

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Solicitation for printing and mail services of Elkhart Public Library Explore Magazine (up to four publications in 2026); and printing of the companion Spanish-language Explora Magazine (up to four publications in 2026)

Date of public notice: Wednesday, Nov. 26, 2025

Date responses due: Monday, Dec. 8, 2025

Date of decision on selected vendor: On or before Thursday, Dec. 18, 2025

I. INTRODUCTION

Elkhart Public Library informs, inspires and empowers our diverse communities. To accomplish this mission, Elkhart Public Library encourages greater awareness and use of services provided through a 48-page quarterly magazine. The publication includes original content, event listings, library information, and more.

Elkhart Public Library is actively soliciting responses to this Request for Proposal (RFP) in accordance with local policy and state law governing expenditures for goods and services provided in accordance with IC 5-22-9. With this open call for proposals, responsive and responsible vendors will be judged by their adherence to the items specified in this document, including the scope of work, the specifications for the services to be provided, and the proposal preparation section. An electronic version of this RFP will be posted on Elkhart Public Library's website, MyEPL.org/RFP.

Neither this RFP nor any response (proposal) submitted hereto are to be construed as Elkhart Public Library's agreement for these printing services.

II. SCOPE OF WORK

Elkhart Public Library intends to select a vendor to satisfy the need for the printing and, as needed, preparation for mailing of eight separate publications in 2026.

Elkhart Public Library welcomes vendor recommendations and/or alternatives that will improve pricing without compromising the quality of the print products produced.

Explore Magazine, with English content, currently is mailed to approximately 27,500 households in a service area defined by the following ZIP codes: 46514, 46516 and 46517. An additional quantity of magazines shall be printed and made available in 100-count boxes to the buyer as specified by the buyer a minimum of six weeks in advance of the expected mail delivery window (generally Jan. 26-Feb. 3; April 26-May 4; July 26-Aug. 3; Oct. 26-Nov. 3).

Explora Magazine, with Spanish content, generally is printed in quantities of 3,500 and made available in 100-count boxes to the buyer (generally Feb. 1, May 1, Aug. 1, Nov. 1).

All artwork and page design will be completed by Elkhart Public Library staff. The selected vendor will receive complete, working printable files (PDF, etc.) adequate for professional-quality print production.

III. SPECIFICATIONS

For the purposes of this RFP, the following specifications are defined to provide a consistent comparison of proposals received.

Explore Magazine printing:

- 48 pages
- Quantity 31,500
- Finished product measures a minimum of 8.375 inches by 10.875 inches
- 60-pound gloss text
- Self covering
- Saddle stitching, meaning two staples at the fold line
- Full color with bleeds

Explora Magazine printing:

- 48 pages per issue
- Quantity 3,500
- Finished product measures a minimum of 8.375 inches by 10.875 inches
- 60-pound gloss text
- Self covering
- Saddle stitching, meaning two staples at the fold line
- Full color with bleeds

Explore Magazine summer issue insert printing:

- 4 additional pages at the center of the May / summer issue
- Quantity: 32,000 (as in: 27,500 inserted / saddle stitched into magazines to be mailed; 4,000 inserted / saddle stitched into magazines for in-person distribution; and an additional 500 separate from magazines intended for hand distribution)
- Finished product does not exceed size of Explore / Explora
- Uncoated card stock
- Full color with bleeds

Explora Magazine summer issue insert printing:

- 4 additional pages at the center of the May / summer issue
- Quantity: 4,000 (as in: 3,500 inserted / saddle stitched into magazines for in-person distribution; and an additional 500 separate from magazines intended for hand distribution)
- Uncoated card stock
- Included within the saddle stitching (not a loose insert)
- Full color with bleeds

Explore Magazine mail preparation services:

- Cost to provide an approved and accurate U.S. Postal Service residential mailing list (CSV or XLS format) for the ZIP codes of 46514, 46516 and 46517; list will be edited by Elkhart Public Library staff in advance of printing production
- Cost for applying, affixing, or printing addresses to 27,500 magazines to be mailed
- Anticipated postage cost based on indicia mark used by printer
- Cost of freight, if any, associated with transport of 27,500 magazines to postal service

IV. VENDOR PROPOSALS

Elkhart Public Library seeks the best information possible from vendors responding to this RFP. To do this, the response to this RFP must be done in up to four sections to be considered fairly:

- Required; Company name, business address, completed W9, administrative contact, sales contact (if different from previous), production contact (if different from previous).
- Required: Vendors are asked to confirm each of the items, line by line, of the five sections contained in III. Specifications above. Following each section, vendors must provide a cost for completing the task (as in, "Explore Magazine printing total cost as specified here: \$X").

- Optional: Vendors are encouraged, but not required, to provide alternatives / options that would enhance consideration of the proposal. These items should not sacrifice the quality of the finished product, but rather introduce lower-cost options for buyer consideration.
- Optional: Vendors are encouraged, but not required, to supply a cover letter stating business principles and standards, introducing production contacts, and/or any other introductory information thought to be beneficial for establishing a buyer-vendor relationship.

Responses to the RFP must be received by 5 p.m. Monday, Dec. 8, 2025, addressed to Trevor Wendzonka, Chief Marketing Officer, trevorw@myepl.org. Mail service will be considered, but the same deadline, 5 p.m. Monday, Dec. 8, 2025, for Elkhart Public Library to receive the proposal shall apply.

V. QUESTION AND INQUIRY PROCESS

All questions and/or inquiries from prospective vendors seeking to clarify this RFP must be submitted in writing by the deadline of **5 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2025**. Questions must be emailed to Trevor Wendzonka, Chief Marketing Officer, trevorw@myepl.org and received by the above time and date to receive response. The questions and answers, with vendor name removed for fairness, will be posted at MyEPL.org/RFP by **10 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 4, 2025**.

If questions and/or inquiries lead to the revision of any part of this RFP, an addendum to the original RFP will be posted at MyEPL.org/RFP by **10 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 4, 2025**.

VI. EVALUATION AND SELCTION PROCESS

A committee of at least three (3) and no more than five (5) representatives of Elkhart Public Library (as in, employees and/or representatives of the Board of Trustees) shall be appointed by the Executive Director to evaluate responses to this RFP.

Criteria to be used in the evaluation process includes (50 points available):

- Thoroughness and adherence to the expectations established in IV. Vendor Proposals. (Pass/Fail)
- Cost (60 points)
- Quality of known work – please provide up to three (3) samples of similar work relevant to the print project expressed herein. (20 points)

- Quality of past work done for Elkhart Public Library (10 points)
- Business address / production facility within Elkhart County (10 points)

Price Importance:

Proposals will be scored by summing the raw scores of each item multiplied by relative weights. Cost will not exceed 60% of the total evaluation. While quality and past performance are key, price will be the deciding factor if scores are within five (5) points. Elkhart Public Library reserves the right to conduct any needed follow-up to receive valuable and relevant information, such as business references, product samples, etc.

All respondents will be notified by email whether the proposal submitted was accepted or declined by 5 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 18, 2025.

VII. PUBLIC RECORDS DISCLAIMER

Elkhart Public Library complies with all aspects of Indiana’s public records laws, generally provided for the purposes of this RFP and its results as I.C. 5-14-3. As such, responses to this RFP should be considered disclosable to the public upon request. Should a responsive vendor feel aspects of its proposal are exempt from public records statutes, a separate letter must be provided by the RFP response deadline specifying the items for which a disclosure exemption is claimed with the applicable Indiana Code citation.

Itemized Proposal Table

Component	Specification Summary	Vendor Confirmation (Y/N)	Proposed Cost	Optional Alternatives / Notes
Explore Magazine Printing	48 pages, Qty 31,500, 8.375" × 10.875", 60# gloss text, saddle stitch, full color w/ bleeds			
Explora Magazine Printing	48 pages, Qty 3,500, same specs as Explore			

Explore Summer Insert	4 pages, Qty 32,000, uncoated card stock, full color w/ bleeds			
Explora Summer Insert	4 pages, Qty 4,000, uncoated card stock, full color w/ bleeds			
Mail Preparation Services	USPS-approved mailing list, address application, postage estimate, freight to USPS			
Total Proposal Cost	Combined total of all components			

Printed Name & Title: _____

Date: _____