Diploma Programme and those that do not. Readers with access to the internet can click this text to access a search engine to locate MYP schools in all IB regions.

PROJECT BUDGET

The project budget for the proposed study is approximately US $265,000.

KEY PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Key deliverables for this project include:
1. A comprehensive evaluation plan
2. Logical model of the MYP Next Chapter
3. Implementation evaluation report
4. Monitoring and programme performance report
5. Outcome evaluation report
6. Evaluation framework

Detailed timelines for project deliverables will be negotiated with the successful vendor following contract signing and the vendor’s familiarization with the i) MYP NC, and ii) needs and purposes of the multi-year evaluation.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All proposals should include the following:
1. A one-page cover letter describing the vendor’s interest in the project and the vendor’s capacity to undertake the project.
2. Description of the services that the vendor will provide.
3. Evaluation design and methodological approach: Descriptions should detail how the evaluation design and methodological approach (including analysis of resulting data) will address the research questions outlined in the RFP.
4. Key personnel and their qualifications: Concise abstract of experiences that explains the background and expertise the vendor will bring to this project. Include CVs or resumes as attachments.
5. Itemized budget.
6. Indicative timeline of evaluation activities and deliverables.

REVIEW PROCESS & CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated on their methodological rigor, the feasibility of proposed timelines, and the proposed budget. Members of IB’s research team will review proposals, and will seek input from external
research advisors when appropriate. All applicants will be notified of the IB’s decision within a month.

**DEADLINES**

Review of proposals will begin immediately upon receipt. All proposals received on or before **April 30, 2015** will be considered. The project should be completed by **December 2018**.

Please submit proposals by mail or electronically to:
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References


Appendix A

Key changes introduced by the Middle Years Programme ‘Next Chapter’

For institutional, educational and pragmatic reasons, the IB launched a broad review of the MYP in 2010 (Harrison, in press). The MYP ‘Next Chapter project’ resulted in significant changes with respect to the Middle Years Programme’s structure and implementation, curriculum framework and assessment. Major drivers of the review were:

i) A perception in the IB school community that the MYP was difficult and complex to implement (Nicolson and Hannah, 2011, p.35). This was especially true with state sponsored schools which had to contend with local context requirements that did not match easily with the MYP;

ii) Recognition considerations where the MYP programme was under pressure to maintain reliability and manageability in its external assessment model;

iii) The need for developing a programme that fully reflected the IB’s principles of teaching and learning, and was more explicitly integrated within the IB continuum and better supported student transition to the Diploma Programme.

Through cycles of action and reflection, involving the participation of international curriculum experts and MYP practitioners, the following major changes were introduced to the Middle Years Programme:

- The MYP’s concept driven curriculum framework was refined to specify a list of concepts and a two-level structure of conceptual understanding that includes interdisciplinary ‘Key concepts’ and ‘Related concepts’ for selected subjects. MYP ‘Key concepts’ identify certain ideas as having special relevance or resonance for disciplinary subjects.

- The MYP now includes an explicit requirement that collaborative planning and reflection facilitates interdisciplinary learning; In the MYP Guide to school Authorization (International Baccalaureate, 2015) schools must show that they have at least one interdisciplinary unit that includes more than one subject group in each year of the MYP.

- MYP’s former ‘Areas of interaction’ were subsumed within specified ‘Global contexts’ that provide shared starting points for inquiry into what it means to be internationally-minded.

- The MYP’s original ‘fundamental concepts’ were re-cast to more fully reflect the IB’s adoption of the Learner Profile across all programmes in 2006.

- The programme’s inquiry cycle was re-worked to more clearly represent a simpler statement of (social) constructivist learning expressed by the troika of inquiry-action-reflection. This change is intended to make inquiry learning more explicit and reflective of constructivist learning principles.

- The IB’s Approaches to Teaching in Learning (ATL) has become more explicitly incorporated within the MYP. Subsequently, ATL skill categories within the MYP Principles to Practice including Communication, Social, Self-Management, Research, and Thinking are integrated within MYP unit planners. This change has been introduced to provide schools greater pedagogical guidance and to better facilitate the integration of these skills in pedagogical planning and implementation.

- Whereas previously schools were required to offer courses from all eight MYP subject groups, for Years 4-5 schools can now offer six courses consisting of one course from each of the following five subject
groups; Mathematics, Sciences, Language and Literature, Language acquisition and the Humanities. The sixth course can be offered from *either* ‘Arts’, ‘Design’, or ‘Physical and health education’ subject groups.

- Where formerly the MYP’s external assessment was based solely on school-selected, moderated coursework, the MYP Next Chapter now offers a certification via e-assessments for select courses, in addition to re-vamped moderation requirements for the ‘MYP Project’.

*Documents that describe these changes in more detail and provide an implementation timeline for MYP Next Chapter changes can be obtained by contacting the IB. Relevant contact details are provided in this RFP.*
Appendix B

*The following documents may be relevant when developing proposals for the current RFP. Vendors can contact Sarah Manlove ([sarah.manlove@ibo.org](mailto:sarah.manlove@ibo.org)) to request the documents.*


International Baccalaureate. (2014). *The revamped Middle Years Programme, 10 key changes for candidate schools*. International Baccalaureate: Cardiff, Wales.

