

LEGAL NOTICE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR SERVICES OEC-QIS-024

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood Quality Improvement Supports

**ISSUE DATE:
October 29, 2019**

The State of Connecticut, Office of Early Childhood (OEC) is seeking proposals from private and public organizations to design, deliver and or implement OEC technical assistance activities. The scope of work includes reaching personnel working with young children in settings including family childcare, and center- and school-based programs. Technical assistance activities may include training, coaching, and consultation utilizing best practice strategies for delivering assistance that provides not only information but also enhances early care and education practice.

The request for proposals is available from the following sources:

- Online at http://www.biznet.ct.gov/SCP_Search/Default.aspx?AccLast=2
- Online at www.ct.gov/oec ; or
- From the Official Agency Contact:

Deborah Adams
Office of Early Childhood
Mail: 450 Columbus Blvd, Suite 304
Hartford, Connecticut 06103
E-mail: OEC.RFP@CT.GOV
Telephone: 860-500-4535

A bidder's conference will be held on **November 13, 2019 at the Office of Early Childhood, 450 Columbus Blvd., Hartford. Registration for this event must be completed at: Eventbrite** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/oec-bidders-conference-for-oec-qis-024-tickets-77496284473> Or Search Eventbrite.com for OEC Bidders Conference OEC-QIS-024

The due date for proposals is **1:00 PM on Wednesday, December 11, 2019**

Please direct all questions to the Official Agency Contact.

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**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) OEC- QIS -024
THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD (OEC)**

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

I. A. INTRODUCTION

The OEC Quality Improvement and Early Care and Education Division funds settings that provide early care and education services including settings that accept subsidy (Care for Kids) funding as well as technical assistance opportunities to support these settings. Funds provided through this proposal establish foundational aspects of a professional development system, and provide supports to enable programs and individuals to attain higher levels of qualifications, meet state and federal requirements, and provide high quality care to support children's development.

OEC is authorized in accordance with Section 10-500(b) of the Connecticut General Statutes to provide technical assistance to providers of early care and education programs and services. Support for programs may include licensing attainment and improving program quality; maintaining an accreditation facilitation initiative to assist early childhood care and education programs and service providers in achieving national standards and program improvement; and ensuring a coordinated and comprehensive state-wide system of professional development for providers and staff of early care and education and child development programs and services. The requested services will be awarded through a competitive procurement process and funded by State and Federal dollars. OEC anticipates making up to 16 awards for technical assistance and quality improvement services.

Commodity Codes. The following commodity code should be used when posting the RFP on the State Contracting Portal.

0600 Services (Professional, Support, Consulting and Misc. Services)

I. B. ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS / DEFINITIONS

OEC or Department	Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
Business Days	Days of the work week Monday through Friday excluding state holidays
Calendar Days	Inclusive of all days of the week Sunday through Saturday and state holidays
CCDF	Child Care Development Fund
CFDA	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance
C.G.S.	Connecticut General Statutes
CHRO	Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities
Contract	A legally executed agreement between the Contractor and the OEC which is also referred to as a Personal Service Agreement or an Agreement
Contractor	An entity that is awarded a contract as a result of this RFP
CT	Connecticut
Cultural Diversity	Differences in race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, sexual identity, socioeconomic status, physical ability, language beliefs, values, behavior patterns, or customs among various groups within a community, organization, or nation
DAS	CT Department of Administrative Services
DUNS	Data Universal Numbering System
FOIA	CT Freedom of Information Act
IRS	Federal Internal Revenue Service

LOI	Letter of Intent
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
OAG	CT Office of the Attorney General
OPM	CT Office of Policy and Management
OSC	Office of the State Comptroller
PA	CT Public Act
POS	Purchase of Service
Prospective Respondent	An entity with a legal presence in Connecticut or Connecticut municipality that may submit a proposal to OEC in response to this RFP, but has not yet done so
Respondent	Entity responding to this RFP
RFP	Request for Proposals
SAM	System for Award Management
SEEC	CT State Elections Enforcement Commission
Setting	Refers to settings where young children are serviced; such as, family child-care, center- and school-based programs
Subcontractor	An individual (other than an employee of the contractor) or business entity hired by the entity contracting with OEC as a result of this RFP to provide specific services, and who will be paid with contract funds to provide such services
Technical Assistance	The provision of targeted and customized supports by a professional(s) with subject matter and adult learning knowledge and skills needed to develop or strengthen processes, knowledge application, or implementation of services by recipients (NAEYC & NACCRRRA, 2011). Technical assistance includes roles

such as coach, consultant, mentor, and trainer (inclusive of higher education faculty). CT Core Knowledge and Competencies for Technical Assistance Providers offers more information related to technical assistance

https://www.ct.gov/oec/lib/oec/final_ct_ta_ckcs.doc.pdf

U.S.

United States

Year

State Fiscal Year – July 1 through June 30

Young Children

Children ages 0-5

I. C. INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Official Contact** - The individual below is the Official Contact for purposes of this RFP. The Official Contact is the only authorized contact for this procurement and, as such, handles all related communications of the RFP on behalf of OEC. Respondents, prospective Respondents, and other interested parties are advised that any communication with any other Department employee(s) (including appointed officials) or personnel under contract to OEC about this RFP is strictly prohibited. Respondents or prospective Respondents who violate this instruction will be disqualified from further consideration.

Deborah Adams
Office of Early Childhood
450 Columbus Blvd, Suite 304
Hartford, Connecticut 06103
TELEPHONE: (860) 500-4535
E-MAIL: OEC.RFP@CT.GOV

Respondents and prospective Respondents must ensure that e-mail screening software (if used) recognizes and accepts e-mails from the Official Contact.

OEC reserves the right to appoint an alternate Official Contact if necessary. A formal RFP amendment will be issued to provide contact information for the alternate Official Agency Contact. Respondents will be required to limit their contact regarding the RFP to the person named therein. The RFP amendment will be posted on the State Contracting Portal at http://www.biznet.ct.gov/SCP_Search/Default.aspx?AccLast=2 and www.ct.gov/oec

2. **State Contracting Portal** - Respondents must register with the State of CT contracting portal at <https://biznet.ct.gov/AccountMaint/NewLogin.aspx> if not already registered. Respondents shall submit the following information pertaining to this application to this portal, which will be checked by the OEC contact at http://www.biznet.ct.gov/SCP_Search/Default.aspx?AccLast=2
 - Secretary of State recognition – Click on appropriate response
 - Non-profit status, if applicable
 - Notification to Bidders, Parts I-V
 - Consulting Agreement Affidavit (OPM Ethics Form 5) – Requires Notarization <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/OPM/OPMForm5ConsultingAgreementAffidavit32814pdf.pdf?la=en>

- Affirmation of Receipt of State Ethics Affidavit (OPM Ethics Form 6) – Requires Notarization <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/OPM/Finance/psa/OPMEthicsForm6Final91511PDFpdf.pdf?la=en>
 - Iran Certificate (OPM Ethics Form 7) – Requires Notarization <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/OPM/OPMForm7IranCertification32814pdf.pdf?la=en>
3. **RFP Information** - The RFP, amendments to the RFP, and other information associated with this procurement are available in electronic format from the Official Contact or from the Internet at the following locations:

- **State Contracting Portal** https://biznet.ct.gov/SCP_Search/Default.aspx?AccLast=2
- **Office of Early Childhood** www.ct.gov/oec

It is strongly recommended that any Respondent or prospective Respondent interested in this procurement subscribe to receive e-mail alerts from the State Contracting Portal at <http://das.ct.gov/cr1.aspx?page=161>. Subscribers will receive a daily e-mail announcing procurements and addendums that are posted on the portal. This service is provided as a courtesy by the state's DAS to assist in monitoring activities associated with State procurements, including this RFP.

Proposals that fail to follow instructions will not be reviewed further. The OEC will reject any proposal that deviates significantly from the requirements of this RFP. After an initial screening by the Review Committee Chair and one other member, the Official Agency Contact may request correction of minor submission errors. Corrected documents must be submitted by an established deadline otherwise the proposal will not be reviewed.

The remaining items in this section describe general information regarding the proposal. Section D continues to describe the format expectations.

Letter of Intent – See Attachment A1

Interested Respondents are **required** to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI), via e-mail to the Official Agency Contact by **1:00 PM on November 22, 2019** at OEC.RFP@CT.GOV **with subject line: OEC-QIS-024** notifying the OEC of its intention to submit a proposal. Submission of a **LOI is required** in order to submit a proposal; however, submission of an LOI does not require a

submission of the RFP. Respondents must designate an authorized representative and one (1) alternate. Signing the LOI acknowledges that the representative and one (1) alternate enable only those individuals to communicate with the OEC during the open submission period. The organization's chief executive officer or another official with signatory authority must sign the LOI. If a change in representative is needed, contact official OEC contact to amend the information.

RFP Submission

The due date is **1:00 PM on Wednesday, December 11, 2019.** One signed original proposal must be received in the required packaging and labeling at the OEC, 450 Columbus Blvd, Suite 304, Hartford, CT 06103 not later than the deadline. When hand-delivering proposals by courier or in person, allow extra time due to parking and building security procedures. OEC requires respondents to contact the official contact at (860) 500-4535 or OEC.RFP@CT.GOV to make arrangements 24 hours prior to delivery of the proposal to arrange for meeting in the lobby of the state office building. A **copy** of the original proposal must be emailed to OEC.RFP@CT.GOV with subject line: **OEC-QIS-024 by 1:00 PM on Wednesday, December 11, 2019.**

The original proposal must carry original signatures and be clearly marked on the cover as "Original." Unsigned proposals will not be evaluated. The original proposal and the conforming copy of the proposal must be complete, properly formatted and outlined, and ready for evaluation by the Review Committee. The electronic copy of the proposal must be compatible with Microsoft Office Word 2013 except for the Budget and Microsoft Office Excel 2013 formatted Attachments. For the electronic copies, required Attachments may be scanned and submitted in Portable Document Format (PDF) or similar file format.

Eligibility

Public or private organizations, for- profits or non-profits with a legal presence in Connecticut are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP. All respondents must be registered with the CT Secretary of State as having the authority to operate in CT. Individuals and any entity that is not a duly formed business entity are ineligible to participate in this procurement. Nonprofit respondents must provide proof of nonprofit status such as a copy of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) determination letter as appropriate.

Minimum Expectations of Respondents

To qualify for a contract award, a Respondent will be expected to:

- Demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively with the OEC and technical assistance delivery entities in the coordination of professional learning services in efforts to ensure services are available statewide and to eliminate duplication.
 - Demonstrate that staff meet the OEC technical assistance approval criteria (**See Attachment A2**) to implement activities and that the identified staff are prepared to provide culturally competent services inclusive of recruiting bilingual technical assistance providers.
 - Demonstrate ability to engage in ongoing data collection, analysis, and reporting as outlined by OEC within activities and collectively across multiple activities chosen by Respondent.
 - Demonstrate the ability to engage with OEC and technical assistance delivery entities in gathering feedback from stakeholders, applying that feedback and reporting to stakeholders on the impact of their contributions.
 - Demonstrate fiscal stability and organizational structure to sustain high quality technical assistance services for the duration of the contract period.
 - Describe knowledge and understanding about designing and implementing high-quality technical assistance.
 - Provide a plan to address reaching the target audience set by OEC across the state or identified service delivery area for consistency and that every effort is made for equitable access to opportunities.
 - Demonstrate the ability to assess technical assistance needs of the target population described in the activities chosen by the Respondent, assess the ability of the settings to accommodate various technical assistance strategies, and assess the need for resources for successful implementation.
 - Make recommendations to the OEC about potential changes to policy and/or scope to increase effectiveness and efficiency of the work on regularly established intervals.
4. **Procurement Schedule** - The following timeline, up to and including the deadline for submitting proposals, shall be changed only by an amendment to this RFP. Dates after the submittal deadline for proposals indicated with an asterisk (*) are target dates only.

RFP Release	October 29, 2019
Legal notice published in the newspaper	October 29, 2019
Bidder's conference, in-person	November 13, 2019

Deadline for questions, via e-mail	November 18, 2019
Anticipated release of official answers	November 20, 2019
Mandatory Letter of Intent	November 22, 2019
Proposals due	December 11, 2019
Anticipated selection	*December 19, 2019
Anticipated start of contract negotiations	*January 2020
Anticipated start of contract	*January 2020

*The OEC anticipates that successful Respondents will commence work in January 2020 and continue through December 31, 2021. Timeline may be adjusted due to state procurement processes.

5. **Inquiry Procedures** -

- All questions regarding this RFP must be directed, in writing via e-mail to OEC.RFP@CT.GOV with subject line **OEC-QIS-024**, to the Official Agency Contact by **12:00 Noon on November 18, 2019**.
- The early submission of questions is recommended.
- Submit questions only to OEC contact at OEC.RFP@CT.GOV Questions will not be accepted or answered verbally – neither in person nor over the telephone.
- All questions received before the deadline, except questions categorized below, will be answered.
 - The OEC will not answer questions when the source is unknown (i.e., nuisance or anonymous questions).
 - Questions deemed by OEC to be unrelated to the RFP or the procurement process **WILL NOT** be answered.
- The OEC may combine similar questions and give only one answer to the combined question.
- All questions and answers will be compiled into a written amendment posted on the State Contracting Portal at https://biznet.ct.gov/SCP_Search/Default.aspx?AccLast=2 and the OEC website at www.CT.GOV/OEC . If any answer to any question constitutes a material change to the RFP, the question and answer will be placed at the beginning of the amendment and duly noted as such.
- If needed, a formal amendment to this RFP may be issued no later than November 26, 2019 to provide answers to questions. The amendment will be posted on the State Contracting Portal at http://www.biznet.ct.gov/SCP_Search/Default.aspx?AccLast=2; and on the OEC's website at www.CT.GOV/OEC

6. **Contract Award** - It is the OEC's intent to award up to 16 contracts as a result of this RFP. The award of any contract pursuant to this RFP is

dependent upon the availability of funding to the OEC and successful negotiation between the OEC and pending Contractor.

7. **Declaration of Confidential Information** - Respondents are advised that all materials associated with this procurement are subject to the terms of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the Privacy Act, and all rules, regulations and interpretations resulting from them. If a Respondent deems that certain information required by this RFP is confidential, the Respondent must label such information as CONFIDENTIAL. The Respondent must reference where the information labeled CONFIDENTIAL is located in the proposal.

EXAMPLE: the Respondent must provide a convincing explanation and rationale sufficient to justify an exemption of the information (reference which information) from release under the FOIA. The explanation and rationale must be stated in terms of (a) the prospective harm to the competitive position of the Respondent that would result if the identified information were to be released and (b) the reasons why the information is legally exempt from release pursuant to C.G.S. §1-210(b). Acceptance of a proposal by OEC where such proposal contains such confidentiality requests is not an agreement that such material is confidential or exempt from disclosure. OEC reserves the right to make such determination.

8. **Conflict of Interest -Disclosure Statement**. – See Attachment A3
Respondents must include a disclosure statement concerning any current business relationships (within the last three (3) years) that pose a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85. A conflict of interest exists when a relationship exists between the Respondent and a public official (including an elected official) or State employee that may interfere with fair competition or may be adverse to the interests of the State. The existence of a conflict of interest is not, in and of itself, evidence of wrongdoing. A conflict of interest may, however, become a legal matter if a Respondent tries to influence, or succeeds in influencing, the outcome of an official decision for their personal or corporate benefit. OEC will determine whether any disclosed conflict of interest poses a substantial advantage to the Respondent over the competition, decreases the overall competitiveness of this procurement, or is not in the best interests of the State. In the absence of any conflict of interest, a Respondent must affirm such in the disclosure statement. Example: “[name of Respondent] has no current business relationship (within the last three (3) years) that poses a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85.”

I. D. PROPOSAL FORMAT

All materials must comply with the required format, except for the items previously listed in Section I.C.2 submitted through the State Portal. The following materials must be submitted as hard copy in the order listed. The email version can be submitted in separate files as not to exceed state server size limit of 25 mega-bytes. For example, a single document that includes the Cover Sheet, Table of Contents, Executive Summary and Main Proposal text can be separate from more lengthy attachments or specifically formatted attachment such as the Application for Service Delivery, the Personnel Checklist and Plan, and the Budget. All attachments should fit in one email but please follow directions below is submitting the proposal in multiple emails.

When submitting proposal in multiple emails to OEC.RFP@CT.GOV use subject line: OEC-QIS-024 [abbreviate organization name] number and total number (eg.1 of 4).

1. **Required Outline** - All proposals must follow this outline in order with clearly marked sections.
 - Cover Sheet – as provided by OEC
 - Table of Contents
 - Executive Summary – clearly referencing attachments if applicable
 - Main Proposal – clearly referencing attachments
 - Attachments – clearly referenced to summary and main proposal where applicable
 - Declaration of Confidential Information (as applicable)
 - Conflict of Interest -Disclosure Statement
 - Statement of Assurances

Submissions that fail to follow the required outline will be deemed non-responsive and not evaluated.

Cover Sheet – See Attachment A4. The Respondent must use the Cover Sheet provided by the OEC. *Legal Organization Name* is defined as the name of the organization, submitting the proposal. Respondent's *Authorized Representative* is defined as the individual who can provide additional information about the proposal or who has immediate responsibility for the proposal. *Authorized Official* is defined as the individual empowered to submit a binding offer on behalf of the Respondent to provide services in accordance with the terms and provision described in this RFP and any amendments or attachments hereto.

Table of Contents. Respondents must include a Table of Contents that lists sections and subsections with page numbers that follow the organization outline and sequence for this proposal.

Executive Summary. The page limitation for this section is two (2) double-sided pages briefly describing how the Respondent meets the eligibility criteria outlined in the Proposal Overview and a brief overview of why the Respondent should be selected for the Activities chosen in the Application for Service Delivery.

Main Proposal. Proposals must include a description of the Respondent's organization and how the Respondent proposes to implement the activities for which they are applying (See Section II. C. for details).

Attachments. Attachments other than the required attachments identified are not permitted and will not be evaluated. Further, the required attachments must not be altered or used to extend, enhance, or replace any component required by this RFP. Failure to abide by these instructions may result in disqualification.

Declaration of Confidential Information. Place after Attachments.

Conflict of Interest -Disclosure Statement. Place after Declaration of Confidential Information statement. **(See Attachment A3)**

Statement of Assurances. Place after Conflict of Interest-Disclosure Statement. Sign and return only the signature page of the Assurances **(See Attachment A5).**

2. **Style Requirements.** Submitted proposals must conform to the following specifications:

- Paper Size: 8 ½ X 11, Portrait for most of proposal, landscape only when necessary
- Font Size: 12 point
- Font Type: Times New Roman or Arial
- Margins: 1" minimum on the top, bottom, and sides of all pages
- Pagination: The Respondent's name and the RFP number must be displayed in the header of each page, including attachments. Page numbers can be sequential by section. It is not necessary to have continuous page numbers from beginning to end. Budget pages and Excel pages do not need to be numbered.
- Page Limit: No limit for submission of entire RFP. See specific page limit to Executive Summary and Main Proposal.
- Do not use material dependent on color distinctions, animated electronics, etc.
- Graphics: Must be readable when copied
- Line Spacing: Single Spaced

3. **Packaging and Labeling Requirement**

- Binders will NOT be accepted.
- All proposals must be submitted in sealed envelopes or packages and be addressed to the Official Contact.
- The proposal must be duly executed by signing Cover Sheet and Assurances Form.
- The Legal Name and Address of the Respondent must appear in the upper left corner of the envelope or package.
- The RFP Name and Number must be clearly displayed on the envelope: State Funded Quality Improvement Supports – **OEC-QIS-024**
- OEC reserves the right to exclude from evaluation any proposal that doesn't conform to structure.
- Any proposal received by OEC will not be returned.

I. E. **EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS**

1. **Evaluation Process.** It is the intent of OEC to conduct a comprehensive, fair, and impartial evaluation of proposals received in response to this RFP. When evaluating proposals, negotiating with successful Respondents, and awarding contracts, OEC will conform to OEC's written procedures for POS procurements (pursuant to C.G.S. § 4217) and the State's Code of Ethics (pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 1-84 and 1-85)
https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_010.htm#sec_1-84
2. **Minimum Submission Requirements Screening.** The OEC will screen the proposal for meeting eligibility and completion of application and proposal format. **(See Attachment A6)**
3. **Review Committee.** The OEC will designate a Review Committee to evaluate proposals submitted in response to this RFP. The Review Committee will be composed of individuals, OEC staff or other designees as deemed appropriate. The contents of all submitted proposals, including any confidential information, will be shared with the Review Committee. The Review Committee shall evaluate all proposals that meet the Minimum Submission Requirements by score and rank ordered and make recommendations for awards. The Commissioner of the Office of Early Childhood will make the final selection. Attempts by any Respondent (or representative of any Respondent) to contact or influence any member of the Review Committee will in disqualification of the Respondent.
4. **Review Criteria.** The review criteria are the objective standards that the Review Committee will use to evaluate the merits of the proposals submitted in response to this RFP. Only the criteria outlined in the scoring rubric will be used to assess submissions. **(See Attachment A6)**

5. **Respondent Selection.** Upon completing its review of proposals, the Review Committee will recommend the top ranking Respondents to the OEC Commissioner. The final selection of a successful Respondent is at the discretion of the OEC Commissioner. Any Respondent selected will be notified within (5) five business days and awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract with the OEC. Such negotiations may, but will not automatically, result in a contract. Pursuant to Governor M. Jodi Rell's Executive Order No. 3, any resulting contract will be posted on the State Contracting Portal. Any resulting executed contract will be posted on the State Contracting Portal. All unsuccessful Respondents will be notified by e-mail or U.S. mail, at the OEC Commissioner's discretion, about the outcome of the evaluation and the Respondent selection process. OEC reserves the right to decline to award contracts for activities which OEC Commissioner considers there are not adequate respondents.

6. **Debriefing.** Within (10) ten business days of receiving notification of award status from the OEC, unsuccessful Respondents may contact the Official Agency Contact and request information about the evaluation and Respondent selection process. The e-mail sent date or the postmark date on the notification envelope will be considered "day one" of the ten days. If unsuccessful Respondents still have questions after receiving this information, they may contact the Official Agency Contact and request a meeting with the OEC to discuss the evaluation process and their proposals. If held, the debriefing meeting will not include any comparisons of unsuccessful proposals with other proposals. The OEC will schedule and hold the debriefing meeting within fifteen (15) business days of the request. The OEC will not change, alter, or modify the outcome of the evaluation or selection process as a result of any debriefing meeting. More detailed information about requesting a debriefing may be obtained from the Official Contact.

7. **Appeal Process.** Any time after the submission due date, but not later than thirty (30) calendar days after OEC notifies Respondents about the outcome of a competitive procurement, Respondents may submit an Appeal to OEC. Any such Appeal must be submitted to the Agency Head with a copy to the Official Contact. The e-mail sent date or the postmark date on the notification envelope will be considered "day one" of the thirty (30) calendar days. Respondents may appeal any aspect of OEC's competitive procurement; however, such Appeal must be in writing and must set forth facts or evidence in sufficient and convincing detail for OEC to determine whether during any aspect of the competitive procurement there was a failure to comply with the State's statutes, regulations or standards concerning competitive

procurement or the provisions of the RFP. The Respondent must include the basis for the Appeal and the remedy requested. The filing of an Appeal shall not be deemed sufficient reason for OEC to delay, suspend, cancel or terminate the procurement process or execution of a contract. More detailed information about filing an Appeal may be obtained from the Official Contact.

8. **Contest of Solicitation or Award.** Pursuant to Section 4e-36 of the Connecticut General Statutes, “Any bidder or Respondent on a state contract may contest the solicitation or award of a contract to a subcommittee of the State Contracting Standards Board.” More detailed information is available on the State Contracting Standards Board web site at <http://www.ct.gov/scsb/site/default.asp>.
9. **Contract Execution.** Any contract developed and executed as a result of this RFP is subject to OEC’s contracting procedures, which will include approval by the Office of the Attorney General. The successful awardees who will be interacting with federal funds are required to register and be active in the Federal System for Award Management (SAMS). Fully executed and approved contracts will be posted on State Contracting Portal and the OEC website.

SECTION II: PROPOSAL INFORMATION

II. A. DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The OEC is the state agency charged with fostering cross-systems integration, coordination, and collaboration at the state and local level in order to enhance the health and well-being of young children, families and communities. The OEC brings together leadership and expertise, and a wide range of early childhood and family support services that were formerly at five agencies. The goal of this office is to build an integrated early childhood system that includes family support and home visiting services, early intervention services, early care and education programming, quality improvement, and childcare licensing for the State of Connecticut.

Established in 2013, the OEC provides funding standards, regulations, training and oversight to ensure that early care and education programs for young children:

- Are safe, healthy and nurturing;
- Effectively support children's physical, social, emotional and cognitive development; and
- Are accessible to all children, particularly those facing barriers, risks or challenges to their healthy development and success.

The OEC is organized into four divisions: Early Care and Education, Child Care and Camp Licensing, Quality Improvement, and Family Support. The OEC is the State's lead agency for administering the federal Child Care Development Fund, the Birth to Three program, state funded home visiting programs and the Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) grant and state funded early childhood programs such as School Readiness, Child Day Care Contracts, Smart Start and State Head Start. In addition, OEC is the state affiliate of the national Help Me Grow program.

II. B. PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

The purpose of these funds is to support the OEC's efforts to build the foundation for a coordinated statewide-integrated professional development system for early care and education providers in Connecticut by providing technical assistance to those who serve young children and to support technical assistance providers. Respondents are invited to propose technical assistance design, delivery methods and implementation activities most suited to their expertise resulting in the potential for more than one entity receiving contracts. The intent of these contracts is to leverage existing technical assistance design and delivery expertise and build capacity that encourages collaboration within and across

agencies and across regions providing technical assistance. The OEC will be the lead entity coordinating contracts and providing leadership to coordinate statewide efforts to design and deliver high-quality technical assistance to settings serving young children.

Respondents are expected to demonstrate the ability to assist, in consultation with OEC, in the design and coordination of delivery of OEC technical assistance activities and conduct needs assessments to inform technical assistance efforts, and engage in evaluation of each activity. The corresponding scope of work includes reaching personnel working with young children and working in before and after school programs. Settings for target audience include early care and education centers, public schools, and family child-care homes and other settings as indicated in outlined activities. The awarded Respondents and OEC will work collaboratively as follows:

Awardee General Expected Tasks:	OEC General Expected Tasks:
Manage coordination of OEC technical assistance activities and data collection for the activities awarded by being engaged partners with OEC in the design and delivery of quality technical assistance initiatives.	Appoint a Technical Assistance Liaison responsible for coordination of communication between the Contractors and OEC Activity Lead staff, reviewing and approving the activity work plan, project deliverables, and monitoring activity progress. OEC Activity Leads will be engaged partners providing support for coordination and implementation efforts sharing strategies, monitoring data collection systems, and providing or finding the resources necessary for successful technical assistance initiatives.
Assist in the coordination of early childhood efforts with the OEC and the State Department of Education Bureau of Special Education regarding early childhood initiatives and programs in which Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are implemented.	Collaborate with SDE on cross-sector professional development opportunities to leverage funds and expertise.
Assist reaching settings serving infants and toddlers in order to provide technical assistance opportunities to such programs as possible within the context of the Scope of Work.	Provide resources addressing infant and toddler care and education in coordination with OEC Birth to Three Program and Family Support Services.
Support technical assistance providers in their professional learning needs and coordinate resources to facilitate their work.	Develop the vision for a technical assistance provider system and leverage expertise and resources from states and

	national entities to build this system of supports.
Support efforts to design and conduct professional learning needs assessments and feedback loop processes.	Partner with contractors to design professional learning assessment and feedback processes.
Provide detailed reporting on activities and evaluation of activities.	Provide reporting guidance and fiscal accountability. Monitor implementation and reporting and provide feedback for improvement.
Engage in technical assistance system continuous quality improvement efforts as an entity providing services.	Design a process for continuous quality improvement for technical assistance providers in preparation for formal technical assistance system evaluation.
Common Activity Tasks	
<p>The Respondent will report technical assistance activities provided under OEC funding, in the OEC provided format and timeline, which shall include but not be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed description of activities completed in a format and timeframe determined by OEC; • A description and citations for resources utilized to inform the delivery of services to participants • Data on outreach efforts; participants engaged by type of activity, outcomes achieved • Fiscal reporting on funds utilized on the form provided by the OEC; and • Other reporting as determined by OEC specific to any individual activity. 	<p>The OEC will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign OEC Activity Leads • Collaborate with Contractor on design and implementation of all activities; • Provide the Contractor with policy and implementation guidance; • Provide the Contractor with technical assistance as needed; • Retain final authority for making and communicating policy decisions affecting the design, delivery, and evaluation of technical assistance activities; • Monitor contractors' participation in outcomes-based performance for incentive-based bonuses; • Review and approve all Contractor activities performed under this contract; • Monitor contract activities according to goals, policies, guidance and timelines; • Communicate with the Contractor regarding priorities, trends, and needs assessments; • Hold regularly scheduled meetings related to the contract; • Attend activities related to the contract;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide formats for reports, including data to be collected; and • Review reports submitted and provide follow up to ensure each Respondent is contributing and accountable to the success of each activity. Request updates as appropriate.
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II. C. PROPOSAL DETAILS

Executive Summary- The page limitation for this section is two (2) double-sided pages briefly describing how the Respondent meets the eligibility criteria outlined in the Proposal Overview and a brief overview of why the Respondent should be selected for the activities chosen.

Main Proposal - The page limitation for the Main Proposal (items 1 through 4) is eight (8) doubled-sided pages excluding required forms to be submitted to the State Contracting Portal or required attachments to be submitted to the OEC.

Responses to the requirements in this section must describe the Respondent’s background and experience relevant to providing technical assistance services. The responses must also address the details regarding the Respondent’s organization, and resources of the organization. The proposal must clearly describe the Respondent’s knowledge and ability to perform the requirements as described in this RFP, focusing on activities chosen by the Respondent in the Application for Service Delivery.

1. **Organizational Profile** - The OEC is requesting proposals from organizations to fulfill state-wide technical assistance as directed by the OEC. A responsive proposal shall demonstrate that the Respondent has experience in providing technical assistance to early care and education settings.

To submit a responsive proposal, the Respondent shall include the following specific details regarding their organization:

- a. Organization establishment date and mission;
- b. Description of how the organization meets the required qualifications of this RFP to include at a minimum:
 - 1) Statements regarding how organization staff, including managerial and administrative support, will be able to implement the services

required by this RFP including the ability to meet data/technology and reporting requirements;

- 2) The ability to provide technical assistance to target audience as appropriate by activity; and
 - 3) Explanation of why the organization is well suited to implement the services required by this RFP including addressing the Respondent's qualifications as outlined in the Executive Summary.
 - 4) A brief description of how your organization is well positioned to communicate, cooperate and serve people from all cultural identities with respect, professionalism, integrity, and fairness. A working definition of cultural diversity for this application includes *differences in race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, sexual identity, socioeconomic status, physical ability, language beliefs, values, behavior patterns, or customs among various groups within a community, organization, or nation*. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. In addition, how will your organization promote diversity in its work with individuals, organizations, and providers in reference to each of the associated activities?
- c. Organization chart, as an attachment not counted in the main proposal page count, showing the structure of functions and positions within the organization. Indicate on the diagram where the following functions related to this RFP will be located, including at a minimum: activity manager, supervisor(s), internal delivery staff, external contracting of services, fiscal, Information Technology and administrative support.
2. **Organizational Experience** – The Respondent shall describe its experience and success related to the Scope of Services outlined in the Application for Service Delivery (**See Attachment A7**) including the following information concerning the Respondent's experience with other contracts or projects similar to the type of service described by this application, whether ongoing or completed.
- a. Describe the Respondent's background as it relates to projects similar in scope and complexity to the activities described in this RFP;

- b. Describe the Respondent's relationship with sub-contractors or other entities such as all State agencies and commercial vendors for which the Respondent has engaged in similar or related contract work or projects completed within the last three (3) years with emphasis on activities relevant and related to the proposed activities for which the Respondent is seeking funding. Submit the Work History with Similar Activities chart (**See Attachment A8**) identifying contracts awarded to the Respondent as primary contractor or sub-contractor by state agencies;
- c. Describe any financial, programmatic and/or administrative sanctions, fines, penalties, or letters of noncompliance issued against the Respondent by any contracting entities such as government or philanthropy. List all issues describing the circumstance eliciting the sanction, fine, penalty, or letter of noncompliance and the corrective action or resolution to the sanction, fine, penalty, or letter of noncompliance. If no sanctions, fines, penalties, or letters of noncompliance were issued, a statement that attests that no sanction, fine, penalty, or compliance action has been imposed on the Respondent within the three years immediately preceding the RFP posting/release date;
- d. Provide a description of the agency's computer hardware and software capabilities, including software and/or applications specific to technical assistance and/or data collection. Include information on plans to use technology for the purposes of this proposal. Describe access to Information Technology supports, how the organization will secure data, implement a data recovery plan and protect against data breach; and
- e. Describe how the Respondent will make a "Good Faith Effort" to meet Connecticut General Statutes of Connecticut section 4a-60g as described here. Small, Minority, or Women's Business Enterprise - Section 4a-60g of the General Statutes of Connecticut (C.G.S.) sets forth the requirements of each Executive Branch agency relative to the Connecticut Small Business Set-Aside program. Pursuant to that statute, 25 percent of the average total of all contracts for each of the three previous fiscal years must be set aside. The OEC requires that as the Respondent utilizing a subcontractor it must make a "Good Faith Effort" to set aside a portion of the resultant contract for a small, minority, or women's business enterprise as a proposed subcontractor. Such proposed subcontractors may supply goods or services. Respondents may obtain a list of firms certified to participate in the Set-Aside program at the State of Connecticut Office of

Administrative Services Web site at <http://das.ct.gov/cr1.aspx?page=34> or by calling 860-500-4434.

During the evaluation process, special consideration will be given to those Respondents who document their use of a certified small business or show the Respondent's commitment to, whenever possible, use a certified small business. Businesses must be certified with the State of Connecticut. To submit a responsive proposal, the respondent shall describe its effort to set aside a portion of the resultant contract for a small, minority, or women's business enterprise as a proposed subcontractor if it is proposing the use of a subcontractor.

3. **Application for Service Delivery Parts 1 and 2 – See Attachment A7**

The Application for Service Delivery is an attachment completion and may be submitted as a separate document via email as previously described. Please complete all of Part 1 and only the corresponding activities described in Part 2 for which the Respondent is seeking funding.

Part 1: Service Summary Chart

Responses to this section must reflect the Respondent's choice(s) of activities based on ability to deliver high-quality services outlined in the Scope of Work Details (see part 2). Complete all of Part 1 and only the charts in Part 2 for which the Respondent is seeking funding.

The cost outlined in the Service Summary Chart indicates the cost of the service described and does not include administrative overhead and does not designate which activities are funded by state or federal funds. State or federal funding, by Activity, will be determined at point of contracting for final determination of administrative cap. Administrative overhead is capped at the federal percentage for those Respondents that receive federal funds and provide a letter indicating a cap. Respondents receiving federal funds who do not provide a letter will be capped at 10%. For Respondents who may be awarded activities funded solely by state funds, an OEC cap of 15% over the cost of the delivery of service is allowable. The state or federal cap is a combined figure inclusive of the lead agency and any sub-grantee administrative cost. Respondents must clearly indicate activity choices for funding consideration and the corresponding fiscal proposal to perform work not to exceed the amount for each activity plus up to the federal percentage, if applicable, or the OEC 15% administrative overhead cap.

Part 2: Scope of Work Activity Details

Part 2 of the Application for Service Delivery provides further detail per activity and asks the Respondent to address a personnel plan, prior experience with the activity, data collection capability, plans to reach the intended audience, and allows for comments to OEC for consideration.

Information provided by the Respondent in Part 2 can be brief but concise. The following description of attachments related to Part 2 will describe in further detail the Respondent's ability to perform the activities chosen.

4. **Personnel Plan** - Submit a personnel plan that describes the personnel resources assigned to each activity chosen by the Respondent. Use the OEC Personnel Checklist and Plan (**See Attachment A9**) to demonstrate the Respondent's expertise, as well as sub-contractor's expertise, in the type of work to be performed for the target population(s). Indicate whether each person is an employee (full or part- time) or an individual subcontractor and proposed monthly hours dedicated to each activity. The Excel workbook has a sheet for each activity to be completed for those activities for which the Respondent is seeking funding. Address how and when your organization will hire new staff or engage contractors, and provide assurances that Respondent will have personnel or sub-contract with an entity able to communicate in English and Spanish.

5. **Sub-Contractors** - If the response to this proposal includes the use of subcontractors, the Respondent shall complete the Proposed Subcontractor Listing (**See Attachment A10**). If contractors are not yet known, describe recruiting efforts to secure the expertise.

The Respondent shall provide the following information about the subcontractor on the attachment provided:

- Legal Name of Agency or Individual, Address, FEIN#
- Contact Person, Title, Phone, E-mail
- Activity # associated with proposed subcontractor
- Proposed payment terms and value

6. **Fiscal Information**

Financial Profile - To submit a responsive proposal, the Respondent shall provide audited financial statements for each of the last two fiscal years. If audited financial statements for each of the last two fiscal years are not available, the Respondent shall provide comparable statements that will document the financial stability of the Respondent and include an explanation of the submission of documents other than audited financial statements.

Budget Information - To submit a responsive proposal the Respondent shall complete a proposed budget (**See Attachment A1**) providing a

budget for the period January 2020 through December 2021. The budget will identify expenditures across the three State fiscal years covered by this funding. One budget will cover the period of January 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020. The second budget will cover the period from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 and the third budget will cover the period July 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

Cost Standards - Budgetary information included in the Respondent's response to this RFP must comply with the **Cost Standards** published by the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management. The cost standards are available online at <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/OPM/POSCostStandards101816pdf.pdf?la=en> as well as the Federal Office of Management and Budget Cost Principles <https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/management-and-budget-office> for RFP activities utilizing federal funds.

OEC Administrative Costs - In addition to required compliance with the published cost standards, Respondents are advised that a responsive budget must limit annual administrative costs to 15% of the total over the activity budget. Respondents with a federal administrative cap must use the federal percentage. State or federal funding, by Activity, will be determined at point of contracting for final determination of administrative cap.