

Staffed Family Child Care Network Hub

RFP Name: OEC-21-SFCCNH

Questions and Answers

Note: Questions have been organized thematically

UPDATED 8/31/2021

I. Scope of Service Description

A. Organizational Expectations

1. How much training will the Hub be directly responsible for providing to the regional networks and the FCC providers? Or is the hub's primary role to arrange and pay for trainings provided by a third party? - **Question received: 8/18/21**

The exact volume of *direct* training the Hub will provide depends on the internal capacity of each respondent. If the respondent selected as the Hub has subject-matter expertise and training capacity among its staff, it can and should leverage this capacity to provide direct training to regional networks. If this capacity does not yet exist, the Hub can subcontract to other third party providers. It is possible that the Hub could provide direct training for some subjects and contract out for others. Any plans to subcontract out training should be reflected in the proposed budget.

Please keep in mind that overall, the Hub will be responsible for building the capacity of regional network operators to implement training to FCC providers. In consultation with the cohort of SFCC networks, the Hub is expected to develop and maintain an inventory of professional development and technical assistance resources. The respondent ultimately selected as the Hub will be expected to organize a system for identifying professional development needs; delivering professional development training; coaching through the SFCC networks; and formulating training and coaching models geared to the needs of family child care providers.

B. Budget Expectations

2. The estimated annual amounts for the three years total \$4,263,000 which is \$500 more than the total amount indicated in the RFP of \$4,262,500. Please clarify the total amount, and the annual amount each year. - **Question received: 8/18/21**

Thank you for noting the discrepancy. There was a typo in the Year 2 amount. The corrected amounts are indicated in the table below. The OEC has corrected this typo, and the revised RFP with the corrected amounts can be found on both the OEC's website and on CTSource.

Year 1	\$ 1,132,500
Year 2	\$ 1,865,000
Year 3	\$ 1,265,000
Total	\$ 4,262,500

3. In each year of the 3-year project, funds are expected to be provided to subcontracted regional network operators and specialized nursing consultants. - *Question received 8/18/21*
- a. Please provide details about the expected funding amounts for the regional network operators.
 - b. Please provide details about the services anticipated to be provided by the specialized nursing consultants and the expected funding to be provided to specialized nursing consultants.

To better support respondents in developing their budgets, the table below represents the OEC's best estimates at this time on how funds might be allocated between network operators and specialized nursing consultants. The OEC has updated the RFP to include this table as well.

Please note that the figures below are estimates; the OEC is interested and open to respondents (and ultimately, the Hub) proposing different frameworks for allocating funds. The ultimate goal is to ensure that network operators are sufficiently resourced and supported in doing critical work.

Year	Network Operators Estimate	Nurse Consultants Estimate
Year 1	\$500,000	\$32,500
Year 2	\$1,000,000	\$65,000
Year 3	\$1,000,000	\$65,000

The consultative nursing services are likely to include supports (via training, email, telephone support) to advance the health and safety of providers and the children and families they care. This might include:

- Practices related to reducing the transmission of germs
- Keeping children and families safe
- Nutrition, physical activity, and other health topics

The Hub will be responsible for ensuring that relevant data is collected to reflect utilization and need for the services.

4. Using the information on page 22 of the RFP, the funding amount for the hub, after the required budget dollars are allocated to the regional network operators and nurse consultants, results in the following: - *Question received 8/18/21*

		Proposed annual	Allocation to subcontractor		Remaining for Hub
Jan-22		\$ 1,132,500	\$ 532,500		\$ 600,000
Jan-23		\$ 1,865,500	\$ 1,065,000		\$ 800,500
Jan-24		\$ 1,265,000	\$ 1,065,000		\$ 200,000

a. Please confirm if this summary is accurate.

The remaining figure for the Hub in Year 2 should be \$800,000. Due to a typo, the Year 2 total was incorrectly listed as \$1,865,500 in the RFP. The correct total for Year 2 is \$1,865,000. The OEC has corrected this in the RFP.

b. If it is accurate, please describe the OEC’s expectations for how the hub will operate in each year with differing budget amounts, especially in Year 3 (\$200,000).

The Hub’s focus in Years 1 and 2 of the contract are to lay the foundations of the state’s family child care infrastructure, with a particular focus on technology. It is likely that this will mean more start-up costs in early project years, while later years will focus on system maintenance. The OEC will partner closely with the Hub to analyze how both network operators’ and the Hub’s own operations can be sufficiently resourced.

5. What is the payment schedule for the contract/grant? Is it reimbursed based or payment for the grant made at the beginning of the contract? - *Question received 8/27/21*

The initial payment in an amount not to exceed 25% of the annual contract maximum amount will be made upon execution of the contract by both parties and approval of the same by the Office of the Attorney General. Additional funds will be released based on submission by the Contractor of programmatic and financial reports; requests for payment made in a manner directed by the OEC including submission and acceptance of appropriate information documenting activities and hours billed, the availability of funds, and the Contractor’s compliance with the terms of the contract.

C. Project Objectives

1. Is a network eligible to be a sub-grantee/subcontractor of the hub to provide technical assistance (TA) services to other networks? - *Question received 8/25/21*

The Hub is the TA provider to the networks. It is possible that the Hub would subcontract some of these functions to a subcontractor, but the primary role of the Hub is to provide statewide TA to the Networks. Therefore, these services cannot not be provided by a Network. It may be possible for a Network to serve as a consultant to the Hub. Such an agreement would require approval by the OEC.

D. Evaluation of Proposals

1. **Who is on the evaluation committee for this RFP? Specifically, will there be family child care educator and network representation?** – *Question received 8/25/21*

The OEC will designate an Evaluation Committee to evaluate proposals submitted in response to this RFP. The Evaluation Committee will be composed of individuals, OEC staff or other designees as deemed appropriate. The Evaluation Committee will be determined at the close of the RFP period.

II. General

1. **What is the plan for supporting potential continuity of the hub following a successful initial 3-year period?** - *Question received 8/18/21*

The OEC intends to continue to fund a Hub as the support structure for SFCCNs. The continuation will be funded through contract extension or a new competitive bid process.

2. **What does OEC see as the areas of greatest need for FCCs and SFCCNs both now and also during non-pandemic periods? Where would they want initial focus?** - *Question received 8/18/21*

The OEC is focused on increasing program quality and stabilizing the business model of family child care. Family providers demonstrated their ability to effectively serve families during the public health crisis, but the business model does not provide a sufficiently stable income to the provider and their family. SFCCNs link providers to professional development and offer networking opportunities that advance quality and business operations, yielding higher quality experiences for children. SFCCNs also offer shared service opportunities that can reduce costs and provider time on administrative functions, which increase both the provider's satisfaction and income, and allow more time to engage with families and children.

3. **Would the new hub be allowed to also be the shared services vendor in this new model?** - *Question received 8/20/21*

Yes, a Hub could potentially manage the current shared services platform (ctShares).

4. **This is a 3-year plan with funds decreasing to the hub each year. What do you envision the hub's role to be in year 4?** - *Question received 8/20/21*

The OEC intends to continue to fund a Hub as the support structure for SFCCNs. The continuation will be funded through contract extension or a new competitive bid process.

5. **Is it true that FCCN cannot apply to be the state intermediary for the FCCNs?** - *Question received 8/30/21*

FCCN can apply so long as they meet the eligibility criteria, which can be found on page 6 of the RFP:

Public or private organizations, for-profits or nonprofits legally registered with CT's Secretary of State are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP. Respondents claiming nonprofit status must provide proof of nonprofit status, such as a copy of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) determination letter. (Please note that to avoid conflicts of interest, the contractor selected as the Hub will not be permitted to bid for a regional network role in the next network procurement cycle.)

6. **One of the current SFF networks supports the existing networks with a statewide reach offering PD. Do you envision this role remaining once the new hub is in place? - Question received 8/20/21**

All current SFCC Network contracts expire on 6/30/22. The Hub's first tasks will be to partner with the OEC to prepare a competitive Request for Proposals to select regional networks to serve family child care providers statewide. The Hub will contract directly with the regional networks, with contracts expected to be fully executed by July 1, 2022.

7. **Will OEC also be involved in the reviewing and selection of these bids or will this be the sole responsibility of the Hub? - Question received 8/27/21**

The OEC will serve as an advisor to the Hub to design and ensure a fair and transparent RFP process. The OEC will approve the final selection of network operators.

8. **Who will be responsible for funding the cost of the web based system? – Question received 8/27/21**

Per the service expectations description, the OEC does not expect the CCMS to be fully implemented until beyond the scope of this contract. The focus for the Hub in the early years will be on supporting networks in assessing the readiness of their provider members to use digital technology and assessing the capacity of the networks to support FCC providers as they adopt technology. For the future, an aspirational goal for the Hub would be to oversee implementation of a CCMS, preferably an on-the-shelf product customizable for CT, for FCC providers to use to manage the financial and administrative tasks associated with running their businesses. For more details, please refer to pages 19 – 20 of the RFP.

III. Proposal Submission Overview

Submission Format

1. **Could you please clarify the limit of pages for the main body? The number listed in the RFP is 35, however, 25 was mentioned. - Question received 8/20/21**

The page limit is 35 pages for the main body of the proposal (the cover letter, executive summary, budget, and required attachments do not count towards this 35-page limit).