



Request for Application

Community Mental Health Equity Project
January 6, 2021

Department of Health Care Services
Medi-Cal Behavioral Health Division
Quality Assessment and Performance
Improvement Section
MS 2702
PO Box 997413
Sacramento, CA 95899-7414

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A. Purpose and Background

1. Purpose

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is committed to building an equitable system of care, where a diverse workforce representing California provides culturally responsive, trauma-informed services to all who need them. The DHCS Medi-Cal Behavioral Health Division solicits applications from entities that can provide training and technical assistance services for local county health departments statewide to identify and reduce health and behavioral health disparities, practice cultural humility build a diverse workforce, and counter the effects of structural racism. Applications must address all of the services described throughout this Request for Application (RFA) and “Scope of Work” (SOW).

2. Background

Assembly Bill (AB) 74 (Chapter 23, Statutes of 2019) authorized funding to provide training and technical assistance to county behavioral health departments to increase their expertise in cultural humility, health equity, stakeholder engagement, language access, workforce diversity, and trauma-informed care and to assist them in the development of population-specific and community-driven approaches to reducing disparities and offering culturally-responsive care.

The funding created a collaborative relationship between the California Department of Public Health’s Office of Health Equity (CDPH-OHE) and DHCS’ Medi-Cal Behavioral Health Division (DHCS-MCBHD). The collaboration is known as the Community Mental Health Equity Project (CMHEP) and addresses strategies and interventions aimed at reducing disparities in access to health and behavioral health care.

This contract implements technical assistance, trainings, consultation services and learning networks for the CMHEP. The focus of assistance will be the development of a technical assistance program enabling county behavioral health plans and DHCS staff to understand the core needs of beneficiaries and design behavioral health services that are data-driven, culturally-responsive, trauma-informed, and include community-defined practices targeted to reduce behavioral health disparities and ensure equitable care.

B. Time Schedule

Below is the tentative time schedule for this procurement. If DHCS finds a need to alter the timelines listed herein, either an addendum or correction notice will be issued announcing the alternate timelines.

- RFA Released: February 1, 2021
- Questions Due: February 8, 2021 @ 4:00 p.m.
- Application Due Date: February 26, 2021 @ 4:00 p.m.
- Contractor Selected: March 15, 2021

- Proposed Start Date of Agreement: April 01, 2021

C. Contract Term

The term of the resulting agreement is expected to be 24 months, anticipated to be effective April 1, 2021 and continue through March 31, 2023. The agreement term may change if DHCS makes an award earlier than expected or if DHCS cannot execute the agreement in a timely manner due to unforeseen delays. DHCS reserves the right to extend the term of the resulting agreement via an amendment as necessary to complete or continue the services. Contract extensions are subject to satisfactory performance and funding availability.

D. Scope of Work

Refer to the CMHEP Scope of Work contained as an attachment to the RFA. The SOW is referred to throughout the RFA and provides a more detailed description of the requirements.

E. Qualification Requirements

Failure to meet the following requirements by the application submission deadline will be grounds for DHCS to deem an Applicant nonresponsive. In submitting an application, each Applicant must certify and prove that it possesses the following qualification requirements.

1. Applicant Requirements

- a) Applicant must be registered with the California Secretary of State to operate in California.
- b) Applicant must have extensive experience developing and delivering training and technical assistance in the area of diversity, equity and inclusion.
- c) Applicant must have extensive experience and expertise in project management of large and complex projects.
- d) Applicant must have extensive experience and expertise in the creation of professional and well developed work product, including project analysis and reporting.

2. Applicant Preferred Experience

- a) Preferred if applicant has experience and knowledge in providing technical assistance to both large and small organizations in multiple formats to include, but not be limited to, conducting listening sessions to determine and prioritize recommendations for stakeholder training needs, webpage creation and maintenance, learning collaboratives, and training conferences.

- b) Preferred if Applicant has experience and knowledge regarding the use and training of best practices and data collection.

3. Corporations, Partnerships, Limited Liability Companies

As required by California law, business entities must be in good standing and qualified to do business in California.

4. Non-profit organizations must certify their eligibility to claim non-profit status

5. Past Business Practice

Applicant must have a past record of sound business integrity and a history of being responsive to past contractual obligations.

6. Staffing Requirements

Applicant must have trained and experienced personnel or labor resources with appropriate knowledge, skills, and abilities to direct, supervise, and perform all services outlines in the SOW.

7. Transportation and Other Resources

Applicant must have adequate transportation resources, materials, supplies, and/or equipment to effectively perform all services outlines in the SOW.

8. Financial Stability

Applicant must certify they are financially stable and solvent and have adequate cash reserves to meet all financial obligations while awaiting reimbursement from the state.

F. Questions

Direct questions about the services or about the instructions herein to DHCS as indicated below. Inquiries and questions will not be accepted after **4:00 p.m.** on February 8, 2021.

Please include the following in an inquiry:

- a) Respondent's name, name of Respondent's firm, mailing address, area code, telephone number, fax number, and email address.
- b) A description of the subject or issue in question or discrepancy found.
- c) RFA section, page number, or other information useful in identifying the specific problem or issue in question.

Email Inquiries to: MCBHD.CCPR@dhcs.ca.gov

Subject: Questions – Community Mental Health Equity RFA

DHCS will respond directly to each person or firm submitting an inquiry. If a question and response is determined to be of value to other potential respondents, DHCS will transmit the question(s) and response(s) to the other firms on the Respondents list. At its discretion, DHCS may contact an inquirer to seek clarification of any question or inquiry received.

G. Reasonable Accommodations

For individuals with disabilities, DHCS will provide assistive services such as reading or writing assistance, conversion of the RFA, questions/answers, RFA addenda, or other Administrative Notices into Braille, large print, audiocassette, or computer disk. To request copies of written materials in an alternate format, please use one of the following methods below to arrange for reasonable accommodations.

Reasonable Accommodation Requests:

Email Address: MCBHD.CCPR@dhcs.ca.gov

Subject: Reasonable Accommodations – Community Mental Health Equity RFA

FAX: (916) 440-5230

H. State's Rights

1. DHCS may collect additional applicant documentation, signatures, missing items, or omitted information during the response review process. DHCS will advise the applicant orally, by fax, email, or in writing of any documentation that is required along with the submission timeline. Failure to submit the required documentation by the date and time indicated may cause DHCS to deem a response nonresponsive and eliminate it from further consideration.
2. The submission of a response to this RFA does not obligate DHCS to make a contract award.
3. DHCS reserves the right to deem incomplete responses as non-responsive to the RFA requirements.
4. DHCS reserves the right to modify or cancel the RFA process at any time.
5. The following occurrences may cause DHCS to reject a response from further consideration:
 - a) Failure to meet the state applicant requirements by the submission deadline.
 - b) Failure to comply with a request to submit additional documents in a timely manner, if needed.
 - c) Failure to comply with all performance requirements, terms, conditions, and/or exhibits that will appear in the resulting contract.
 - d) Failure to submit an RFA by February 26, 2021.

I. Narrative Application Format and Content Requirements

1. General Instructions

- a) Each Applicant may submit only one proposal. For the purpose of this paragraph, "Applicant" includes a parent corporation of an Applicant and any other subsidiary of that parent corporation. If an Applicant submits more than one proposal, DHCS will reject all proposals submitted by that Applicant.
- b) All narrative portions should be straightforward, detailed, and precise. DHCS will determine the responsiveness of an application by its quality, not its volume, packaging, or displays. DHCS will not count any information contained on the pages past the set limits.

2. Format Requirements

- a) Submit one application with cover page that includes the name of the Applicant entity along with contact information.
- b) Format the narrative portion of the narrative application as follows:
 - i. Use one-inch margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
 - ii. Use a font size of no less than 12 points.
 - iii. Sequentially paginate the pages in each section.

3. Content Requirements

This section specifies the order and content of each application. Applications must conform to the page limitations. Assemble the materials in the following order:

a) Proposal Cover Page

A person authorized to bind the Proposer must sign the Proposal Cover Page. If the Proposer is a corporation, a person authorized by the Board of Directors to sign on behalf of the Board must sign the Proposal Cover Page.

b) Table of Contents

Properly identify each section and the contents therein. Paginate all items in each section with the exception of those items placed in the Forms Section and Appendix Section.

c) Executive Summary Section

This section must not exceed **two (2) pages** in length.

In preparing the Executive Summary, do not simply restate or paraphrase

information in this RFA. Describe or demonstrate, in the Applicant's own words, the following information.

- i. A brief summary demonstrating an understanding of California's needs and the importance of this project.
- ii. The outcomes that are expected to be achieved by this project and how they will be achieved.
- iii. How this project will be effectively integrated into the applicant firm's current obligations and existing workload.
- iv. Why the proposing entity should be chosen to undertake this work.

d) Applicant's Capability Section

This section must not exceed **five (5) pages** in length.

- i. Describe experience that qualifies the proposing entity to undertake this project. The Application must demonstrate an ability to perform the requirements to implement services outlined in the SOW.

e) Deliverable Performance Section

This section must not exceed **ten (10) pages** in length.

- i. Describe the overall approach and/or methods that will be used to accomplish the SOW. Include a description for accomplishing the requirements in the following categories outlined in the SOW (please refer to Exhibit A, page 3, for more detail):

- Project Management
- Research
- Training and Technical Assistance
- Stakeholder Meetings
- Distribution of Program Materials
- Meetings with DHCS
- Performance Measurement Framework

f) Management Plan Section

This section must not exceed **five (5) pages** in length.

- i. Describe how the Applicant will effectively coordinate, manage, and monitor the efforts of the assigned staff, including Subcontractors and/or Consultants, to ensure that all tasks, activities, and functions are completed effectively and in a timely manner.
- ii. Include an implementation timeline which identifies the specific tasks/activities that will be performed in the order they are likely to occur.

- iii. Describe how the Applicant will ensure that project funds do not supplant other funding.
- iv. Describe the fiscal accounting processes and budgetary controls that will be employed to ensure the responsible use and management of contract funds and accurate invoicing. Include, at a minimum, a brief description of the proposing entity's fiscal reporting and monitoring capabilities to ensure contract funds are managed responsibly.

g) Attachments (Required Documents)

i. Proposed Budget/Narrative

- 1. The Applicant shall provide a Budget for each consulting contractor including staff classifications, number of persons, name of staff, major tasks/activities, and deliverable responsibilities, anticipated number of hours of work under the contract, hourly rate, and labor costs. A Budget/Price Quote template is included in this RFA as an attachment (see Attachment B).
- 2. Applicants may only spend up to **[insert \$ amount]** in each state fiscal year, for a total contract amount of **[insert \$ amount]**. Any unspent funds per fiscal year will be returned to DHCS. All applications will be capped at the limit projected in the Proposed Budget.
- 3. Applicants must also submit a Budget narrative describing the proposed Budget. The Budget narrative must not exceed **three (3) pages**.
- 4. The proposed Budget must be separated into the following periods:
 - a) April 1, 2021-June 30, 2022
 - b) July 1, 2022–March 31, 2023

ii. Implementation Timeline

Include an implementation timeline which identifies the specific tasks/activities that will be performed in the order they are likely to occur.

iii. Organization Chart

Include an organization chart of the key staff. The organization chart must show the distinct lines of authority between and among the divisions that will perform the project work and the primary reporting relationships within

the Applicant's organization. Show the relationships between management, key decision makers, supervisory personnel, and Subcontractors and/or independent Consultants.

iv. Staff Resumes

The Applicant shall provide resumes of all key staff.

v. Subcontractor/Consultant Letter of Agreement

For each pre-identified Subcontractor or independent Consultant that will be used to perform services under the resulting contract, submit a letter of agreement to work on this project. A letter of agreement must be signed by an official representative of each subcontracted entity or independent Consultant, acknowledging their intended participation/availability to work on this project and acknowledging they have read or been made aware of the terms and conditions of the SOW. Include an explanation if a letter of agreement cannot be obtained from each pre-identified Subcontractor and Consultant, and indicate when a letter of agreement will be forthcoming

4. RFA Application Submission

- a. Applications must be submitted electronically to DHCS no later than **4:00 p.m. (PDT), February 26, 2021** at the e-mail address shown below. Applications received after the specified date and time are considered late and will not be accepted. There are no exceptions to this requirement.

Application Submissions

Email Address: MCBHD.CCPR@dhcs.ca.gov

Subject: Community Mental Health Equity Project Application Submission

J. Evaluation and Selection

A multiple stage evaluation process will be used to review and/or score narrative applications. DHCS will reject any application that is found to be non-responsive at any stage of evaluation and/or exceeds the specified page limits. In evaluating RFA responses and assigning points, raters may consider issues including, but not limited to, the extent to which a response:

- a) Is lacking information, lacking depth or breadth, or lacking significant facts and/or details;
- b) Is fully developed, comprehensive, and has few if any weaknesses, defects, or deficiencies;
- c) Clearly demonstrates the Applicant's understanding of DHCS' needs, the services sought, and/or the contractor's responsibilities;

- d) Illustrates the Applicant's capability to perform all services and meet all SOW performance requirements;
- e) Will contribute to the achievement of DHCS' goals and objectives if implemented; and/or
- f) Demonstrates the Applicant's capacity, capability, creativity, and/or commitment to exceed regular service needs.

1. Stage 1 – Narrative Application Evaluation/Scoring

Raters will individually and/or as a team review, evaluate and numerically score applications based on each application's adequacy, thoroughness, and the degree to which it complies with the RFA requirements.

DHCS will use the following scoring system to assign points. Section H outlines the considerations that raters may take into account when assigning individual points to a narrative application. Below are the point values and weight for each rating category that will be scored.

0 (Inadequate): Applicant does not include a response and/or supporting information for the requirement(s) or does not commit to meet the RFA requirement(s).

1 (Barely Adequate): Response and/or supporting information just meets the RFA requirement(s) and/or the information is unclear. Response provides very minimal descriptive information to support the Applicant's claim that they understand and intend to meet the requirement(s). Response is lacking information, lacking depth or breadth, or lacking facts and/or details.

2 (Adequate): Response and/or supporting information meets the basic RFA requirement(s) and demonstrates an understanding of, and the ability and intent to meet the requirement(s). There may be omission(s), flaw(s) and/or defect(s), but they are inconsequential and acceptable.

3 (More than Adequate): Response and/or supporting information demonstrates a thorough, detailed, and complete understanding of the requirement(s), demonstrates the ability and intent to meet the requirement(s), provides evidence of current ability to comply, and/or provides detailed plans or methodologies to further assure compliance with the requirement(s). The response is not considered excellent or outstanding but is above average and has no flaw(s), omission(s) or defect(s).

4 (Excellent or Outstanding): Response and/or supporting information demonstrates a thorough, detailed, and complete understanding of the requirements(s). Response demonstrates the ability and intent to exceed the requirement(s), provides evidence of current ability to comply, and proposes detailed plans or methodologies that further assure how the requirement(s) will be exceeded.

Narrative Application Rating Factors

Raters will use the following criteria to score the narrative applications.

a) Executive Summary Rating Factors

- i. To what extent does the application provide a brief summary that demonstrates an understanding of California's needs and the importance of this project?
- ii. How well does the application describe the outcomes that are expected to be achieved by this project and how they will be achieved?
- iii. How well does the application describe how this project will be effectively integrated into the applicant firm's current obligations and existing workload?
- iv. How does this application demonstrate that it is qualified and should be chosen to undertake this work?

Executive Summary Score: Possible Points - 16

b) Applicant's Capability Rating Factors

- i. To what extent does the application describe the Applicant's experience that qualifies the proposing entity to undertake this project?
- ii. To what extent does the application describe the Applicant's experience developing creative and effective Training and Technical Assistance modules and sessions using multiple delivery methods?

Applicant's Capability Score: Possible Points - 8

c) Deliverable Performance Rating Factors

- i. To what extent does the Applicant describe the ability to develop a Training and Technical Assistance Plan?
- ii. To what extent does the Applicant identify specific methods, training principles, and technology applications used in previous projects?
- iii. To what extent does the Applicant describe the ability to provide creative and effective Training and Technical Assistance to varying audiences and in

various formats?

- iv. To what extent does the Applicant describe their ability to develop and distribute training materials?
- v. To what extent does the Applicant describe their ability to develop process and outcome measures to be used in project evaluations?
- vi. To what extent does the Applicant describe their ability to develop and utilize, at minimum, the training and technical assistance modalities listed in the SOW?
- vii. To what extent does the Applicant describe their ability to develop and provide quarterly reports containing information identified in the SOW?
- viii. To what extent does the Applicant describe their ability to develop and provide a performance measurement framework as identified in the SOW?
- ix. To what extent does the Applicant describe their ability to convene and facilitate meetings?

Deliverable Performance Score: Possible Points - 36

d) Management Plan Rating Factors

- i. To what extent does the Applicant describe how they will effectively coordinate, manage, and monitor the efforts of the assigned staff, including Subcontractors and/or Consultants, to ensure that all tasks, activities, and functions are completed effectively and in a timely manner?
- ii. To what extent does the Applicant provide an implementation timeline that identifies the specific tasks/activities performed during the contract?
- iii. To what extent does the Applicant describe the fiscal accounting processes and budgetary controls that will be employed to ensure the responsible use and management of contract funds and accurate invoicing?

Management Plan Score: Possible Points - 12

Applications, excluding the Budget/Price Quote, will be scored on a scale of 0 to 72 points as follows:

Narrative Rating Category: Total Points Possible - 72

Executive Summary: 16 points possible

Applicant's Capability: 8 points possible

Deliverable Performance: 36 points possible

Management Plan: 12 points possible

2. Stage 2 – Proposed Budget Score

DHCS will use the following scoring system to assign points. Section I (3) (g) (i) outlines the considerations that raters may take into account when assigning individual points to a budget application. Below are the point values and weight for each rating category that will be scored.

0-5 (Inadequate): Applicant does not include a response and/or supporting information for the requirement(s), or does not commit to meet the RFA requirement(s).

6-10 (Barely Adequate): Response and/or supporting information just meets the RFA requirement(s) and/or the information is unclear. Response provides very minimal descriptive information to support the Applicant's claim that they understand and intend to meet the requirement(s). Response is lacking information, lacking depth or breadth, or lacking facts and/or details.

11-15 (Adequate): Response and/or supporting information meets the basic RFA requirement(s) and demonstrates an understanding of, and the ability and intent to meet the requirement(s). There may be omission(s), flaw(s) and/or defect(s), but they are inconsequential and acceptable.

16-20 (More than Adequate): Response and/or supporting information demonstrates a thorough, detailed and complete understanding of the requirement(s), demonstrates the ability and intent to meet the requirement(s), provides evidence of current ability to comply, and/or provides detailed plans or methodologies to further assure compliance with the requirement(s). The response is not considered excellent or outstanding, but is above average and has no flaw(s), omission(s) or defect(s).

21-25 (Excellent or Outstanding): Response and/or supporting information demonstrates a thorough, detailed, and complete understanding of the requirements(s). Response demonstrates the ability and intent to exceed the requirement(s), provides evidence of current ability to comply, and proposes detailed plans or methodologies that further assure how the requirement(s) will be exceeded.

3. Stage 3 – Final Score Calculation

DHCS will use the formula shown below to calculate final application scores and to

determine the highest scored application.

Narrative Application Score + Proposed Budget Score = Total Score

K. Contract Award

Award of the contract, if awarded, will be to the eligible applicant that DHCS believes can best meet its needs. DHCS intends to select the applicant earning the highest total score. Consideration may be given to each applicant's past experience, qualifications, personnel resources, management capabilities, and proposed methods and procedures.

DHCS will verbally notify the chosen firm of its selection and will follow-up the verbal notice in writing via fax or email. DHCS will fax or email a notice of award to each firm that submits a price quotation in response to this procurement.

L. Disposition of Materials Following Award

All materials submitted in response to this RFA will become the property of DHCS and, as such, are subject to the Public Records Act (GC Section 6250 et. Seq.). DHCS will disregard any language purporting to render all or portions of any response confidential.

M. Award Objections

California law does not provide a protest or appeal process against award decisions made through an informal selection method. Applicants submitting a response to this RFA may not protest or appeal the award. DHCS' award decision shall be final.

N. RFA Attachments

Attachment A–Scope of Work

Attachment B–Project Budget Template