

**New Hampshire Department of Education  
Bureau of Special Education  
101 Pleasant Street  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301**

**July 16, 2010**

***REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)***

***Independent Organization for Program  
Evaluation and Quality Assurance***

**Deadline for Receipt of Proposals:** 4:00pm, Friday, August 13, 2010

**Proposal Inquiries:** All questions about this Request for Proposals (RFP) should be submitted in writing by e-mail or fax (include your fax number) to:

Barbara Raymond, Administrator Supervisor  
New Hampshire Department of Education  
Bureau of Special Education  
101 Pleasant Street  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301-3860  
e-mail: [braymond@ed.state.nh.us](mailto:braymond@ed.state.nh.us)  
Fax: 603-271-1099

The deadline for receipt of inquiries is 4:00pm, Friday, July 30, 2010. Inquires must begin with the heading "Independent Evaluator RFP Inquiry." The Department of Education (Department) will address written inquiries received by the deadline, and, if they are determined to be vital to the competitive bidding process, a written response will be sent no later than five (5) working days after the deadline to ALL who submitted inquiries. This written response will also be posted on the Department of Education website under this specific RFP at [www.ed.state.nh.us/education/RFP/RFP.htm](http://www.ed.state.nh.us/education/RFP/RFP.htm). In addition, any modifications to the specifications contained in this RFP shall be made only in writing by the Department immediately following the deadline for receipt of inquiries and no requests for information will be entertained or changes made after that date. Verbal agreement or instructions from any source are not authorized or binding on the State of New Hampshire (State).

**Grant Award:** The Department of Education anticipates that this award will be an eight (8) month contract (November 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011) to the successful bidder. Approximately \$60,000.00 to \$75,000.00 will be available for distribution to the grant recipient of this project for a contract period of November 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011, upon Governor and Council approval.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this RFP is to seek proposals to provide the New Hampshire Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education with the services of an Independent Nationally Recognized Organization, in accordance with RSA 186-C:5(IX), to conduct a program evaluation and quality assurance to evaluate the effectiveness of the program approval and monitoring systems, to ensure activities in RSA 186-C:5 are carried out in an efficient manner.

### **1.0 Services to be Provided**

The Project Evaluator will provide the following services as part of this contract:

- 1.1 The Project Evaluator team will be responsible for evaluation of the program approval and monitoring systems, reporting to the Administrator of the Bureau of Special Education. The Project Evaluator will work closely with the contracted vendor for the Bureau of Special Education for the program approval and monitoring systems, and Bureau personnel who have related responsibilities to determine the effectiveness of the program approval and monitoring systems, to ensure that activities in RSA 186-C:5 are carried out in an efficient manner, such as, but not limited to:
  - 1.1.1 The NHDOE's timely identification of district's noncompliance;
  - 1.1.2 The NHDOE's timely verification of district's noncompliance;
  - 1.1.3 The staffing capacity of the NHDOE or its vendor to carry out the activities of RSA 186-C-5 including, but not limited to, managing, analyzing, and verifying data, coordinating and staffing on-site monitoring teams, preparing reports, such as findings of noncompliance and corrective actions, and determining, monitoring, and/or supervising corrective actions and sanctions.
- 1.2 The Project Evaluator team will gather necessary data and conduct formative and summative evaluations of all projects through a systematic investigation as described in a proposal to include at minimum; on-site visits to observe, interview, survey and/or gather data and information about accomplishments, obstacles, impact and recommendations.
- 1.3 The Project Evaluator team will meet regularly with the Administrator of the Bureau of Special Education to coordinate evaluation activities and data requests.
- 1.4 The Project Evaluator team will make evaluation data, analysis and resulting recommendations available to the Commissioner of Education, State Board of Education, the Governor, and the General Court within 90 days of completing the program evaluation in the form of written and oral reports according to a schedule described in a proposal.
- 1.5 The Project Evaluator team will submit monthly invoices and reports that reflect progress in the evaluation visits/reviews of the program approval and monitoring system (progress, obstacles, impact and outcomes).

### **2.0 BIDDER QUALIFICATIONS**

The Project Evaluator team will demonstrate the following qualifications:

- 2.1 Strong background in conducting formative and summative evaluations and experience in the use of appropriate methods and techniques.
- 2.2 Ability to provide sound, reliable and meaningful information to be used in making thoughtful and reasonable recommendations and decisions.
- 2.3 Appreciation for the issues and strategies related to the education of students with disabilities and professional preparation and development.

- 2.4 Working knowledge of the structure and operation of educational organizations at the State and local level and the relationship between the two, especially in New Hampshire.
- 2.5 Sensitivity to the unique context of educational systems across multiple systems and between multiple organizations with multiple partners.
- 2.6 Ability to develop and implement program evaluation incorporating various qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods in New Hampshire schools, Institutions of Higher Education, and other organizations and agencies in an impartial manner.

### **3.0 TERMS & CONDITIONS**

- 3.1 The State shall not be responsible for or pay any costs incurred by the bidder in the preparation of the proposal submitted in response to this RFP.
- 3.2 The Department reserves the right to seek clarification of any information contained in a proposal submitted in response to this RFP.
- 3.3 The Department reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted in response to this RFP. The distribution of this RFP shall not commit the State to issue a contract.
- 3.4 If the Department chooses to award a contract in response to this RFP, the successful bidder shall be notified by letter. The Department shall then develop a contract for approval by Governor and Council. The contract shall incorporate, by reference, all provisions of this RFP and the successful bidder's proposal. In preparing a contract with the successful bidder, the Department reserves the right to clarify any terms and conditions contained in the applicant's proposal.
- 3.5 Public announcements or news releases pertaining to the award of a contract shall not be made without the written permission from the Department of Education.
- 3.6 The State shall not be responsible for any work performed by the successful bidder prior to the effective date of a contract approved by Governor and Council.
- 3.7 All obligations of the State, including the continuance of payments under an approved contract shall be contingent upon the availability and continued appropriation of state, federal, or other funds, and in no event shall the State be liable for any payments in excess of such available appropriated funds. In the event of a reduction or termination of those funds, the State shall have the right to withhold payment until such funds become available, if ever, and shall have the right to terminate or amend the contract immediately upon giving the contractor notice of such termination or amendment.
- 3.8 When delivering services under an approved contract, the contractor shall work under the broad supervision of the Administrator of the Bureau of Special Education or designee.
- 3.9 Unless otherwise deleted or modified by mutual agreement between the State and the contractor, all general provisions contained on page 2 of Form P-37 (see **Attachment A**) shall be incorporated into the contract.
- 3.10 The Department expects to award a contract to the successful Bidder, for a contract period of November 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011, upon approval of Governor and Council, with the option to renew the contract for one additional fiscal year if services are determined to be satisfactory and pending continuation of funds. Unless there is a change in the program requirements and/or services to be delivered, the cost for this contract shall not exceed the amount bid in the response to subsection 5.0 of this RFP.

The successful bidder will be required to provide the Department with the following information (if applicable):

- A recent financial statement.
- Certificate of Existence from the Secretary of State's Office.
- Certificate of Authority authorizing the company to do business with the State of New Hampshire, Department of Education at the time the contract is signed. The Secretary of State's Office, Corporate Division, can be reached by calling (603) 271-3244 or on the web at [www.sos.nh.gov/corporate](http://www.sos.nh.gov/corporate).

3.11 Indirect cost may not exceed (8%) of the direct costs of this project.

#### **4.0 Audit**

Sec. 80.26 Non-Federal audit.

- (a) Basic Rule. Grantees and subgrantees are responsible for obtaining audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (31 U.S.C. 7501-7507) and revised OMB Circular A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations." The audits shall be made by an independent auditor in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards covering financial audits.
- (b) Subgrantees. State or local governments, as those terms are defined for purposes of the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996, that provide Federal awards to a subgrantee, which expends \$300,000 or more (or other amount as specified by OMB) in Federal awards in fiscal year, shall:
  - (1) Determine whether State or local subgrantees have met the audit requirements of the Act and whether subgrantees covered by OMB Circular A-110, "Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit organizations," have met the audit requirements of the Act. Commercial contractors (private for-profit and private and governmental organizations) providing goods and services to State and local governments are not required to have a single audit performed. State and local governments should use their own procedures to ensure that the contractor has complied with laws and regulations affecting the expenditures of Federal funds.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING THE AFOREMENTIONED CIRCULARS, GO TO  
[www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/index.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/index.html)

#### **4.1 Debarment and Suspension**

##### **CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, INELIGIBILITY AND VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION**

The bidder/offeror certifies, by submission of this proposal or acceptance of this contract, that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency. It further agrees by submitting this proposal that it will include this clause without modification in all lower tier transactions, solicitations, proposals, contracts, and subcontracts. Where the bidder/offeror/contractor or any lower tier participant is unable to certify to this statement, it shall attach an explanation to this solicitation/proposal.

#### **4.2 Insurance**

**Attachment A**, page three and four of Form P-37, section 14, specifies the amount of comprehensive general liability and fire insurance. Upon mutual agreement of both parties, this section MAY [in full or in part] be waived if so indicated in the RFP. If the general liability or fire insurance is waived, the Department may still require that the contractor provide proof of automobile insurance.

#### 4.3 Copyrights

The Department reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, for Department of Education purposes:

- (a) the copyright in any work developed under a grant, subgrant, or contract under a grant or subgrant; and
- (b) any rights of copyright to which a grantee, subgrantee or a contractor purchases ownership with grant support.

### 5.0 LIMITATIONS ON AMOUNT AND CONTRACT PERIOD

- 5.1 The amount of the award will be based on the scope of the proposed evaluation plan and activities, and the proposed evaluation instruments and protocols.
- 5.2 It is expected that the typical proposal will cover activities to be conducted during the initial phase of this contract, approximately \$60,000.00 to \$75,000.00 will be available for distribution to the grant recipient of this project for a contract period of November 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011, upon Governor and Council approval.

### 6.0 BID PROCEDURES

- 6.1 An original and four (4) identical copies of a formal proposal must be sent or delivered to the Department of Education. The maximum number of points to be awarded for each of the proposal elements is shown in parentheses. Each proposal shall include:
  - 6.1.1 A resume and detailed statement of the bidder's professional qualifications and experience, including references (20 points).
  - 6.1.2 A statement describing the bidder's interest in this project and the relevance of this contract to the bidder's professional activities (15 points).
  - 6.1.3. A narrative, which addresses the responsibilities as outlined in Section 1.0 of this RFP, describing the bidder's related experience, insights and proposed evaluation approach including evaluation tools, methods and strategies (35 points).
  - 6.1.4 A detailed budget and justification related to the bidder's services in the capacity described in the above Section 2.0.
    - 6.1.4.1 Cost factor (25 points).
    - 6.1.4.2 Adequate resources to provide required services that are detailed in the budget (5 points).
- 6.2 In order to provide bidders with the opportunity to present a response to this RFP which best presents their credentials and approach, no page limit has been established for the proposal, however, the bidder's ability to develop a concise proposal which responds to all of the elements listed in 1.0 above will be considered in rating the proposal. Supplementary materials may be included as part of the submittal. These should either explain or expand upon information presented in the formal proposal. All supplementary materials must be clearly identified (e.g. Appendix A, B, etc.) and cross-referenced in the text of the formal proposal.
- 6.3 Qualified bidders may be asked to provide the Department with additional written materials or documentation of qualifications, and may be asked to meet with the proposal evaluation team to discuss their proposal.

- 6.4 Each bidder shall submit, along with the formal proposal, a completed/signed "Alternate W-9 Form" (see **Attachment B**).
- 6.5 An original and four (4) identical copies of a formal proposal shall be submitted by 4:00pm, Friday, August 13, 2010 to:

Barbara Raymond, Administrator Supervisor  
New Hampshire Department of Education  
Bureau of Special Education  
101 Pleasant Street  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301-3860

## **7.0 EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS**

- 7.1 All proposals will be reviewed and rated by an evaluation team. Each proposal will be rated in accordance with the requirements established in this RFP. The maximum numbers of points for each of the required elements are identified in subsection 6.1 above. The Department shall be under no obligation to contact bidders for clarification of their proposals, but it shall reserve the right to do so at any time prior to the award of a contract.
- 7.2 If the Department chooses to award a contract relative to this RFP, it shall be to the responsive and responsible bidder that receives the highest total rating as a result of the proposal evaluation process.
- 7.3 The evaluation team may request that semi-finalists present a live presentation to the team of their proposal. The evaluation team will score these presentations at that time in order to determine the successful applicant. Evaluation and scoring criteria will be provided to each semi-finalist prior to their presentation.
- 7.4 If the department chooses to award contract(s) relative to this RFP, it shall be to the responsive and responsible bidders that receives the highest total rating as a result of the proposal evaluation and interview process.

Enclosures:

Chapter 186-C Special Education-Section 186-C:5

Attachment A: P-37 Contract Form

Attachment B: ALT W-9 Form