



United States Department of the Interior

INTERIOR BUSINESS CENTER

Washington, DC 20240

THIS IS A SOURCES SOUGHT NOTICE ONLY. This Sources Sought Notice is a means of obtaining feedback from contractors concerning the requirements stated below, under Description of the Requirement, which is part of the acquisition planning and market research phase for this procurement. The industry input received from this Sources Sought Notice will aid in determining available sources that can meet the Government's below stated requirements and may be considered in the preparation of the official solicitation package. **This Sources Sought Notice does not constitute a solicitation.**

The anticipated NAICS for this requirement is 541611 "Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services"; PSC R410 "Support – Professional: Program Evaluation/Review/Development". If contractors believe a more appropriate NAICS applies to the requirement as detailed below, include the feedback in your response.

SUBJECT: Sources Sought Notice (DOIDFBO200023) for the Health and Human Services (HHS) Technical Assistance (TA) on Evaluation for Discretionary Grant Programs

INTRODUCTION:

The Department of Interior (DOI), Interior Business Center (IBC), Acquisition Service Directorate (AQD), is conducting this Sources Sought to identify contractors on behalf of the Health and Human Services (HHS) Administration for Children and Families (ACF) who possess the capabilities to provide services as specified herein and to determine their availability and capability. AQD is a federal franchise fund contracting office within DOI and is authorized to provide acquisition support to federal agencies and the Department of Defense (DoD) under the authority of the Government Management Reform Act (GMRA).

If your firm may be interested in this requirement and has performed similar projects, we request the information shown below. All business sizes under the applicable NAICS should consider submitting a response to this notice.

As permitted by Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 10, this is a market research tool being utilized for informational and planning purposes. Your responses will assist the Government in the development of its acquisition strategy for a possible Request for Quote (RFQ), to be issued at a later date, and in determining whether there are contractors capable of completing the requirements on General Services Administration (GSA) Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) Professional Services – Business Administration Services, Category 541611 – "Management and Financial Consulting, Acquisition and Grants Management Support, and Business Program and Project Management Services".

This notice shall not be construed as an RFQ or as any commitment or obligation on the part of the Government to issue a solicitation. The Government does not intend to award a contract based on this request, so quotes will not be considered. No reimbursement will be made for any costs associated with providing information in response to this synopsis or any follow-up information requests.

Response is strictly voluntary – it is not mandatory to submit a response to this notice to participate in any formal RFQ process that may take place in the future. However, it should be noted that information gathered through this notice may significantly influence our acquisition strategy. All interested parties will be required to respond separately to any solicitations posted as a result of this Sources Sought Notice.

DESCRIPTION OF THE REQUIREMENT:

The anticipated period of performance for this HHS Technical Assistance (TA) on Evaluation for Discretionary Grant Programs effort is 1 (one) base year plus 4 (four) option years.

Background:

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is the United States government's principal agency for protecting the health of all Americans and providing essential human services, especially for those who are least able to help themselves. Within HHS, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is the agency responsible for Federal programs that promote the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals, and communities. The Administration on Children, Youth, and Families (ACYF) administers major federal programs that support: social services that promote positive youth familial development and protective services and shelter for children and youth in at-risk situations.

Within ACYF, CB plans, manages, coordinates, and supports child abuse and neglect prevention and child welfare services programs and promotes continuous improvement in the delivery of child welfare services. CB programs are designed to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of all children. CB programs promote the strengthening of the family unit in order to help prevent the unnecessary separation of children from their families and support reunification of families when appropriate after separation has occurred and to help children who are at-risk of entering foster care to reconnect with family members.

More information about CB programs is available at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb>.

Purpose and Objectives:

The contractor is expected to assume the provision of evaluation TA to all the currently funded CB discretionary grantees and to all grantees that will be funded during the next five years unless evaluation TA is provided by other means, as determined in consultation with the Federal Project Officer (FPO) for these grants and the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) for this contract. Some of the grantees will be ending the projects during this time and others will be initiated as applications are funded in response to new Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs).

CB publishes announcements for discretionary grant funding on an annual basis, subject to the availability of funds. The topics, or priority areas, that are published change from year to year. The Bureau typically funds a cluster of grants under any single priority area for a period of three to five years. Information on CB Discretionary Grant Programs, including a list of discretionary grant awards, is available at: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/grants/discretionary-grant>.

Project Requirements

CB has a commitment to knowledge development, management, and dissemination for the benefit of the child welfare field. This contractual effort with discretionary grantees will support CB's objective to identify gaps in knowledge in the field and address these, with the goal of building evidence of what works in child welfare. TA provided under this contract will assist CB in maximizing the development and dissemination of evidence-based/informed knowledge gained from demonstration projects, and will support the integration of knowledge developed by grantees into practice, policy, and future discretionary activities, in order to improve or enhance child welfare practices.

Evaluation TA will include, but is not limited to, providing assistance in assessing the need to revise the logic model and doing so; selecting project outcomes and measures; addressing IRB requirements;

training staff in collecting data and understanding the usefulness of the data; developing common data elements across the cluster where appropriate; modifying programming in accordance with evaluation findings, as appropriate; and reporting evaluation findings.

In providing evaluation TA, the contractor will assist grantees in attaining improved project outcomes, strengthening evaluation findings, and determining how findings and lessons learned can be used to improve practice and support sustainability. The contractor will interpret project evaluation results and grantee implementation experiences, both for the use of grantees and to assist CB in identifying strategies that are most successful in addressing issues of importance to the child welfare field.

There are several concurrent ways that this TA effort will be conducted.

- At the beginning of each fiscal year, the contractor shall develop an annual TA delivery plan and staffing pattern, with the agreement of the FPOs and approval of the COR.
- At the start of each new fiscal/program year, the contractor shall initiate plans for evaluation TA activities for *newly-funded* grantees and update plans for TA for *continuing* grantees.
- The contractor will become familiar with the specific approach of each of the funded projects to receive TA, including the design and plan for the local evaluation. Throughout the Project Period, the contractor will stay current with any changes of grantee plans, as well as with progress toward project goals, and any barriers or challenges encountered by the grantees during project implementation and conduct of the local evaluation.
- The contractor shall have regular communication with the FPOs regarding grantees' evaluation activities, any significant changes in their plans, and project findings.
- TA will occur through multiple mechanisms, employed concurrently: via email, telephone, conference calls, webinars or other electronic means, in-person, during kick-off meetings and annual grantees meetings, and during a limited number of on-site visits to address severe problems unable to be resolved or alleviated by TA delivered by other means.
- It is anticipated that the contractor will be providing TA to approximately 50 grantees in each of the five fiscal years of the contract.
- Throughout the grant project period, the contractor is expected to provide ongoing TA, which will address the identified needs to respond to common evaluation challenges. Ongoing TA will include things such as producing updated information about projects and clusters in Grantee Profiles, Cluster Summaries, and reports, which describe the design and conduct of local evaluations, and the characteristics and effectiveness of project implementation.
- TA will be provided via the *development of new, and the adaptation of existing, tools and products*, which are designed to support rigorous evaluation and effective implementation by demonstration projects and to synthesize findings and lessons learned of groups of similar discretionary grants. Products will include written syntheses, briefs, and other resources and tools.
- TA will be targeted to *individual grantees* to strengthen their local evaluation so that their projects will yield more meaningful information and higher levels of evidence on effective, new or innovative approaches or models that would enhance child welfare practice;
- TA will be delivered to *groups of grantees* by identifying and examining program commonalities within and across grant clusters. Where feasible and desired by CB, the contractor will develop common frameworks for cross-site data collection and reporting by grantees in specific clusters, in order to create the potential to increase the strength of grantee findings through synthesis.
- As clusters of grantees conclude their project periods, the contractor is expected to produce a summary of the evaluation findings and implementation lessons learned by the cluster, to be disseminated at the direction of CB. If a grants cluster has been designated to collect common data elements, the contractor shall also prepare a summary of the cluster's overall accomplishments on the common data elements or cross-site evaluation, where applicable.

- The contractor will work closely with the COR, FPOs, and other CB staff to plan and carry out both *targeted and general dissemination* of the new knowledge developed by grantees.

Core Tasks

Core Tasks are activities in which the contractor will engage throughout the contract period. Many Core Tasks are expected to overlap throughout the project period, while other activities may recur cyclically. For example, the contractor will begin assessing TA needs and providing “start-up” TA for new grantees at the beginning of each fiscal year of the contract, while simultaneously providing ongoing TA for continuing grantees, which is relevant to their stage of project implementation.

Furthermore, the contractor is responsible for reviewing semi-annual reports and materials pertaining to local grantee evaluations; identifying, collecting, developing and/or adapting products, tools, and resources to meet TA needs of discretionary grantees; delivering evaluation TA at Grantees Meetings and on-site as needed; conducting cluster-level knowledge dissemination and transfer activities related to demonstration project evaluation findings and implementation lessons learned; and conducting cross-site evaluation activities as directed by CB. Other Core Tasks for which the contractor is responsible include project management activities; and communicating project progress to CB in reports and meetings.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:

All interested contractors certified small business concerns (please specify which type) or other than small business concerns, who believe they can meet the requirements described in this Sources Sought Notice are invited to submit, in writing, complete information describing their ability to provide the deliverables under this effort.

All responses shall be submitted via e-mail on or before **10:00 AM Eastern Time (EST), May 20, 2020**, to the Contracting Officer, Ms. Samantha Hartman (e-mail: Samantha_Hartman@ibc.doi.gov), and must include the information requested below. Responses should be submitted in either Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format. Late responses will not be accepted. This is strictly market research and the Government will not entertain any questions.

Respondents will not be notified of the results of the evaluation. We appreciate your interest and thank you in advance for responding to the Sources Sought Notice.

Qualified firms shall submit a statement of interest on company letterhead demonstrating the firm’s qualifications to perform the defined work. Responses must be complete and sufficiently detailed to address the specific information. The documentation shall address, at a minimum, the following:

A. Company Profile, to include:

1. Company name and address;
2. Affiliate information, parent company, joint venture partners, and potential teaming partners;
3. Year the firm was established and number of employees;
4. Point of contact (name, title, phone number, and e-mail address);
5. DUNS numbers and CAGE Code, as registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) at <https://www.sam.gov/>;
6. Business designation/status (must correlate with SAM registration) under the applicable NAICS:

_____ Small business _____ HUBZone _____ WOSB

_____ 8(a) _____ VOSB _____ SDVOSB
_____ Small Disadvantaged Business
_____ Other than Small Business

B. Documentation of firm's ability/experience:

1. Staff expertise, including their availability, experience, and formal and other training;
2. Current in-house capability and capacity to perform the work;
3. Evidence of extensive relationships with the child welfare, research and evaluation communities;
4. Prior completed projects of similar nature;
5. Corporate experience and management capability; and
6. Examples of prior completed Government contracts, references, and other related information.

Additionally, for each project listed of same or similar nature, provide the following:

1. Brief description of the work performed;
2. Project title;
3. Dollar value;
4. Location;
5. Customer's point of contact name and phone number.

C. Demonstrate an understanding of current child welfare evaluation technical assistance practices (see Project Requirements, above);

D. Responses shall also indicate the likelihood of responding to an actual solicitation, if an actual solicitation is issued, using the following:

- ☐ 75% to 100%
☐ 50% to 74%
☐ 25% to 49%
☐ Less than 25%

E. The anticipated NAICS for this requirement is 541611 "Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services"; PSC R410 "Support – Professional: Program Evaluation/Review/Development". If contractors believe a more appropriate NAICS applies to the requirement as detailed herein, include the feedback in your response.

F. Additional comments: