



MEMORANDUM

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County

DATE: January 27, 2016

SUBJECT: RFQ #16-01: Health Workforce for the Future (HWF) Local 3rd Party Evaluator

SUMMARY OF REQUEST

In October 2015 the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County (WDC) was selected by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as a grant-funded partner in round 2 of its national Health Professions Opportunity Grant (HPOG) initiative. This grant will support the King County Health Workforce for the Future (HWF) project designed to build from lessons learned in the first round of HPOG to enhance educational and employment outcomes in the healthcare field for TANF recipients and other low-income youth and adults. The WDC will award up to \$50,000 to support local 3rd party evaluation activities under the HWF project as described below. The WDC will fund a local 3rd party evaluator via subcontract for an initial time period of March through September 2016, with funding in subsequent years of the 5-year HPOG project contingent on performance and funding availability.

I. PROJECT BACKGROUND & OVERVIEW

The HPOG initiative includes a significant national evaluation effort in which the WDC and its partners will be active participants. In addition to the national evaluation, the WDC is undertaking a local evaluation focused on implementation of the project and analysis of activities that impact participant outcomes. The local evaluation will be well coordinated with national evaluation activities, including efforts to minimize duplication of effort and ensure timely and thorough responses to requests for information from national evaluators.

This project's importance and complexity requires a thorough and ongoing evaluation that is both formative, providing needed information to guide mid-course correction and program development, and summative, documenting the program's success in meeting its goals and informing sustainability and future investments. The local evaluation will track both the implementation of the grant and its outcomes and will use both quantitative and qualitative data. To the extent possible and appropriate, the local

evaluation design for Health Workforce for the Future (HWF) will build from and expand on lessons/learnings documented under both local and national evaluation efforts associated with the WDC's 1st round HPOG project, Health Careers for All (HCA).

The HWF project will use grant funding to work with industry, education, social service, and community partners to: **(1)** develop new approaches to serving diverse learners informed by previous initiatives (including HCA) and brain development/function research; **(2)** enhance/scale strategies that have demonstrated promise but need further development/refinement or are currently limited in scope; and **(3)** sustain and scale models that are proven to be successful.

Labor market data, demographic data, and employer projections provide compelling evidence of a critical need for a more robust pipeline to build the future healthcare workforce in King County. Despite the improving and relatively strong local economy, the King County Executive's Office has documented substantial disparities "by race and by place." King County communities most impacted by this disparity face unemployment rates nearly four times greater than those least impacted, and more than half the population in these adversely impacted communities is living at or near poverty (household income less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level). Individuals in the most impacted communities also experience much worse mental and physical health outcomes, and are among the most racially and linguistically diverse in King County.¹

In short, while participation of the youth and adults living in these communities will be critically important to building the future healthcare workforce in King County, they face some of the greatest barriers to entry. Employer partners indicate that a more diverse health workforce is needed to meet the mental and physical health needs of the increasingly diverse population within King County. However, English language skills, poverty, stress, and health status all impact an individual's ability to access and successfully participate in employment and training. Therefore, many desirable candidates for that future workforce will go untapped without enhanced strategies and infrastructure.

HWF is designed to address these pipeline issues and invest in this infrastructure. Individuals enrolled in HWF will be supported by grant-funded "Navigators" to enroll and participate in training via "slot-in" funded through individual training account (ITA) vouchers and/or customized cohort-based training. It is expected that participants will engage in training at appropriate levels from pre-college or "foundational" level, entry-level, and more advanced levels to prepare them for occupations along targeted training

¹King County Equity and Social Justice Annual Report. November 2014. Retrieved from: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/equity-social-justice.aspx>

pathways. Eligible applicants will be selected to participate in a national evaluation via random assignment², conducted by HWF Navigators.

III. RESPONSE FORMAT

Entities interested in submitting a response to this solicitation should use the following format:

A. Experience & Qualifications

- Please identify the individual(s) who would serve as principal investigator for the work proposed here.
- Please describe your organization/principal investigator's prior grant evaluation experience and specific work with federal grants.
- Please describe organization/principal investigator's interest and experience working with projects focused on low-income populations, diverse learners, and healthcare employment and training.
- Please describe organization/principal investigator's interest and experience working with career pathway initiatives.

B. Proposed Approach

- Given the goals and approach of the HWF project as described above, please outline the local evaluation framework, including key evaluation components/activities, you feel would be appropriate for this project.
- Please describe how you would effectively measure and analyze: program achievements, program process (key components, implementation, strengths, gaps, level of alignment with project goals and projected outcomes, etc.), successes/best practices, challenges, and lessons learned.
- Please provide an approximate timeline of activities you would propose during the first year (approximately March through September 2016) of the 5-year HWF project.
- Please describe examples of products/deliverables that would facilitate dissemination of local evaluation analysis and findings over the course of the 5-year HWF project, to inform both near-term program refinements and longer-term sustainability efforts/future investments.

C. Resumes

- Please include a detailed resume for your proposed principal investigator and any other staff you would allocate to this project

² As a condition of HHS HPOG round 2 funding, all grantees are required to participate in the federal evaluation, including random assignment, which involves entering eligible individuals into a lottery to determine if they will be invited to participate in the program.

D. Cost

- Please provide hourly rate(s) with projected total number of hours required to execute proposed local evaluation work during the first year of the 5-year HWF project (between March and September 2016).

Each response is limited to 5 pages of narrative in 12-point, double-spaced, Times New Roman font using one-inch margins. Tables/charts included in the response, as appropriate and necessary, are exempt from the double-spacing requirement. Please include resume(s) as attachments (resumes do not count toward the page limit).

VII. RATING

Each proposal that is received by the due date and is responsive to this RFQ will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Experience & Qualifications (40%)* Responses will be evaluated on the strength of the organization/principal investigator's experience with similar types of projects.
- Proposed Approach (40%)* Responses will be evaluated on the clarity of the proposed approach and the extent to which it is aligned with the goals and priorities included in this solicitation.
- Cost (20%)* Responses will be reviewed and evaluated in terms of the reasonableness of costs relative to the proposed evaluation activities.

VIII. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposals must be received no later than 6:00 p.m. on February 26, 2016. Please submit your proposal in PDF format, via email to operations@seakingwdc.org, with RFQ 16-01 in the subject line.

Late responses will not be considered. The WDC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to accept or reject any or all items in the proposal, and to award the contract(s) in whole or in part as is deemed to be in the best interests of the WDC. The WDC reserves the right to negotiate with any or all respondents on modifications to proposals and/or integration of components across proposals to achieve maximum efficiency. *Award contingent on available funds.*

The Seattle-King County Workforce Development Council is an equal opportunity employer and provider of employment and training services.

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

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