



2021 SN7

***Request for Proposal and Bidding
Guidelines for Qualification
Weekend No. 1 to be held either
April 24-25 or May 1-2***

UNITED STATES CHESS FEDERATION

Empower people, enrich lives, and enhance
communities through chess.

Events Department



P.O. BOX 3967
CROSSVILLE, TN 38557
(931) 787-1234
www.uschess.org

Organizational background

The United States Chess Federation (US Chess) is the official, nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organization for chess players and chess supporters of all ages and strengths, from beginners to Grandmasters, in the United States. US Chess is the only official representative of the United States to the World Chess Federation (FIDE).

Our mission is to empower people, enrich lives, and enhance communities through chess. Founded in 1939, US Chess has grown to serve over 80,000 members and 1,500 affiliated chess clubs and organizations today.

Event Details

“SuperNationals” (SN) is the largest over-the-board scholastic tournament in the country. SuperNationals combines the three national championship events: Elementary, Junior High, and High School into one major tournament to complete the scholastic season. Held every four years, SuperNationals would have witnessed its seventh rendition in 2021 with an expected in-person player turnout north of 5,500. Unfortunately, this historic championship was canceled in the interest of player safety due to the current COVID-19 crisis.

US Chess seeks an online platform partner to help offer a rendition of these tournaments that provides the national stage our players are accustomed to and encourages the spirit of togetherness, fun, and competition that our over-the-board events encapsulate. This online version **will** ultimately produce official individual National Champions, across six divisions. Apart from the requirements listed below, the proposal should also detail how the prospective partner intends to elevate the tournament to an experience for the player that is worthy of the title “National Championship.”

SuperNationals presents a unique challenge due to the potentially large player turnout that may occur. As such, US Chess has opted to split the event into two qualification stages and one championship event. The details are as follows:

- **Qualification Weekend 1 (the subject of this RFP)**: K-12 and K-9 sections on April 24-25 or May 1-2. The time control is G/25+5, with play in 8 rounds (4 Saturday 4 Sunday). The round start times advertised by US Chess will allow for a minimum of two hours for each round.
- **Qualification Weekend 2**: K-6, K-5, K-3, and K-1 sections on May 8-9. Time controls, number of rounds and round start times are the same as Weekend 1.

- **Championship Weekend:** The top finishers from all 6 qualification events will play June 12-13. The time control is G/60+10, with play in 6 rounds (3 Saturday 3 Sunday). The start times for each round will allow for a minimum of three and a half hours per round.
- **For All Weekends:** The first round on any day shall not start before 11am ET.

This RFP is for bids for Qualification Weekend 1 ONLY. Prospective partners are invited to submit proposals for one, two or all three of the weekends of the event and should specify in their bids which part of the event they plan to bid for. If a single proposal is submitted for multiple weekends, the proposal should clearly delineate the details for each weekend.

Event Bidding Guidelines

An ideal partner will provide a comprehensive plan to meet the conventions of online play which includes the pairing and conduct of games, player identification and eligibility verification, fair play measures, and child safety during online play.

- The successful bidder will issue event-specific usernames with unique passwords, formatted per US Chess specifications, for all players.
- The successful bidder will demonstrate the ability to accommodate manual (offline migrated) pairings as well as bot pairings. If bot pairings are used, the ability to not pair teammates is preferred but not mandatory.
- The successful bidder will demonstrate ability to accurately gather all results from every game in each round and transmit those to US Chess in a timely fashion.
- The successful bidder will include specifics on load balancing and backup capacity.
- The successful bidder will provide a comprehensive customer support structure for this event, covering pre-event, in-event and post-event server inquiries.
- The successful bidder will assume primary responsibility for any performance failure of the platform that causes damage to the event.

In addition to the above requirements, preference will also be given to proposals that address the following elements:

- A proposal that maintains the traditional style of a Scholastic National Championship: players can compete within their section against similarly aged opponents from around the country
- Clear, concise details as to how fair play will be enforced in an online environment
- A secure plan to verify the identity of players and ensure that they are current US Chess members as well as their section/grade eligibility
- Due to the large number of younger players, **simple, effective onboarding and registration instructions** are an absolute requirement
- The vendor's ability to participate in US Chess's overall event communications strategy such as, but not limited to, US Chess-led efforts to broadcast or record event-specific instructions for all participants
- A safe, kid-friendly and COPPA-compliant online environment

- Provisions for adequate staffing, including at a minimum US Chess certified TDs and live fair play staff to oversee the event in progress
- Clear delineation of duties between bidder and US Chess
- Server capabilities commensurate with the scale of the event
- A warm-up event for players to allow them to acclimate to server, test process
- Live pre, during, and post-tournament support
- US Chess certified NTD must act as chief tournament director
- All staff subject to approval by the US Chess Director of Events prior to the event
- Procedures for handling breaks in connectivity on the part of the player or service provider
- Promotion of the event including, but not limited to, a live stream of the tournament

Finally, bidders for the first Qualification Weekend should consider the following “W1 Specifics:”

- The players will be mostly an older scholastic crowd – K-9 and K-12 age group
- The dates April 24-25 are strongly preferred to avoid year-end activities for older students; May 1-2 are the alternate dates

Who Can Submit a Bid?

Because of the prestige involved in the event and potential attendance, US Chess will only accept bids directly from online platforms and host sites capable of running such a large-scale tournament and whose fair play methodology is endorsed by US Chess.

Should you have questions about whether or not you are eligible to submit a bid or general queries about the bidding process, you may contact US Chess Assistant Director of Events Pete Karagianis at pete.karagianis@uschess.org prior to submission of your bid.

Bidding Process

A bid on a US Chess National Event is a statement that your group wants to work in partnership with US Chess. If your proposal is accepted, then your group will be held accountable for all the things promised in your bid. If your group wishes to make changes to an accepted bid, you will need the prior written permission of the US Chess Director of Events.

The deadline for final bid proposals is 5:00pm Eastern time Wednesday, March 3, 2021. **Final bid proposals should be submitted via email to eventbids@uschess.org ONLY.** Do *NOT* submit copies of your bid to any other email address. The server timestamp on your emailed bid will determine whether it has been received by the deadline. Late bids will NOT be considered.