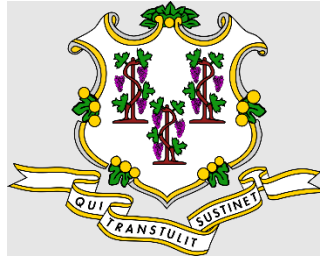


STATE OF CONNECTICUT PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Continuous Quality Improvement Supports

RFP Name: OEC-22-CQIS 2023-26

Issued by:
Office of Early Childhood
Wednesday - June 22, 2022

The Request for Proposal is available in electronic format on the State Contracting Portal by filtering by Organization for the "Early Childhood, Office of"
<https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/BidBoard> or from the OEC's Official Contacts:

Names: Africka S. Hinds
Address: Office of Early Childhood
450 Columbus Boulevard
Hartford, CT 06103
Phone: (860) 500 - 4549
E-Mail: oec.rfp.eceqi@ct.gov

The RFP is also available on the OEC's website at: <https://www.ctoec.org/rfps/>
Respondents may register for the optional pre-bid conference by clicking on this [LINK](#).

RESPONSES MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN
Wednesday – August 3, 2022, at 5:00 PM EST

The Office of Early Childhood is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

The OEC reserves the right to reject any and all submissions or cancel this procurement at any time if deemed in the best interest of the State of Connecticut (State).



STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD



June 2022

Dear Present and Future Colleagues,

Since its inception in 2013, the OEC has worked to build an early care and education system for our state. This systems-building work crosses settings that serve young children, incorporates public and privately operated providers, supports access for families, and includes professional development for providers.

It is in this context that the OEC is working to create a Quality Improvement System for childcare providers that focuses on simplicity; access to and leveraging of existing health, safety and quality activities; and that bridges licensing standards to accreditation standards. This new system will offer a supportive strategy for programs, increase transparency and clarity for families regarding program quality and limit system overhead expenses in favor of funding for providers.

The foundation of the system is continuous quality improvement. OEC defines quality programs as settings that:

- are healthy and safe;
- partner with families to support and monitor children's learning and development;
- engage in continuous improvement at the program and classroom levels;
- advocate for providers, children, and families; and
- are viable and sustainable businesses

as indicated by NAEYC accreditation, NAFCC accreditation, and/or Head Start approval.

Using this definition, the OEC organizes and funds activities that comprise the support aspects of the system, enabling programs and providers to advance and maintain standards of quality. The journey begins with achievement of childcare licensing and continues through the maintenance of accreditation or Head Start approval. By distributing supports across the continuum of quality, providers engage with OEC resources.

This Request For Proposal (RFP) sets out activities that build the infrastructure of the continuous quality improvement system. It invests up to **\$10.6 million dollars** in professional development, technical assistance (training and coaching); advancement of provider skills and competencies, and accreditation process supports. It also incorporates these activities with existing activities including OEC Staffed Family Child Care Networks.

The OEC will manage the activities set forth in this RFP ensuring they are compatible with each other, responsive to provider and community needs, and supportive of a continuous quality improvement mindset.

The OEC will host a pre-bid conference on Wednesday – June 29, 2022, at 11:00 am to further explain the vision for the activities set forth in this document and to take questions from prospective respondents. Interested respondents are invited to register for the optional pre-bid conference by using this [LINK](#). **Proposals will be due to the OEC by Wednesday – August 3, 2022, at 5:00 pm EST.**

Our vision for the support and achievement of high quality is an ambitious one. We look forward to working with collaborative partners who will share and help us execute our vision. We look forward to reading your proposals, and we hope that many of you will join us in developing and implementing this system.

A small icon of a person, possibly representing a staff member or a participant.

In Partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Beth Bye".

Commissioner Beth Bye

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General Information

A. INTRODUCTION

- 1. RFP Name and Number.** Continuous Quality Improvement Supports: OEC-22-CQIS 2023-26
- 2. RFP Summary and Purpose.** The OEC is committed to ensuring that Connecticut's early childhood settings are able to access well-designed professional development experiences delivered by qualified technical assistance providers. To that end, the OEC seeks professional development entities that design and deliver learning opportunities to providers in the early care and education field. This RFP outlines activities ranging from direct training and coaching activities to designing frameworks for professional learning and supporting a continuous quality improvement mindset across early childhood settings.
- 3. Commodity Codes.** The services that OEC wishes to procure through this RFP are as follows:
86000000: Education and Training Services

B. INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Official Contacts.** The OEC has designated the individual below as 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 on behalf of the OEC. Proposers, prospective proposers, and other interested parties are advised that any communication with any other OEC employee(s) (including appointed officials) or personnel under contract to the OEC about this RFP is strictly prohibited. Proposers or prospective proposers who violate this instruction may risk disqualification from further consideration.

Name: Africka S. Hinds

Address: Office of Early Childhood, 450 Columbus Street, Hartford, CT 06103

Phone: (860) 500 - 4549

E-Mail: oeq.rfp.eceqi@ct.gov

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

- 2. Registering with State Contracting Portal.** Respondents must register with the State of CT contracting portal at <https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/Registration> if not already registered. Respondents shall submit the following information pertaining to this application to this portal (on their supplier profile), which will be checked by the OEC contact.
 - Secretary of State recognition – Click on appropriate response
 - Non-profit status, if applicable
 - Notification to Bidders, Parts I-V
 - Campaign Contribution Certification (OPM Ethics Form 1): <https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/Fin-PSA/Forms/Ethics-Forms>
- 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:
 - Agency's RFP Web Page: <https://www.ctoec.org/rfps/>
 - State Contracting Portal (go to CTSource bid board, filter by "Early Childhood, Office of"): <https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/BidBoard>

It is strongly recommended that any proposer or prospective proposer interested in this procurement check the Bid Board for any solicitation changes. Interested proposers may receive additional e-mails from CTSource announcing addendums that are posted on the portal. This service is provided as a courtesy to assist in monitoring activities associated with State procurements, including this RFP.

- 4. Procurement Schedule.** See below. Dates after the due date for proposals ("Proposals Due") are non-binding target dates only (*). The OEC may amend the schedule as needed. Any change to non-target dates will be made by means of an amendment to this RFP and will be posted on the State Contracting Portal and, if available, the OEC's RFP Web Page.

RFP Released: **Wednesday – June 22, 2022**
Optional RFP Conference: **Wednesday - June 29, 2022**
Optional Letter of Intent Due: **Wednesday - July 27, 2022**
Q&A Period: **June 29 – July 20, 2022**

The OEC will collect and respond to questions weekly.

Questions Received By...	Will Have Answers By...
Wednesday – June 29	Tuesday – July 5
Wednesday – July 6	Tuesday – July 12
Wednesday – July 13	Tuesday – July 19
Wednesday – July 20	Tuesday – July 26

Proposals Due: **Wednesday – August 3, 2022**
(*) Proposer Selection: **Wednesday - August 31, 2022**
(*) Start of Contract: **January 1, 2023**

- 5. Contract Awards.** The award of any contract pursuant to this RFP is dependent upon the availability of funding to the OEC. The OEC anticipates the following:

Total Funding Available	Up to \$10.6 million dollars. The estimated annual amounts currently total \$9.7 million dollars: Fiscal Year 2023: \$1,359,871 Fiscal Year 2024: \$2,861,317 Fiscal Year 2025: \$2,756,834 Fiscal Year 2026: \$2,756,394
Number of Awards	Multiple
Contract Term	42 months; 3.5 years
Funding Source	This contract will be funded through the Child Care Development Funds (CCDF) and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

- 6. Eligibility.** 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.
- 7. Minimum Qualifications of Proposers.** To qualify for a contract award, a proposer must have the following minimum qualifications:
- Be able to provide sufficient staff at the time of award, including managerial and administrative support to implement the required operational, research, and evaluation services, including the ability to meet OEC data/technology and report requirements defined in the scope of services description section.
 - Be in sound fiscal health, as determined by documentation of clean opinions in audited financial statements for the last 3 years (or whatever number of years are available, for newer organizations); a recent organizational budget; and the respondent's most recent statement of financial activities (profit and loss statement).
 - Adhere to generally accepted accounting principles.
 - Be registered with [System of Award Management \(SAM\)](#) by the time of contract execution.
- 8. Letter of Intent.** A Letter of Intent (LOI) is not required by this RFP but highly encouraged. The LOI is non-binding and does not obligate the sender to submit a proposal. The LOI must be submitted to the Official Contact by e-mail by the deadline established in the Procurement Schedule. The LOI must clearly identify the sender, including name, postal address, telephone number, and e-mail address. It is the sender's responsibility to confirm the OEC's receipt of the LOI.

- 9. Inquiry Procedures.** All questions regarding this RFP or the OEC's procurement process must be directed, in writing, to the Official Contact before the deadline specified in the Procurement Schedule. The early submission of questions is encouraged. Questions will not be accepted or answered verbally – neither in person nor over the telephone. All questions received before the deadline(s) will be answered. However, the OEC will not answer questions when the source is unknown (i.e., nuisance or anonymous questions). Questions deemed unrelated to the RFP or the procurement process will not be answered. At its discretion, the OEC may or may not respond to questions received after the deadline. The OEC may combine similar questions and give only one answer. All questions and answers will be compiled into a written amendment to this RFP. 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.

The agency will release the answers to questions on the date(s) established in the Procurement Schedule. The OEC will publish any and all amendments to this RFP on the State Contracting Portal and, if available, on the OEC's RFP Web Page. At its discretion, the OEC may distribute any amendments to this RFP to prospective proposers who submitted a Letter of Intent or attended the RFP Conference.

- 10. RFP Conference.** A virtual RFP Bidder's Conference will be held on **Wednesday, June 29, 2022, at 11:00 am EST to answer questions from prospective proposers.** Attendance at the conference is optional, but highly encouraged. The OEC will publish conference material on its website following the conclusion of the conference. Any oral answers given at the conference by the OEC's representatives are tentative and not binding on the OEC. All questions submitted will be answered in a written amendment to this RFP, which will serve as the OEC's official response to questions asked at the conference. 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. The agency will release the amendment on the date established in the Procurement Schedule. The OEC will publish any and all amendments to this RFP on the State Contracting Portal and, if available, on the OEC's RFP Web Page.
- 11. Proposal Due Date and Time.** The Official Contact is the **only authorized recipient** of proposals submitted in response to this RFP. Proposals must be received by the Official Contacts on or before the due date and time: **August 3, 2022, at 5:00 pm EST.**

Please be aware that delays may occur when emailing submissions with large attachments and plan accordingly. **Proposals received after the due date and time will be ineligible for review.** The OEC will send an official letter alerting late respondents of ineligibility.

An acceptable submission must include the following:

- One (1) conforming electronic copy of the original proposal. The proposal must be complete, properly formatted and outlined, and ready for evaluation by the Screening Committee.

The electronic copy of the proposal must be emailed to the official agency contacts for this procurement. The subject line of the email must read: **OEC-22-QIS RFP Response.** The main body should be submitted in **PDF** format, while the **budget template should be submitted as a spreadsheet.** Required forms and appendices may be scanned and submitted as PDFs at the end of the main proposal document. Please consolidate the main proposal body and attachments into a single PDF file or as few files as possible. Please be sure that each file submitted with your proposal is appropriately titled with your organization name and an indicator of the content. For example, if you are submitting the main body and attachments as one file, an appropriate file title would be **"ORNAME_FullProposal"**. If you are submitting the budget, an appropriate file title would be **"ORNAME_Budget"**.

Please ensure the entire email submission is less than 25MB as this reflects the OEC's server limitations. Respondents should work to ensure there are not additional IT limitations from the provider side.

- 12. Multiple Proposals.** There are seven different categories of activities that will comprise the Quality Improvement Supports System. The Scope of Work Application allows entities to apply for one or more activities through a single proposal. Please be aware that there are some requirements specific to the Accreditation Quality Improvement Support (AQIS) activity:
- A single entity may respond to one or more regions AND
 - Respondents by region must be the deliverer of services of the region(s) applied for AND
 - AQIS facilitators must be employees, not contractors, of the responding entity per region. Entities applying for AQIS activity, may elect to apply to implement the Development and Coordination of Consulting Supports.

I. Purpose of RFP and Scope of Services

A. OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD OVERVIEW

Established in 2013, the Office of Early Childhood (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, expertise, and a wide range of early childhood and family support services that were formerly housed at five different state agencies. The goal of the Office is to build an integrated early childhood system that includes high quality services for family support and home visiting services, early intervention services, and early care and education programming.

The OEC provides funding standards, regulations, quality improvement supports, technical assistance, 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 health development and success.
- Provide equitable access for all.

The OEC is organized into three programming divisions: Early Care and Education and Quality Improvement, Child Care and Camp Licensing, and Family Support. These programming divisions are supported by the Operations and Legal divisions, all under the leadership of the Commissioner’s Office. The OEC is the State’s lead agency for childcare under the federal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). This federal program supports improving the supply and quality of childcare programs and services for infants and toddlers. The OEC is also the State’s lead agency for the prevention of child abuse and neglect under the federal Community Based Child Abuse Prevention program; the Birth to Three program; state-funded home visiting programs; and the federal Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting grant. In addition, the OEC is the state affiliate of the national Help Me Grow program.

The Early Care and Education and Quality Improvement Division

Within the OEC, the Early Care and Education and Quality Improvement Division is responsible for the implementation of quality improvement supports and funding to school-, center-, and home-based child care providers. The Division manages quality improvement contracts to deliver technical assistance and to support providers in the implementation of the OEC’s foundational documents, including [the State’s Early Learning and Development Standards](#), Documentation and Observation for Teaching systems, and the [Core Knowledge and Competency Frameworks](#). The Division also guides and monitors the delivery of school readiness grants, child day care contracts, and Smart Start awards. The OEC’s primary tools to house and manage data related to the child care workforce and provider qualifications are the [Early Childhood Professional Registry](#) and [ECE Reporter](#).

B. PROPOSAL OVERVIEW: CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT SUPPORTS

As the OEC continues to strengthen quality improvement support for early care and education providers in Connecticut, these funds will establish the foundation for a statewide, integrated professional development system. The OEC seeks proposals from private and public organizations to implement OEC technical assistance activities that support this system, including training, coaching, and consultation utilizing best practice strategies for delivering assistance that provides not only information but also enhance early care and education practices. The scope of work is divided into seven activities that respondents can choose from in the Scope of Work Application (see attachment A). Below is a summary of the activities' goals with further details in the Scope of Work Application:

- reaching personnel working with young children in settings including family childcare, and center- and school-based programs with improvement supports and early childhood standards and assessment content;
- supporting technical assistance providers with best practices;
- developing a best practice coaching framework;
- coordinating the Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC) portfolio process; and
- anchoring the Quality Improvement Rating Scales Services

Background & Problem Statement

OEC recognizes that program stability and staffing issues may pose challenges for full and active provider engagement. COVID-19 challenged the implementation of the quality improvement support contracts issued March 2020 through December 2022. Early care and education providers were unable to fully access available supports, while technical assistance providers needed to shift to on-line delivery as early childhood settings struggled to remain open. These challenges highlight the need for integrated, cohesive support to the provider community.

Connecticut general statute 10-500(b) allows OEC to address these issues by providing professional development to support the early care and education field in their efforts to reach and maintain quality early care and education. The OEC is also charged with creating a Quality Improvement System (QIS). Specifically, legislation outlines quality improvement supports in the form of maintaining an accreditation facilitation initiative and ensuring a state-wide system of professional development. The funds offered through this proposal will cultivate a quality improvement mindset in the field while meeting legislative allowances.

Creating systems that promote a continuous quality improvement mindset requires intentional design, collaboration, and an understanding of capacity gaps. Prior survey and interview data show that technical assistance providers need their own supports in order to better deliver assistance to the field and that expanding the diversity and bilingual capability of available technical assistance providers would support increased quality of assistance as well as the ability to reach more diverse settings.

In 2021, the OEC commissioned a needs assessment survey to explore the professional learning needs of our technical assistance providers and programs and to gather feedback about our current professional development system. The survey response rate was 54% (about 107 people across roles such as technical assistance providers, program directors, staff). The recommendations from that survey are summarized below in two categories – technical assistance design and integrated content:

- **Design:** Design technical assistance to include mentoring, peer coaching, and attention to program leaders as instructional leaders. Include a balance of knowledge and skill building with application of practice. Explicitly define culturally appropriate feedback and evaluation methods.
- **Integrated Content:** Embed family well-being within content. Intentionally integrate activities in alignment with OEC's vision. Routinely use data as a basis for examining participant practices.

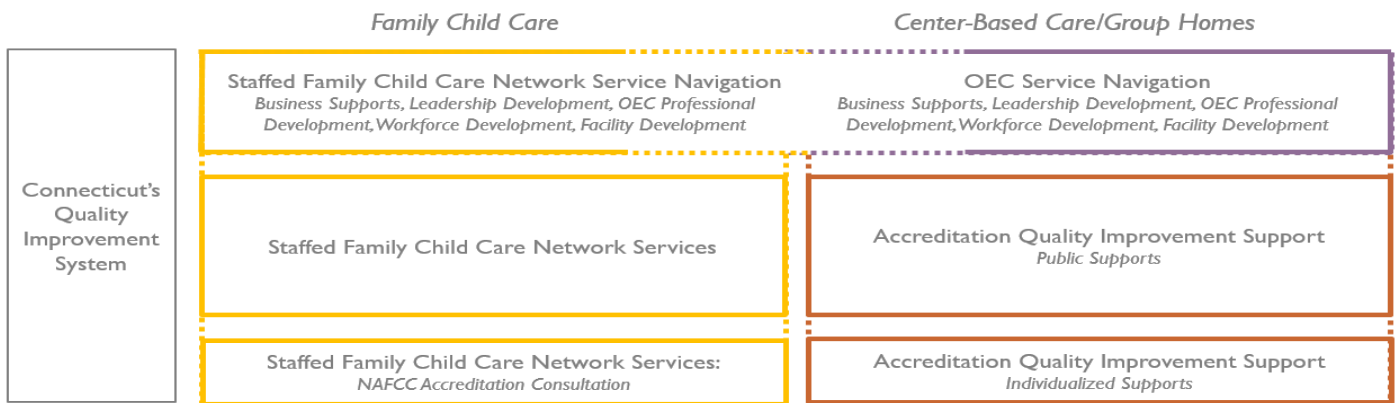
This context provided an opportunity to reflect upon equity, inclusion, diversity, design, and delivery of OEC offerings and capacity. Our collective learning brings us to this new Request for Proposals more informed and ready to engage.

Project Objectives

To continue supporting professional learning across early care and education settings, all contractors involved in the Continuous Quality Improvement Supports (CQIS) will become familiar with the OEC’s emerging Quality Improvement System (QIS). The QIS supports quality improvement practices for licensed and state-funded programs in all settings as well as readiness for National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation, National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) accreditation, and/or Head Start approval. Additionally, the QIS directly connects state supports to national systems including NAEYC, NAFCC, and Head Start.

The QIS connects providers to quality improvement supports to leverage potential growth. The CQIS activities are designed to work in concert with the objectives of the Quality Improvement System.

**QUALITY IMPROVEMENT
BUILT ON EXISTING SYSTEMS**



While the Accreditation Quality Improvement Support (AQIS) activity is most closely related to NAEYC or NAFCC accreditation criteria and quality improvement activities funded by Child Care Development Funds (CCDF), other activities outlined in this proposal address the inherent structures that settings need in order to be successful within accreditation criteria or Head Start standards. For example:

- Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Activity: Connects to NAEYC standards 2,3 and 4, NAFCC Learning Activities Standard, Head Start Performance Standard – Program Operations Subpart C; CCDF section 6.2.1
- Early Childhood Teacher Credential Individual Review Route Coordination: Connects to NAEYC standards 3 and 6; NAFCC Learning Activities Standard; Head Start Standard Program Operations Subpart I; CCDF section 6.2.4
- Rating Scales Activity: Connects to NAEYC standard 9, NAFCC Environment Standard, Head Start Performance Standard – Program Operations Subpart C; CCDF section 7.3.2(c)

Vision for Success

Successful implementation of these activities will support OEC’s efforts to build the foundation for a coordinated statewide-integrated professional development system for early care and education providers in Connecticut.

Respondents are invited to choose activities most suited to their expertise, and the OEC may award contracts to multiple entities. 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. Contractors may need to utilize sub-contractors who work across multiple contracts in order to ensure appropriate expertise and the availability of supports across the state.

OEC realizes success depends on building the capacity and diversity of our technical assistance providers and not over burdening our existing technical assistance providers. In that spirit, the OEC will be the lead entity in monitoring these contracts and providing leadership to coordinate

statewide efforts to design and deliver high-quality technical assistance to settings serving young children. Meanwhile, contractors will be expected to implement policies that address, monitor, and report on any potential conflicts of interest. In addition, contractors will be responsible for monitoring staffing and sub-contractor assignments and hours to ensure appropriate billing of time for activities under OEC contract.

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 delivery and engage in evaluation of each activity. The target audience of technical assistance include individuals working in early care and education centers, public schools, and family childcare homes, and other settings as indicated in outlined activities. The awarded respondents and OEC will work collaboratively as follows:

Contractor Expectations	OEC Responsibilities
<p>Manage coordination of OEC technical assistance activities and data collection for each awarded activity.</p>	<p>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 implementation.</p>
<p>Contractors and their sub-contractors shall attend meetings for up to four per year, three organized by the contractor awarded the Technical Assistance Provider Supports activity and one annual OEC convening for a total of four meetings each year of this contract.</p>	<p>The OEC shall engage in the content design of the Technical Assistance Provider meetings.</p>
<p>Engage in OEC data and IT systems, which currently include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protraxx system for registering participants in OEC approved TA activities. • Canvas learning management system as directed by the OEC Activity Lead when activity requires. Some activities may not require utilizing Canvas • Registry system for referral to staff and sub-contractors as all are expected to meet the technical assistance approval criteria. Education and Training report can be submitted by individuals to the contractor to check degree level and adult learning requirement. <p>OEC systems are subject to change and Contractors shall engage in the systems OEC creates or adopts.</p>	<p>Provide access and training in OEC systems, currently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protraxx • Canvas <p>OEC systems are subject to change and OEC shall provide training in any system OEC creates or adopts.</p>
<p>The Contractors 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 Universal Chart of Accounts (UCOA) Form provided by the OEC; • Market OEC funded activities using OEC logos to clearly differentiate other activities that are not funded by OEC and • Other reporting as determined by OEC specific to any individual activity. 	<p>The OEC will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Assign OEC Activity Leads 3. Collaborate with Contractor on design and implementation of all activities; 4. Provide the Contractor with policy and implementation guidance; 5. Provide the Contractor with technical assistance as needed; 6. Retain final authority for making and communicating policy decisions affecting the design, delivery, and evaluation of technical assistance activities; 7. Review and approve all Contractor activities performed under this contract; 8. Monitor contract activities according to goals, policies, guidance and timelines; 9. Communicate with the Contractor regarding priorities, trends, and needs assessments;

	<p>10. Hold regularly scheduled meetings related to the contract;</p> <p>11. Attend activities related to the contract; Provide formats for reports, including data to be collected; and</p> <p>12. Review reports submitted and provided follow up to ensure each Respondent is contributing and accountable to the success of each activity. Request updates as appropriate.</p>
<p>The Contractor shall hire and deploy staff to meet the requirements of the contract. Consideration should be given to hiring multicultural and multilingual employees. The Contractor shall identify all staff in the Schedule A and Justification Tabs of the UCOA that will ultimately provide the approved contract budget.</p> <p>The Contractor shall ensure staff qualifications and sub-contractors conducting services outlined in the program activities, meet, or have an OEC-approved plan to meet, OEC criteria for qualified technical assistance providers for each position as approved by the OEC prior to contract execution. (Please see Attachment C for completion.)</p> <p>The Contractor shall sign and submit an OEC developed attestation agreeing to comply with the NAEYC Code of Ethics and Code of Ethics Supplement for Early Childhood Adult Educators and will include this same provision in all sub-contracts. (Please see Attachment B for completion by individuals.)</p> <p>The Contractor shall immediately notify the OEC in writing whenever the Contractor intends to make or undergo changes in the direct service personnel that are allocated to this contract. Upon OEC review and approval of personnel changes, the Contractor shall update the Schedule A Tab of the UCOA, which will correlate with the contract budget.</p>	<p>The OEC will develop a Technical Assistance Provider application through the OEC Registry. Until such time, OEC will provide guidance regarding how contractors can collect and submit information regarding their staff and sub-contractors in meeting the OEC technical assistance provider criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds adult learning course or OEC modules as verified by the Registry. If technical assistance provider does not hold adult learning, the employee/sub-contractor will take within one year of working for the contractor under this funding. • Holds a minimum of an Associates Degree with at least 12 early childhood credits, bachelor's degree preferred. • Submits an OEC developed attestation agreeing to comply with the NAEYC Code of Ethics and Code of Ethics Supplement for Early Childhood Adult Educators. • Engage in an OEC provided orientation when it is available for viewing in Canvas. • Become familiar with the OEC Technical Assistance Provider Core Knowledge and Competency Framework.
<p>The Contractor shall engage in quality assurance activities performed by OEC, such as: audit of materials, staffing audits for hours per activity, across activities and across contractors, observations of events, survey dissemination, and meeting at least monthly with OEC activity leads.</p>	<p>The OEC shall engage in actively managing contract activities including monthly check ins, quarterly meetings with Contractor activity leads, observing events as appropriate, conducting audit of materials, and developing surveys for dissemination.</p>
<p>The Contractor shall engage in transition activities from one contract to another, if applicable, for the purpose of transitioning materials and to avoid disruption of services to the public.</p>	<p>The OEC shall coordinate transition activities between contractor to avoid disruption of services to the public and to maintain documentation of all materials.</p>
<p>The Contractor shall integrate content and OEC foundational standards, as appropriate, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family well-being • CT Core Knowledge and Competency Framework alignment • NAEYC program criteria alignment • NAEYC higher education preparation standards alignment • NAFCC criteria alignment 	<p>The OEC shall assist with alignment and content revisions and/or development as part of regularly scheduled activity meetings.</p>

C. SCOPE OF SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Organizational Expectations

Organizations may apply for one or more activities (see attachment A). As such, it is expected that the organization holds, and/or can sub-contract, the knowledge and skill set needed to perform the work as described. The organization will need to be financially stable, collaborative, and able to be flexible to address the needs of the field and be responsive to potential changes in delivery of services. In particular, the OEC is interested in potential respondents with the following criteria:

- **Expertise** - The OEC will accept responses to this RFP from organizations for whom the field of early care and education is central to their delivery of technical assistance. The ideal respondent possesses deep knowledge of early childhood development, design and delivery of technical assistance, and familiarity with the ecosystem of organizations, governing entities, and funding streams that support the field of early childhood education. The ideal respondent would also be knowledgeable in Connecticut's childcare workforce and regulatory environment.
- **Track Record of Success** – The ideal respondent has an organizational history that illustrates its longevity, capacity to manage innovative and complex programmatic initiatives, and track record in the early care and education field.
- **Innovation and Change Management** – The ideal respondent has the capacity to develop and deliver innovative solutions to sector-wide challenges and to lead a process for facilitating change in the way providers have managed their businesses since their inception.
- **Strategic Alignment** – The ideal respondent's organizational mission and direction aligns with the OEC's mission and vision (<https://www.ctoec.org/about-oec/>).
- **Leadership** – The ideal respondent would be able to exercise leadership to support the early childhood field with navigating the resources, instilling the confidence and competence needed to promote a continuous improvement mindset.
- **Fiscal Management** – The ideal respondent possesses sophisticated financial control systems and would be able to manage complex fiscal arrangements, be able to sub-contract if needed, and provide regular financial reporting to OEC.
- **Technology** – The ideal respondent possesses sophisticated technology capabilities to engage in OEC's learning management system, be able to provide training and coaching for both in-person and on-line formats, and host calls and meetings to accommodate fifty or more participants.

Staffing Expectations

- **Governance & Leadership** – The ideal respondent's governing board, chief executive, and senior staff are actively engaged in the early education and care field and have the ability to provide strategic leadership in this area.
- **Dedicated Personnel** – The ideal respondent's personnel will be afforded an appropriate amount of time to fully engage in the work. Full time equivalence will be regarded as a strength in the response. Sub-contracting is allowable in cases where the organization needs to seek expertise, diversity, and capacity to fulfill the intended implementation of the activity. **NOTE: Sub-contracting is not allowed for the Accreditation Quality Improvement Supports facilitator role.** Staff and sub-contractors associated with the design and delivery of the activities must meet the OEC Technical Assistance Provider criteria.
- **Diverse Workforce** – The ideal respondent has, or is actively working towards, a diverse workforce, with multicultural and multilingual employees.
- **Conflict of Interest Practices** – The ideal respondent has processes in place that document conflict of interest attestations by staff and sub-contractors. It is expected that staff and sub-contractors divulge information regarding all contracts, board positions, committees, and general technical assistance for which they may be involved to each contractor they may be associated with.

Service Expectations

- **Target Audience for Technical Assistance** – Staff in settings where young children are served; center-based childcare, family childcare, public school-based preschool. An emphasis on infants and toddlers either specifically and/or embedded and promoted within delivery of the activities. Activities addressing meeting the needs of technical assistance providers, the target audience included contractors and sub-contractors under this funding as well as individuals interested in becoming OEC approved technical assistance providers.

- **Core Services** – To provide one or more professional learning activities as described to the target audience. Attachment A lists the full descriptions and expectations. Respondents may choose one or more activities in their response.
- **Products and Delivery** - All products created under this contract are the property of OEC. Use of all OEC products must be appropriately attributed to the funding source, activity, and the OEC. Contractors and sub-contractors may only use OEC products and/or products approved by the OEC for all OEC approved activities. Contractors and sub-contractors shall not develop same or similar professional development activities as the OEC approved version to offer for free or for a fee without written consent by the OEC.

General Description of Activities <i>See attachment A for details</i>			
A1 Accreditation Quality Improvement Supports	Accreditation facilitators support a range of Early Childhood providers in areas of continuous quality program improvement and NAEYC accreditation processes and standards for early learning programs. They deliver supports through individualized technical assistance for providers seeking initial or renewal of accreditation; public trainings that explore NAEYC’s best practice standards and accreditation readiness; and consulting supports to fragile programs to ensure progress in the program’s compliance with OEC licensing and/or movement towards accreditation readiness. The six AQIS Regions will be listed as an attachment to this RFP.		
A1 Accreditation Quality Improvement Supports - Regions	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="border: none; vertical-align: top;"> <input type="checkbox"/> A1NC North Central <input type="checkbox"/> A1NE North East <input type="checkbox"/> A1NW North West </td> <td style="border: none; vertical-align: top;"> <input type="checkbox"/> A1SC South Central <input type="checkbox"/> A1SE South East <input type="checkbox"/> A1SW South West </td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> A1NC North Central <input type="checkbox"/> A1NE North East <input type="checkbox"/> A1NW North West	<input type="checkbox"/> A1SC South Central <input type="checkbox"/> A1SE South East <input type="checkbox"/> A1SW South West
<input type="checkbox"/> A1NC North Central <input type="checkbox"/> A1NE North East <input type="checkbox"/> A1NW North West	<input type="checkbox"/> A1SC South Central <input type="checkbox"/> A1SE South East <input type="checkbox"/> A1SW South West		
A2 Standards, Curriculum and Assessment	State early learning standards provide a foundation for strong curriculum and assessment practices. Knowing and applying appropriate teaching strategies, documenting child progress across all age and developmental ranges and reflecting on curriculum and practices are skills that anchor quality programming. This activity provides a range of professional learning experiences that meet the needs of early childhood providers across a variety of settings.		
A3 Early Childhood Teacher Credential Individual Review Route Coordination	This activity addresses an alternate route to meeting the qualified staff member criteria for state-funded early childhood programs. It supports candidates to meet the NAEYC professional preparation standards associated with an early childhood bachelor’s degree. The coordinator of this activity supports portfolio development and the review process. Note: The ECTC Individual Review Route is allowed through legislation. Should legislation change, this activity, along with its scope of work, would change to meet any new legislative requirements.		
A4 Adult Learning In-Service Coaching	Competent technical assistance providers understand the adult learning theories and know key strategies that have the greatest impact on the adult learner’s experience with professional learning. This activity provides the opportunity for trainers and coaches who have some adult learning background to refresh their skills with a personal coach.		
A5 Technical Assistance Provider Supports	Confident and competent technical assistance providers support NAEYC, NAFCC, and Head Start overall implementation of standards bringing an equity lens to the work with early childhood settings. This activity provides professional learning opportunities to our technical assistance providers, explores development of a mentoring framework for onboarding technical assistance providers and peer supports in early childhood settings, engages in recruitment activities to build a more diverse and multi-lingual cadre of state approved technical assistance providers, and offers support for building the knowledge and skills of new and experienced coaches.		
A6 Coaching System Framework	Coaching provides the personal and professional support to build confidence and competence for technical assistance providers, early childhood administrators, and staff. This activity explores the possibility of future OEC framework for coaching practices that can be sustained within early childhood settings and as an external support for developing and maintaining a continuous quality improvement mindset.		
A7 Quality Improvement Rating Scales	Providing appropriate and supportive environments for young children is a foundation of quality. This activity provides funding to support the use of validated tools for program improvement and monitoring of state-funded programs. This activity involves provision of overview sessions for providers and ensuring a cadre of reliable raters for the following scales: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Third Edition (ECERS-3) • Infant and Toddler Environment Rating Scale, Third Edition (ITERS-3) • Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale, Third Edition (FCCERS-3) • Business Administration Scale (BAS) 		

Activity Budget				
	SFY23 1/1/23-6/30/23	SFY24 7/1/23-6/30/24	SFY25 7/1/24-6/30/25	SFY 26 7/1/25-6/30/26
A1 NC North Central Accreditation Quality Improvement Supports	Option A: \$187,331 Option B: \$223,595 *\$8,500	Option A: \$374,662 Option B: \$447,188 *\$14,000	Option A: \$374,662 Option B: \$447,188 *\$14,000	Option A: \$374,662 Option B: \$447,188 *\$14,000
A1 NE Northeast Accreditation Quality Improvement Supports	\$151,068 *\$8,500	\$302,135 *\$14,000	\$302,135 *\$14,000	\$302,135 *\$14,000
A1 NW Northwest Accreditation Quality Improvement Supports	\$151,068 *\$8,500	\$302,135 *\$14,000	\$302,135 *\$14,000	\$302,135 *\$14,000
A1 SC South Central Accreditation Quality Improvement Supports	Option A: \$187,331 Option B: \$223,595 *\$8,500	Option A: \$374,662 Option B: \$447,188 *\$14,000	Option A: \$374,662 Option B: \$447,188 *\$14,000	Option A: \$374,662 Option B: \$447,188 *\$14,000
A1 SE Southeast Accreditation Quality Improvement Supports	\$151,068 *\$8,500	\$302,135 *\$14,000	\$302,135 *\$14,000	\$302,135 *\$14,000
A1 SW Southwest Accreditation Quality Improvement Supports	\$151,068 *\$8,500	\$302,135 *\$14,000	\$302,135 *\$14,000	\$302,135 *\$14,000
A2 Standards, Curriculum and Assessment	\$152,130	\$504,460	\$491,260	\$491,260
A3 Early Childhood Teacher Credential Individual Review Route Coordination	\$29,445	\$58,889	\$58,889	\$58,889
A4 Adult Learning In-Service Coaching	\$6,288	\$12,577	\$0	\$0
A5 Technical Assistance Provider Supports	\$36,271	\$70,542	\$44,691	\$44,691
A6 Coaching System Framework	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$0	\$0
A7 Quality Improvement Rating Scales	\$94,303	\$187,985	\$190,130	\$189,690

***Optional addition to AQIS: Development and Coordination of Statewide Consulting Supports**

Data and Technology Expectations

- **Technology Utilization:** The ideal respondent would have the capacity and know-how to efficiently manage digitized administrative services, professional learning delivery through technology, and engagement in the OEC registration and learning management systems
- **Data Security, Privacy, and Confidentiality:** The ideal respondent is able to secure all data pursuant to all state and federal data statutes, regulations, and policies.

Financial Expectations

- **Fiscal Health** –The ideal respondent is in a fiscally sound position, as determined through clean opinions documented in the last 3 years of audited financial statements (or whatever number of years are available, for newer organizations); a recent organizational budget; and the respondent's most recent statement of financial activities (profit and loss statement).
- **Financial Management** – The ideal respondent has strong financial systems and reporting capabilities and would be able to manage contracts with third parties contracted to deliver training and technical assistance services to the target audience. Respondents should be using Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

Budget Expectations

- **Program Funding Sources:** This contract may be funded through a combination of state and federal funds. Regardless of funding source, the administrative cap for the services outlined in this request of proposals is 10%. The administrative cap is a combined figure inclusive of the lead agency and any sub-grantee administrative costs.
 - **Total Available Funding & Award Period:** The contractor(s) selected to implement one or more activities would be awarded the sum total per activity which includes 10% administrative funds over the period outlined by each activity. Funds will be distributed on a quarterly basis within the following time frames to align with beginning and ending of state fiscal year. The amount will be calculated based on the activity amounts.
 - January 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023 (2 payments)
 - July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024 (4 payments)
 - July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025 (4 payments)
 - July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026 (4 payments)

- **Cost Standards:** Respondents' budget and planned expenditures for 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 these contracts are primarily funded through federal grants, respondents are also expected to adhere to standards prescribed by the Federal Office of Management and Budget Cost Principles, which can be found online at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/management-and-budget-office>

In order to comply with State & Federal requirements, awarded providers must maintain separate accounting/cost centers for State and Federal funding using generally accepted accounting practices. The OEC will reach out to the selected contractor about allowable expenditures.

In addition to required compliance with the published cost standards, respondents are advised that a responsive budget must limit annual administrative costs to 10% of the total budget. State or federal funding, by activity, will be determined at point of contracting for final determination of administrative cap.

Per OPM Cost Allocation guidelines, unused/unexpended State funding at the end of the State Fiscal Year (SFY) has to be returned to the State and cannot be carried forward to the following SFY. Federal funds can be carried forward to the next Federal Budget year with OEC review and approval.

D. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT/DATA REPORTING

As part of the State's commitment to becoming more outcomes oriented, OEC seeks to actively and regularly collaborate with contractors to enhance contract management, improve results, and adjust service delivery and policy based on learning what works. The awarded contractor should expect to partner extensively with the OEC staff in its own continuous learning and improvement processes.

OEC will work with the awarded contractor to set expectations for what contract management will look like. At minimum, this will include:

- Frequent, regular meetings focused on project planning; assessing strategy and progress towards system goals; assessing professional learning needs in the community and/or with technical assistance providers; engaging in survey development and delivery; and advancing the field within the Quality Improvement System as appropriate.
- Timely submission of progress updates, fiscal reports, activity specific data; and
- Open lines of communication to proactively address challenges and course correct.

As the OEC data systems expand, the awarded contractors may be required to enter and adhere to data sharing and reporting agreements with the OEC. Should they occur, the awarded contractor will be required to notify the OEC of any data breaches within 24 hours.

E. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are two levels of performance measures that will be regularly analyzed throughout the lifetime of this contract. The first addresses the satisfaction and learning of the participants. The second addresses the performance of the technical assistance provider and the OEC professional development system itself. Data will be used to:

- Understand the learner's experience in order for Contractors to reflect upon the design and delivery of their work and make modifications;
- Respond to emerging needs of learners and technical assistance providers regarding professional growth; and
- Inform OEC about the efficiency and effectiveness of our technical assistance system in order to consider Contractor performance and the OEC system overall

The table below highlights outcomes of interest that the OEC may examine during the course of this contract to understand performance. The table below does not represent an exhaustive list; rather, it is an indicator of how the OEC may approach analyzing its desired outcomes. The OEC looks forward to working with the contractors to collaboratively refine and define additional important performance metrics.

Desired Outcome	Potential Metric	Potential Data Source
Participants feel supported with their learning and find content is relevant to their work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction rates • Identified personal learnings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of event evaluation submitted through Protraxx
Participants and technical assistance providers feel valued for their feedback to influence the emerging quality system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System satisfaction rates and feedback from participants and technical assistance providers 	Service surveys – midpoint and endpoint of contract period Quality assurance reviews through observed events and audit of materials.
Professional learning participation increases across activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants by activity, as appropriate 	Quarterly report – common criteria across activities as appropriate

In addition to the list above, the OEC will provide quality assurance monitoring of our professional development system. Some examples of quality assurance monitoring-strategies include audits of Contractor products by activity, observation of events, and notes to active contract management conversations. OEC may monitor staff and sub-contractor time allocation by activity, across activities, and across contracts.

III. Proposal Submission Overview

A. SUBMISSION FORMAT

1. Required Outline. All proposals must follow the required outline presented in Section IV – Proposal Outline. ***Proposals that fail to follow the required outline will be deemed non-responsive and not evaluated.***

2. Cover Sheet. The Cover Sheet is Page 1 of the proposal. The Cover Sheet should include the following:

• RFP Name and Number	• Contact Person, Title
• Entity Legal Name and FEIN	• Contact Phone Number and E-mail Address
• Street Address	• Authorized Official, Title
• Town/City, State Zip	• Authorized Official Signature

3. Table of Contents. All proposals must include a Table of Contents that conforms with the required proposal outline.

4. Executive Summary. Proposals must include a high-level summary, not exceeding 2 pages of the main proposal and proposed budget.

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

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

- **Paper Size:** 8 ½ x 11 (Letter)
- **Page Limit:** Maximum 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)
- **Font Size:** 12
- **Font Type:** Times New Roman
- **Margins:** Normal (1 inch)
- **Line Spacing:** 1.5

7. Pagination. The proposer's name must be displayed in the header of each page. All pages, including the required Appendices and Forms, must be numbered in the footer.

8. Declaration of Confidential Information. Proposers 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 proposer deems that certain information required by this RFP is confidential, the proposer must label such information as CONFIDENTIAL prior to submission. In subsection F of the proposal submission, the proposer must reference where the information labeled CONFIDENTIAL is located in the proposal. *EXAMPLE: Section G.1.a.* For each subsection so referenced, the proposer must provide a convincing explanation and rationale sufficient to justify an exemption of the 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 proposer 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).

9. Conflict of Interest - Disclosure Statement. Proposers 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 proposer 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 proposer tries to influence, or succeeds in influencing, the outcome of an official decision for their personal or corporate benefit. The OEC will determine whether any disclosed conflict of interest poses a substantial advantage to the proposer 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 proposer must affirm such in the disclosure statement. *Example: "[name of proposer] 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."*

B. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

1. **Evaluation Process.** It is the intent of the OEC to conduct a comprehensive, fair, and impartial evaluation of proposals received in response to this RFP. When evaluating proposals, negotiating with successful proposers, and awarding contracts, the OEC will conform with its written procedures for POS and PSA procurements (pursuant to C.G.S. § 4-217) and the State's Code of Ethics (pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 1-84 and 1-85). Final funding allocation decisions will be determined during contract negotiation.
2. **Evaluation Committee.** The OEC will designate an Evaluation Committee to evaluate proposals submitted in response to this RFP. The Evaluation Committee will be composed of individuals, the OEC staff or other designees as deemed appropriate. The contents of all submitted proposals, including any confidential information, will be shared with the Evaluation Committee. Only proposals found to be responsive (that is, complying with all instructions and requirements described herein) will be reviewed, rated, and scored. Proposals that fail to comply with all instructions may be rejected after review by the Evaluation Committee Chairs. The Evaluation Committee shall evaluate all proposals that meet the Minimum Submission Requirements by score and rank ordered and make recommendations for awards. The OEC Commissioner will make the final selection. Attempts by any proposer (or representative of any proposer) to contact or influence any member of the Evaluation Committee may result in disqualification of the proposer.
3. **Minimum Submission Requirements.** To be eligible for evaluation, proposals must (1) meet the Proposal Format requirements; (2) follow the required Proposal Outline; and (3) be complete. Proposals that fail to follow instructions or satisfy these minimum submission requirements may be disqualified upon review of the Evaluation Committee Chairs. The OEC will reject any proposal that deviates significantly from the requirements of this RFP.
4. **Evaluation Criteria and Weights.** Proposals meeting the Minimum Submission Requirements will be evaluated according to the established criteria. The criteria are the objective standards that the Evaluation Committee will use to evaluate the technical merits of the proposals. Only the criteria listed below will be used to evaluate proposals. The weights are disclosed below.

Evaluation Criterion Title	% of Total	What would a top score look like?
Organizational Strengths	25%	<p>The ideal respondent...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates sustained commitment to and credibility in the early childhood field, with a history of thought leadership and innovation, as well as an experienced staff and a governing board that has subject-matter expertise. • Has the ability to leverage its own capacity/infrastructure to provide training, coaching, and other support services to the target audience, as demonstrated through a strong staffing plan with personnel who individually or cumulatively possess the range of skills related to the activities chosen. • Clearly articulates a cultural humility and equity framework, with an explanation of how that framework will shape both internal processes and external-facing activities. • Provides past examples and/or future-oriented decision-making frameworks illustrating how they will be responsive and adaptable to a dynamic programming environment. • Has prior experience managing state contracts and working collaboratively with public sector partners.
Scope of Work Application	40%	<p>The ideal respondent...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies 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. If this is not applicable, it is clearly stated that the organization has not engaged in related contracts. • Demonstrates ability to address activity specificity as it relates to the intended audience. • Demonstrates capability to collect and report relevant data and specified data.
IT, Data, Evaluation, and Performance Management	15%	<p>The ideal respondent...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has prior experience developing and measuring key metrics, and utilizing data to generate performance insights • Demonstrates an ability to effectively communicate data-derived insights and build data literacy among stakeholders • Articulates a clear, logical vision for developing and implementing a performance management framework • Has the IT infrastructure and enhanced data reporting capacity in place to manage performance and program evaluation data • Has internal capacity on staff to support evaluation and to manage contractor/subcontractors in this area, as needed • Has the ability to adhere to all state and federal data share statutes, regulations, and policies and can secure all confidential information

Evaluation Criterion Title	% of Total	What would a top score look like?
Financial Profile	10%	<p>The ideal respondent...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates strong fiscal health as determined through clean opinions in the last 3 years of audited financial statements (or whatever number of years are available, for newer organizations); a recent organizational budget; and the respondent's most recent statement of financial activities (profit and loss statement) • Responsibly and proactively manages its financial systems, with clearly defined internal controls • Has prior experience managing complex financial reporting requirements • Uses Generally Accepted Accounting Principles with financial systems
Budget and Staffing Plan	10%	<p>The ideal budget and staffing plans...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe a reasonable, cost-effective use of funds, reflect a strategic commitment to the overall goals of delivering the activities in the way that monetary, in-kind, and staffing resources are allocated • Include the majority of staffing and sub-contractors as meeting the OEC requirements and states that those that currently do not meet requirements will so within one year of service under this contract. See Attachment C

Note: As part of its evaluation of the Staffing Plan, the Evaluation Committee will consider the proposer's demonstrated commitment to affirmative action, as required by the Regulations of CT State Agencies § 46A-68j-30(10).

5. **Proposer Selection.** Upon completing its evaluation of proposals, the Evaluation Committee will submit the rankings of all proposals to the OEC Commissioner. The final selection of a successful proposer is at the discretion of the OEC Commissioner. Any proposer selected will be so notified 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. All unsuccessful proposers will be notified by e-mail or U.S. mail, at the OEC's discretion, about the outcome of the evaluation and proposer selection process. The OEC reserves the right to decline to award contracts for activities in which the OEC Commissioner considers there are not adequate respondents.
6. **Debriefing.** Within ten (10) days of receiving notification from the OEC, unsuccessful proposers may contact the Official Contact and request information about the evaluation and proposer selection process. The e-mail sent date or the postmark date on the notification envelope will be considered "day one" of the ten (10) days. If unsuccessful proposers still have questions after receiving this information, they may contact the Official Contacts 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) 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.
7. **Appeal Process.** Pursuant to General Statutes § 4e-36 (a), any bidder or proposer on a state contract may contest the solicitation or award of a contract to a subcommittee of the State Contracting Standards Board. Such contest shall be submitted, in writing, not later than fourteen days after such bidder or proposer knew or should have known of the facts giving rise to such contest and shall be limited to the procedural elements of the solicitation or award process, or claims of an unauthorized or unwarranted, noncompetitive selection process.
8. **Contract Execution.** Any contract developed and executed as a result of this RFP is subject to the OEC's contracting procedures, which may include approval by the Office of the Attorney General. Fully executed and approved contracts will be posted on State Contracting Portal and the OEC website.

IV. Required Proposal Submission Outline

- A. Cover Sheet
- B. Table of Contents
- C. Executive Summary
- D. Main Proposal
- E. Attachments (Clearly referenced to summary and main proposal where applicable)
- F. Declaration of Confidential Information
- G. Conflict of Interest - Disclosure Statement
- H. Statement of Assurances

A. Cover Sheet

The respondent must include a Cover Sheet capturing the following information:

• RFP Name and Number	• Contact Person, Title
• Entity Legal Name and FEIN	• Contact Phone Number and E-mail Address
• Street Address	• Authorized Official, Title
• Town/City, State Zip	• Authorized Official Signature

Legal Name is defined as the name of private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality submitting the proposal. **Contact Person** 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 proposer to provide services in accordance with the terms and provisions described in this RFP and any amendments or attachments hereto.

B. 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.

C. Executive Summary

The page limitation for this section is two (2) 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 highlighted in the scope of services.

D. Main Proposal Submission Questions & Prompts

Please note the maximum total page length for the main proposal submission is 35 pages. Please limit narrative responses to the 20 prompts below to no more than five paragraphs per prompt, for a maximum of 100 paragraphs. All appendices and other attachments should be properly labeled in section E. The OEC Evaluation Committee **will not** read more than 35 pages in the main proposal section.

Organizational Strengths

- 1. Mission, Values & History:** Provide your organization's mission statement, values, a brief organizational history, and a description of core programs. How does your organization put your values to practice?
- 2. Organizational Expertise in Early Childhood Education:** Describe your organization's experience and expertise in early childhood education, highlighting your ability to design and deliver professional learning experiences as well as collect information that informs continuous quality improvement regarding design and delivery.
- 3. Familiarity with Early Childhood Education Delivery System and Foundational Documents:** Describe your organization's involvement with the early childhood education system, including public policy and workforce issues, program quality, licensing and various performance standards, funding streams (including Care4Kids vouchers, Head Start, School Readiness, USDA Child and Adult Food Program, etc.), early intervention and family engagement.

Describe your intent to integrate foundational early childhood documents such as the CT ELDS, the CT CKCs, NAEYC positions statements, etc. within your professional development design and delivery and/or how these documents guide your work.

- 4. Organizational Governance:** Provide a list of your organization's board of directors (and advisory councils, if appropriate) and include a brief summary of their qualifications. Indicate which members have experience in the early childhood space. Also provide a brief explanation of how major strategic and programming decisions are made at your organization and submit the minutes of your last two board meetings as a required attachment.
- 5. Cultural Humility and Equity:** Describe your organization's framework to advancing equity and applying cultural humility to your work. How is this framework applied *within* your organization, and how does it guide your *programming and project decisions*?
- 6. Statewide and Regional Support:** Describe any past or current projects your organization has worked on related to statewide and/or regional early care and education issues in Connecticut. How would you go about deepening your knowledge of statewide and regional issues? What approaches would you take to providing equitable resources to all providers statewide?
- 7. Capacity Building:** Share an example of a current or prior project where your organization supported capacity building for another organization (or cohort of organizations). What was the goal of the project? How did you identify the coaching and technical assistance needs of the recipient organization or individuals? How did you incorporate knowledge transfer and sustainability into your coaching or technical assistance provisions? What internal resources did you leverage to support the other organization(s), and what external resources did you draw on?
- 8. Contract Management:** Describe your experience managing state contracts. How was success defined? What competencies does your organization possess that made the contract management successful? If applicable, what adjustments did you make in between when the contract first started and when it ended to effectively meet the goals of the contract?
- 9. Adaptability Case Study:** Tell us about how your organization responded to the Covid-19 public health crisis, organizationally and programmatically. How did you support your staff members? How did you work with external partners or clients to address their needs? How did you put your equity and cultural humility framework into practice? What did you learn from this experience, what will you carry forward, and what will you let go?
- 10. Organizational Networks:** List and describe existing organizational partnerships with entities whose expertise complements your capacity in the early education arena. Include any Memoranda of Agreement/Understanding you have with relevant partners and current subcontractors in the required attachments section. (If you do not have any memoranda to include, simply indicate "No relevant memoranda" in your attachment section.)
- 11. Productive Collaboration:** Describe the process that your organization will use that balances the three components of productive collaboration (a group process that brings out the best in participants; builds trusting and respectful relationships; and moves participants towards measurable performance and results). In your response, be specific on how each of the three components are established.
- 12. Stakeholder Management:** Share an example of a time when there was disagreement or dissent between different stakeholders you were working with. How did you address the disagreement? What was the result of your efforts, and/or what would you have done differently based on what you learned from that experience?

IT, Data, Evaluation, and Performance Management

- 13. Performance Management:** Describe the process your organization would take to develop a performance management framework that moves program quality and individual supports and the overall system towards OEC's desired outcomes.
- 14. Data Protocols:** Describe your data security procedures to ensure data collected are kept secure, confidential and complies with all state, federal data share laws, regulations and policies. As a required attachment, share your organization's data privacy policy if one is available. If one is not yet available, describe the process you will take to formalizing data security and privacy into organizational policy.

- 15. Data Case Study:** Suppose that in Year 2 of the project, the early childhood settings or individuals are not engaging in offerings provided by your agency. How would you propose a shift in delivery of services? What are metrics you'd propose collecting, and how would you analyze them?

Financial Profile

- 16. Financial Management:** Describe the financial management and internal accounting procedures that will be used to ensure proper financial management, including the fiscal controls designed for accountability. Any respondent to this RFP must agree to maintain its financial records in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (as defined by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants).
- 17. Financial Reporting:** Describe the processes your organization has taken to manage and analyze financial reports – as both a producer/generator of financial reports, and as a consumer/recipient of financial reports.
- 18. Fiscal Health:** As part of the required attachments, include 3 years of audited financial statements, your most recent organizational budget, and your most recent statement of financial activities (profit and loss statement). For respondents who have been incorporated for less than 3 years, include audited financial statements for whatever years you have available.

Budget and Staffing Plans

- 19. Proposed Budget & Budget Narrative:** Submit a detailed budget using the OEC's standard budget template. The budget should reflect how your funding request will be utilized and include a narrative description of the spending plan. Respondents are advised that a responsive budget must limit annual administrative costs to 10% of the total budget.
- 20. Staff Qualifications:** Use the staffing plan Attachment C to list all key staff working directly with your chosen activities who are employees of your agency. List all sub-contractors you know you will be utilizing or plan to utilize that are directly related to your chosen activities.

Scope of Work Application

- **Work Plan:** See directions in Attachment A. Use this attachment to describe your plan to carry out the activity as described in the context of the RFP expectations.

Note: The OEC understands that work plans are dynamic documents, and that often, the granular aspects of project implementation will not become clear until the project itself is in motion. As such, high-level descriptions of planned activities in later years of this contract are acceptable. The OEC is particularly interested in understanding how a respondent would:

- Monitor and adjust delivery of the activities based on information from the field and your experience;
- Measure your effectiveness; and
- Propose innovative ideas for adjustments to OEC.

E. Attachments

Attachments other than the ones identified below 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.

- Scope of Work Application (see Attachment A)
- NAEYC Attestation (see Attachment B and staff upload directly to Registry)
- Staffing Plan (see Attachment C)
- Résumés of Key Personnel may be requested but not necessary to attach at this time.
- Memoranda of Agreement/Understanding for Subcontractors (Indicate "No relevant memoranda" if this is not applicable to you)
- Last Three Years of Audited Financial Statements (respondents with less than three years' organizational history should include audited financial statements for whatever years you have available)
- Most Recent Organizational Budget
- Most Recent Statement of Financial Activities (Profit and Loss Statement)
- Minutes from Last Two Board Meetings
- Copy of your data security and privacy policies, if available (Indicate "in progress" or "see main proposal" if your organization does not currently have one in place)
- Proof of nonprofit status (i.e., IRS Determination Letter), if applicable. Indicate "Nonprofit status not applicable" in your attachments section if this does not apply to you.

F. Declaration of Confidential Information

If a proposer deems that certain information required by this RFP is confidential, the proposer must label such information as CONFIDENTIAL prior to submission. The proposer must reference where the information labeled CONFIDENTIAL is located in the proposal. *EXAMPLE: Section G.1.a.* For each subsection so referenced, the proposer must provide a convincing explanation and rationale sufficient to justify an exemption of the 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 proposer 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).

G. Conflict of Interest – Disclosure Statement

Proposers 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 proposer 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 proposer tries to influence, or succeeds in influencing, the outcome of an official decision for their personal or corporate benefit. In the absence of any conflict of interest, a proposer must affirm such in the disclosure statement. *Example: "[name of proposer] 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."*

H. Statement of Assurances

Place after Conflict of Interest-Disclosure Statement. Sign and return Appendix B.

V. Mandatory Provisions

A. POS STANDARD CONTRACT, PARTS I AND II

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the proposer implicitly agrees to comply with the provisions of Parts I and II of the State's "standard contract" for POS:

Part I of the standard contract is maintained by the OEC and will include the scope of services, contract performance, quality assurance, reports, terms of payment, budget, and other program-specific provisions of any resulting POS contract. A sample of Part I is available from the OEC's Official Contact upon request.

Part II of the standard contract is maintained by OPM and includes the mandatory terms and conditions of the POS contract. Part II is available on OPM's website at: http://www.ct.gov/opm/fin/standard_contract

Note: Included in Part II of the standard contract is the State Elections Enforcement Commission's notice (pursuant to C.G.S. § 9-612(g)(2)) advising executive branch State contractors and prospective State contractors of the ban on campaign contributions and solicitations. If a proposer is awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract with the OEC and the resulting contract has an anticipated value in a calendar year of \$50,000 or more, or a combination or series of such agreements or contracts has an anticipated value of \$100,000 or more, the proposer must inform the proposer's principals of the contents of the SEEC notice.

Part I of the standard contract may be amended by means of a written instrument signed by the OEC, the selected proposer (contractor), and, if required, the Attorney General's Office. Part II of the standard contract may be amended only in consultation with, and with the approval of, the Office of Policy and Management and the Attorney General's Office.

B. ASSURANCES

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly gives the following assurances:

- 1. Collusion.** The proposer represents and warrants that the proposer did not participate in any part of the RFP development process and had no knowledge of the specific contents of the RFP prior to its issuance. The proposer further represents and warrants that no agent, representative, or employee of the State participated directly in the preparation of the proposer's proposal. The proposer also represents and warrants that the submitted proposal is in all respects fair and is made without collusion or fraud.
- 2. State Officials and Employees.** The proposer certifies that no elected or appointed official or employee of the State has or will benefit financially or materially from any contract resulting from this RFP. The OEC may terminate a resulting contract if it is determined that gratuities of any kind were either offered or received by any of the aforementioned officials or employees from the proposer, contractor, or its agents or employees.
- 3. Competitors.** The proposer assures that the submitted proposal is not made in connection with any competing organization or competitor submitting a separate proposal in response to this RFP. No attempt has been made, or will be made, by the proposer to induce any other organization or competitor to submit, or not submit, a proposal for the purpose of restricting competition. The proposer further assures that the proposed costs have been arrived at independently, without consultation, communication, or agreement with any other organization or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition. Nor has the proposer knowingly disclosed the proposed costs on a prior basis, either directly or indirectly, to any other organization or competitor.

- 4. Validity of Proposal.** The proposer certifies that the proposal represents a valid and binding offer to provide services in accordance with the terms and provisions described in this RFP and any amendments or attachments hereto. The proposal shall remain valid for a period of 180 days after the submission due date and may be extended beyond that time by mutual agreement. At its sole discretion, the OEC may include the proposal, by reference or otherwise, into any contract with the successful proposer.
- 5. Press Releases.** The proposer agrees to obtain prior written consent and approval of the OEC for press releases that relate in any manner to this RFP or any resultant contract.

C. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly agrees to comply with the following terms and conditions:

- 1. Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action.** The State is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action employer and does not discriminate in its hiring, employment, or business practices. The State is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs, services, or activities.
- 2. Preparation Expenses.** Neither the State nor the OEC shall assume any liability for expenses incurred by a proposer in preparing, submitting, or clarifying any proposal submitted in response to this RFP.
- 3. Exclusion of Taxes.** The OEC is exempt from the payment of excise and sales taxes imposed by the federal government and the State. Proposers are liable for any other applicable taxes.
- 4. Proposed Costs.** No cost submissions that are contingent upon a State action will be accepted. All proposed costs must be fixed through the entire term of the contract.
- 5. Changes to Proposal.** No additions or changes to the original proposal will be allowed after submission. While changes are not permitted, the OEC may request and authorize proposers to submit written clarification of their proposals, in a manner or format prescribed by the OEC, and at the proposer's expense.
- 6. Supplemental Information.** Supplemental information will not be considered after the deadline submission of proposals, unless specifically requested by the OEC. The OEC may ask a proposer to give demonstrations, interviews, oral presentations, or further explanations to clarify information contained in a proposal. Any such demonstration, interview, or oral presentation will be at a time selected and in a place provided by the OEC. At its sole discretion, the OEC may limit the number of proposers invited to make such a demonstration, interview, or oral presentation and may limit the number of attendees per proposer.
- 7. Presentation of Supporting Evidence.** If requested by the OEC, a proposer must be prepared to present evidence of experience, ability, data reporting capabilities, financial standing, or other information necessary to satisfactorily meet the requirements set forth or implied in this RFP. The OEC may make onsite visits to an operational facility or facilities of a proposer to evaluate further the proposer's capability to perform the duties required by this RFP. At its discretion, the OEC may also check or contact any reference provided by the proposer.
- 8. RFP Is Not An Offer.** Neither this RFP nor any subsequent discussions shall give rise to any commitment on the part of the State or the OEC or confer any rights on any proposer unless and until a contract is fully executed by the necessary parties. The contract document will represent the entire agreement between the proposer and the OEC and will supersede all prior negotiations, representations, or agreements, alleged or made, between the parties. The State shall assume no liability for costs incurred by the proposer or for payment of services under the terms of the contract until the successful proposer is notified that the contract has been accepted and approved by the OEC and, if required, by the Attorney General's Office.

D. RIGHTS RESERVED TO THE STATE

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly accepts that the following rights are reserved to the State:

- 1. Timing Sequence.** The timing and sequence of events associated with this RFP shall ultimately be determined by the OEC.
- 2. Amending or Canceling RFP.** The OEC reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFP on any date and at any time, if the OEC deems it to be necessary, appropriate, or otherwise in the best interests of the State.
- 3. No Acceptable Proposals.** If no acceptable proposals are submitted in response to this RFP, the OEC may reopen the procurement process, if it is determined to be in the best interests of the State.
- 4. Award and Rejection of Proposals.** The OEC reserves the right to award in part, to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part, for misrepresentation or if the proposal limits or modifies any of the terms, conditions, or specifications of this RFP. The OEC may waive minor technical defects, irregularities, or omissions, if in its judgment the best interests of the State will be served. The OEC reserves the right to reject the proposal of any proposer who submits a proposal after the submission date and time.
- 5. Sole Property of the State.** All proposals submitted in response to this RFP are to be the sole property of the State. Any product, whether acceptable or unacceptable, developed under a contract awarded as a result of this RFP shall be the sole property of the State, unless stated otherwise in this RFP or subsequent contract. The right to publish, distribute, or disseminate any and all information or reports, or part thereof, shall accrue to the State without recourse.
- 6. Contract Negotiation.** The OEC reserves the right to negotiate or contract for all or any portion of the services contained in this RFP. The OEC further reserves the right to contract with one or more proposer for such services. After reviewing the scored criteria, the OEC may seek Best and Final Offers (BFO) on cost from proposers. The OEC may set parameters on any BFOs received.
- 7. Clerical Errors in Award.** The OEC reserves the right to correct inaccurate awards resulting from its clerical errors. This may include, in extreme circumstances, revoking the awarding of a contract already made to a proposer and subsequently awarding the contract to another proposer. Such action on the part of the State shall not constitute a breach of contract on the part of the State since the contract with the initial proposer is deemed to be void *ab initio* and of no effect as if no contract ever existed between the State and the proposer.
- 8. Key Personnel.** When the OEC is the sole funder of a purchased service, the OEC reserves the right to approve any additions, deletions, or changes in key personnel, with the exception of key personnel who have terminated employment. The OEC also reserves the right to approve replacements for key personnel who have terminated employment. The OEC further reserves the right to require the removal and replacement of any of the proposer's key personnel who do not perform adequately, regardless of whether they were previously approved by the OEC.

E. STATUTORY AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the proposer implicitly agrees to comply with all applicable State and federal laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, the following:

- 1. Freedom of Information, C.G.S. § 1-210(b).** The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) generally requires the disclosure of documents in the possession of the State upon request of any citizen, unless the content of the document falls within certain categories of exemption, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-210(b). Proposers are generally advised not to include in their proposals any confidential information. If the proposer indicates that certain documentation, as required by this RFP, is submitted in confidence, the State will endeavor to keep said information confidential to the extent permitted by law. The State has no obligation to initiate, prosecute, or defend any legal proceeding or to seek a protective order or other similar relief to prevent disclosure of any information pursuant to a FOIA request. The proposer has the burden of establishing the availability of any FOIA exemption in any proceeding where it is an issue. While a proposer may claim an exemption to the State's FOIA, the final administrative authority to release or exempt any or all material so identified rests with the State. In no event shall the State or any of its employees have any liability for disclosure of documents or information in the possession of the State and which the State or its employees believe(s) to be required pursuant to the FOIA or other requirements of law.
- 2. Contract Compliance, C.G.S. § 4a-60 and Regulations of CT State Agencies § 46a-68j-21 thru 43, inclusive.** CT statute and regulations impose certain obligations on State agencies (as well as contractors and subcontractors doing business with the State) to ensure that State agencies do not enter into contracts with organizations or businesses that discriminate against protected class persons.
- 3. Consulting Agreements, C.G.S. § 4a-81. Consulting Agreements Representation, C.G.S. § 4a-81.** Pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 4a-81 the successful contracting party shall certify that it has not entered into any consulting agreements in connection with this Contract, except for the agreements listed below. "Consulting agreement" means any written or oral agreement to retain the services, for a fee, of a consultant for the purposes of (A) providing counsel to a contractor, vendor, consultant or other entity seeking to conduct, or conducting, business with the State, (B) contacting, whether in writing or orally, any executive, judicial, or administrative office of the State, including any department, institution, bureau, board, commission, authority, official or employee for the purpose of solicitation, dispute resolution, introduction, requests for information, or (C) any other similar activity related to such contracts. "Consulting agreement" does not include any agreements entered into with a consultant who is registered under the provisions of chapter 10 of the Connecticut General Statutes as of the date such contract is executed in accordance with the provisions of section 4a-81 of the Connecticut General Statutes. Such representation shall be sworn as true to the best knowledge and belief of the person signing the resulting contract and shall be subject to the penalties of false statement.
- 4. Campaign Contribution Restriction, C.G.S. § 9-612.** For all State contracts, defined in section 9-612 of the Connecticut General Statutes as having a value in a calendar year of \$50,000 or more, or a combination or series of such agreements or contracts having a value of \$100,000 or more, the authorized signatory to the resulting contract must represent that they have received the State Elections Enforcement Commission's notice advising state contractors of state campaign contribution and solicitation prohibitions, and will inform its principals of the contents of the notice, as set forth in "Notice to Executive Branch State Contractors and Prospective State Contractors of Campaign Contribution and Solicitation Limitations." Such notice is available at https://seec.ct.gov/Portal/data/forms/ContrForms/seec_form_11_notice_only.pdf

5. Gifts, C.G.S. § 4-252. Pursuant to section 4-252 of the Connecticut General Statutes and Acting Governor Susan Bysiewicz's Executive Order No. 21-2, the Contractor, for itself and on behalf of all of its principals or key personnel who submitted a bid or proposal, represents:

- (1) That no gifts were made by (A) the Contractor, (B) any principals and key personnel of the Contractor, who participate substantially in preparing bids, proposals or negotiating State contracts, or (C) any agent of the Contractor or principals and key personnel, who participates substantially in preparing bids, proposals or negotiating State contracts, to (i) any public official or State employee of the State agency or quasi- public agency soliciting bids or proposals for State contracts, who participates substantially in the preparation of bid solicitations or requests for proposals for State contracts or the negotiation or award of State contracts, or (ii) any public official or State employee of any other State agency, who has supervisory or appointing authority over such State agency or quasi-public agency;
- (2) That no such principals and key personnel of the Contractor, or agent of the Contractor or of such principals and key personnel, knows of any action by the Contractor to circumvent such prohibition on gifts by providing for any other principals and key personnel, official, employee or agent of the Contractor to provide a gift to any such public official or State employee; and
- (3) That the Contractor is submitting bids or proposals without fraud or collusion with any person.

Any bidder or proposer that does not agree to the representations required under this section shall be rejected and the State agency or quasi-public agency shall award the contract to the next highest ranked proposer or the next lowest responsible qualified bidder or seek new bids or proposals.

6. Iran Energy Investment Certification C.G.S. § 4-252(a). Pursuant to C.G.S. § 4-252(a), the successful contracting party shall certify the following: (a) that it has not made a direct investment of twenty million dollars or more in the energy sector of Iran on or after October 1, 2013, as described in Section 202 of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability and Divestment Act of 2010, and has not increased or renewed such investment on or after said date. (b) If the Contractor makes a good faith effort to determine whether it has made an investment described in subsection (a) of this section it shall not be subject to the penalties of false statement pursuant to section 4-252a of the Connecticut General Statutes. A "good faith effort" for purposes of this subsection includes a determination that the Contractor is not on the list of persons who engage in certain investment activities in Iran created by the Department of General Services of the State of California pursuant to Division 2, Chapter 2.7 of the California Public Contract Code. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to impair the ability of the State agency or quasi-public agency to pursue a breach of contract action for any violation of the provisions of the resulting contract.

7. Nondiscrimination Certification, C.G.S. § 4a-60 and 4a-60a. If a bidder is awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract, the proposer must provide the State agency with *written representation* in the resulting contract that certifies the bidder complies with the State's nondiscrimination agreements and warranties. This nondiscrimination certification is required for all State contracts – regardless of type, term, cost, or value. Municipalities and CT State agencies are exempt from this requirement. The authorized signatory of the contract shall demonstrate his or her understanding of this obligation by either (A) initialing the nondiscrimination affirmation provision in the body of the resulting contract, or (B) providing an affirmative response in the required online bid or response to a proposal question, if applicable, which asks if the contractor understands its obligations. If a bidder or vendor refuses to agree to this representation, such bidder or vendor shall be rejected and the State agency or quasi-public agency shall award the contract to the next highest ranked vendor or the next lowest responsible qualified bidder or seek new bids or proposals.

- 8. Access to Data for State Auditors.** The Contractor shall provide to OPM access to any data, as defined in C.G.S. § 4e-1, concerning the resulting contract that are in the possession or control of the Contractor upon demand and shall provide the data to OPM in a format prescribed by OPM [or the Client Agency] and the State Auditors of Public Accounts at no additional cost.

VI. Appendix

A. ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS / DEFINITIONS

BAS	Business Administration Scale for Family Child Care
BFO	Best and Final Offer
CACFP	Child and Adult Care Food Program
CCDF	Child Care Development Fund
C.G.S.	Connecticut General Statutes
CHRO	Commission on Human Rights and Opportunity (CT)
CT	Connecticut
CT ELDS	Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards
CT DOTS	Connecticut Documentation and Observation for Teaching System
DAS	Department of Administrative Services (CT)
ECERS-3	Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Third Edition
FCC	Family Child Care Provider
FCCERS-3	Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale, Third Edition
FCCN	Family Child Care Network(s)
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act (CT)
ICERS-3	Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale, Third Edition
IRS	Internal Revenue Service (US)
LOI	Letter of Intent
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
OAG	Office of the Attorney General
OEC	Office of Early Childhood
OPM	Office of Policy and Management (CT)
OSC	Office of the State Comptroller (CT)
POS	Purchase of Service
P.A.	Public Act (CT)
NAFCC	National Association for Family Child Care
NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children
RFP	Request for Proposal
SEEC	State Elections Enforcement Commission (CT)
SFFCN	Staffed Family Child Care Network(s)
U.S.	United States

- **Community of Practice (CoP):** groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly¹
- **Contractor:** a private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality that enters into a POS contract with the OEC as a result of this RFP
- **Fragile Compliance:** Any early childhood program identified by OEC as failing to comply with health and safety standards, statutes or regulations, state-funded programming, and/or OEC policies and NAEYC accreditation status.
- **Professional Learning Community (PLC):** A professional learning community, or PLC, is a group of educators that meets regularly, shares expertise, and works collaboratively to improve teaching skills and the academic performance of students. The term is also applied to schools or teaching faculties that use small-group collaboration as a form of professional development. <https://www.edglossary.org/professional-learning-community/>
- **Proposer:** a private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality that has submitted a proposal to the Department in response to this RFP

¹ Wenger-Trayner, E & B. (2015). [Communities of Practice: A Brief Introduction](#).

- **Prospective Proposer:** a private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality that may submit a proposal to the Department in response to this RFP, but has not yet done so
- **Respondent:** a private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality that has submitted a proposal to the Department in response to this RFP
- **Setting:** Refers to settings where young children are served, 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 a contractor to provide a specific health or human service as part of a POS contract with the OEC as a result of this RFP.
- **Technical Assistance Provider:** 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.ctoec.org/core-knowledge-and-competency-frameworks/framework-for-technical-assistance-providers/>

Connecticut Accreditation Quality Improvement Support (AQIS) Regions

NORTH CENTRAL (34)	NORTH EAST (26)	NORTH WEST (42)	SOUTH CENTRAL (36)	SOUTH EAST (14)	SOUTH WEST (14)
Andover	Ashford	Barkhamstead	Ansonia	Bozrah	Bridgeport
Avon	Brooklyn	Beacon Falls	Bethany	Colchester	Darien
Berlin	Canterbury	Bethel	Branford	East Lyme	Easton
Bloomfield	Chaplin	Bethlehem	Chester	Groton	Fairfield
Bolton	Columbia	Bridgewater	Clinton	Lebanon	Greenwich
Bristol	Coventry	Brookfield	Cromwell	Ledyard	Monroe
Burlington	Eastford	Canaan	Deep River	Montville	New Canaan
Canton	Franklin	Cheshire	Derby	New London	Norwalk
East Granby	Griswold	Colebrook	Durham	North Stonington	Stamford
East Hartford	Hampton	Cornwall	East Haddam	Norwich	Stratford
East Windsor	Killingly	Danbury	East Hampton	Preston	Trumbull
Enfield	Lisbon	Goshen	East Haven	Salem	Weston
Farmington	Mansfield	Hartland	Essex	Stonington	Westport
Glastonbury	Norwich	Harwinton	Guilford	Waterford	Wilton
Granby	Plainfield	Kent	Haddam		
Hartford	Pomfret	Litchfield	Hamden		
Hebron	Putnam	Morris	Killingworth		
Manchester	Scotland	Naugatuck	Lyme		
Marlborough	Sprague	New Fairfield	Madison		
New Britain	Sterling	New Hartford	Meriden		
Newington	Thompson	New Milford	Middlefield		
Plainville	Union	Newtown	Middletown		
Plymouth	Voluntown	Norfolk	Milford		
Rocky Hill	Willington	North Canaan	New Haven		
Simsbury	Windham	Oxford	North Branford		
Somers	Woodstock	Prospect	North Haven		
South Windsor		Redding	Old Lyme		
Southington		Ridgefield	Old Saybrook		
Stratford		Salisbury	Orange		
Tolland		Sharon	Portland		
Vernon		Sherman	Seymour		
West Hartford		Southbury	Shelton		
Wethersfield		Thomaston	Wallingford		
Windsor Locks		Torrington	West Haven		
		Warren	Westbrook		
		Washington	Woodbridge		
		Waterbury			
		Winchester			
		Wolcott			
		Watertown			
		Roxbury			
		Woodbury			

B. STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES**Office of Early Childhood**

The undersigned Respondent affirms and declares that:

1) General

- a. This proposal is executed and signed with full knowledge and acceptance of the RFP CONDITIONS stated in the RFP.
- b. The Respondent will deliver services to the OEC per the cost proposed in the RFP and within the timeframes therein.
- c. Neither the Respondent of any official of the organization nor any subcontractor the Respondent of any official of the subcontractor organization has received any notices of debarment or suspension from contracting with the State of CT or the Federal Government.
- d. Neither the Respondent of any official of the organization nor any subcontractor to the Respondent of any official of the subcontractor's organization has received any notices of debarment or suspension from contracting with other states within the United States.

Legal Name of Organization:

Authorized Signatory

Date

C. PROPOSAL CHECKLIST:

To assist respondents in managing proposal planning and document collation processes, this document summarizes key dates and proposal requirements for this RFP. Please note that this document does not supersede what is stated in the RFP. Please refer to the Proposal Submission Overview, Required Proposal Submission Outline, and Mandatory Provisions (Sections II, III, and IV of this RFP) for more comprehensive details. It is the responsibility of each respondent to ensure that all required documents, forms, and attachments, are submitted in a timely manner.

Key Dates

Procurement Timetable: The OEC reserves the right to modify these dates at its sole discretion.		
Item	Action	Date
1	Optional Pre-bid conference	June 29, 2022; 11:00 am EST
2	Optional Letter of Intent Due	July 27, 2022; 5:00 pm EST
3	Deadline for Questions	July 20, 2022; 5:00 pm EST
4	Proposals Due	August 3, 2022; 5:00 pm EST

Registration Link for Pre-Bidder's Conference:

- <https://attendeegotowebinar.com/register/4189446488865786384>

Registration with State Contracting Portal (if not already registered):

- Register at: <https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/Registration>
- Submit Campaign Contribution: Certification (OPM Ethics Form) <https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/Fin-PSA/Forms/Ethics-Forms>

Proposal Content Checklist

- Cover Sheet** including required information:

• RFP Name and Number	• Contact Person, Title
• Entity Legal Name and FEIN	• Contact Phone Number and E-mail Address
• Street Address	• Authorized Official, Title
• Town/City, State Zip	• Authorized Official Signature

- Table of Contents**

- Executive Summary:** high-level summary of proposal and cost, two-page maximum

- Main Proposal Body** (not to exceed 35 pages)

- Required Attachments**

- Work Plan
- Staffing Plan (Attachment C)
- Résumés of Key Personnel
- Memoranda of Agreement/Understanding for Subcontractors (Indicate "No relevant memoranda" if this is not applicable to you)
- Last Three Years of Audited Financial Statements (respondents with less than three years' organizational history should include audited financial statements for whatever years you have available)
- Most Recent Organizational Budget
- Most Recent Statement of Financial Activities (Profit and Loss Statement)
- Minutes from Last Two Board Meetings
- Copy of your data security and privacy policies, if available (Indicate "in progress" or "see main proposal" if your organization does not currently have one in place)
- Proof of nonprofit status (i.e., IRS Determination Letter), if applicable. Indicate "Nonprofit status not applicable" in your attachments section if this does not apply to you.

- Proposed budget** in standard OEC budget template, including budget narrative and cost schedules for planned subcontractors if applicable.

- Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement**

- Statement of Assurances**

Formatting Checklist

- Is the proposal formatted to fit 8 ½ x 11 (letter-sized) paper?
- Is the main body of the proposal within the page limit?
- Is the proposal in 12-point, Times New Roman font?
- Does the proposal format follow normal (1 inch) margins and 1.5 line spacing?
- Does the proposer's name appear in the header of each page?
- Does the proposal include page numbers in the footer?
- Are confidential labels applied to sensitive information (if applicable)?