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3 TIMELINE

Date	Event
October 26, 2022	RFP Released
November 11, 2022	Deadline for Questions
November 14, 2022	Posting of Questions and Answers
November 23, 2022 (by 5:00 pm CDT)	Proposals Due
November 29 - December 2, 2022 (estimated)	Applicant Interviews
December 9, 2022 (estimated)	Notification of Award
Jan 1, 2023 (estimated)	Start Date for Services

The applicant is responsible for monitoring the Persevere website to monitor responses to applicant questions and any RFP addenda that may be added before the proposal due date.

4 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Institutions of Higher Education (public and private), for-profit or non-profit organizations, and individuals with experience conducting evaluation research and providing other evaluation-related services.

All applicants must hold any applicable licenses, permits, or credentials required to do business in Tennessee. Evidence must be submitted prior to the execution of a contract.

The term “evaluator” in this RFP refers to an individual or organization responding to the RFP. It should not be construed as a preference for an individual over an organization.

Persevere supports collaboration among providers and will accept combined proposals for services which include more than one Bidder. All subcontractors must also be appropriately licensed and must be approved by Persevere prior to contract negotiation.

5 DESCRIPTION OF NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS

5.1 SCOPE

Persevere seeks an independent evaluation of the Tech Alliance program to validate the effectiveness of the program and provide information for ongoing improvement. The evaluation must:

- Include both quantitative and qualitative sources of data
- Yield information to support Persevere in meeting EDA reporting requirements
- Yield information to support the Tech Alliance Leadership Team’s continuous improvement efforts
- Be conducted according to generally accepted standards in evaluation
- Be based on a robust evaluation design sufficient to withstand peer review and meet requirements to determine if the Tech Alliance program meets relevant requirements to be designated as an effective program in evidence-based registries and clearinghouses.

The evaluator must collaborate with Persevere and key Tech Alliance partners on the development of the final Evaluation Plan to ensure that the plan meets the needs of the partners, that Persevere and the partners have sufficient staff and other resources to support the plan, and that it is feasible to complete within the established timeline.

Key evaluation activities:

1. Develop a detailed evaluation plan.
2. Conduct evaluation activities as described in the plan.
3. Assist Persevere with the establishment of appropriate data collection procedures to support the evaluation, federal performance reporting, and continuous program improvement.
4. Maintain regular and ongoing communication with Persevere’s Tech Alliance Program Director and Program Manager regarding the status of the evaluation.
5. Accurately report evaluation results.

The contractor will not be required to prepare or submit any federal performance reports.

7 APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of each applicant to thoroughly review the information in this RFP, any addenda, and the responses to applicant questions posted on the website prior to submitting a proposal.

The proposal is considered the applicant's offer for services. If the applicant is suggesting additional service options with costs beyond those included in the formal offer, those services must be clearly identified as services that are not included in the proposed budget. If they are optional services that are offered at no cost to Persevere, please note that, as well.

The applicant is responsible for ensuring that their proposal is submitted and received before the RFP deadline.

The selected provider(s) is/are responsible for ensuring that all staff and subcontractors are properly certified and trained and that all HIPAA requirements are met.

The applicant is responsible for the accuracy of all information provided in its submitted proposal.

If the applicant takes exception to any stated requirement in this RFP, the applicant must clearly state in the application narrative the specific exception, the reason for the exception, and the applicant's proposed alternative. If no exceptions are noted and explained, Persevere assumes that the applicant understands and will comply with the requirements set forth in the RFP.

8 PROPOSAL CONTENT AND FORMAT

1. Cover Sheet
2. Project Narrative
3. References
4. Resumes/CV
5. Proposed Budget
6. Optional Attachments

1. Cover Sheet

The proposal cover sheet should include at least the following information, in any order:

- a. The title of the RFP to which the applicant is responding
- b. Name of the organization responding to the RFP
- c. Physical and mailing addresses of the responding organization

- d. Contact person name, phone number, and email address
- e. Date the proposal is submitted

2. Proposal Narrative

The proposal narrative must include the proposer’s plan for providing independent evaluation services, as described above. The narrative should be typewritten in a standard 12 point font.

There is no page limitation, but please be as succinct as possible. Also keep in mind that no more than two of the reviewers will be trained evaluators with recent experience in the field.

Please organize the narrative under the following main headings, **in this order**:

Executive Summary

Qualifications and Experience

Evaluation Design and Services

Timeline

Potential Challenges and Remedies

Staffing Plan

The following pages outline what needs to be included within each section, but the order in which the items are addressed within each section is up to you.

Executive Summary

Brief 2-3 page summary of the application, including project approach, experience, and qualifications. The Executive Summary should be prepared as a stand-alone summary of your proposal that will be reviewed by the Selection Committee and may also be provided to funders and Tech Alliance partners.

Qualifications and Experience

Please provide a brief description of the applicant organization, including capacity, qualifications and relevant experience. Highlight specific experience providing the services identified in this RFP, as well as work with non-profit organizations, experience with federally-funded grant programs, and experience with the particular populations Persevere serves. Please explain why your organization is particularly well-suited to provide evaluation services to Persevere and the Tennessee Tech Alliance.

Evaluation Design and Services

Evaluation Design - Describe your proposed evaluation design, including a discussion of your reasons for selecting that design.

3. References

Please provide three (3) references for similarly contracted services within the last (10) ten years including:

- a. Organization name
- b. Organization address
- c. Contact name
- d. Contact phone number
- e. Contact email address
- f. Scope of services provided and length of service

Letters of reference are not required.

4. Resumes/CV

Please attach resumes/CV for the proposed Principal Investigator and all other key personnel.

5. Proposed Budget

The Budget must include both a *Budget Request* and a section called *Additional Budget Information*.

Applicants are not required to make any contribution, cash or in-kind, but if any such contribution is planned, please identify it here. Examples might include the donation of student worker time to assist with part of the project (when they are not compensated through the project) or access to an applicant organization's annual meeting or resource library. It is expected that these would be resources that would be available to any non-profit organization. It is not necessary to quantify the dollar value of any contributions in this section.

Budget Request

Please provide a proposed budget with a clear explanation of costs in each of the following categories:

Personnel (including fringe benefits) - Provide a breakdown of costs by position, including the amount of time (FTE or number of service hours) to be provided. Provide a brief explanation of the role each funded position. Separate fringe benefits from salary/wages.

Travel - Explain any travel costs, why they are needed for the work to be completed, and how they were calculated.

Professional Services - Provide detail for any contracts or other paid agreements for professional services.

Supplies - Identify supplies to be included in the budget.

Other - Identify and explain any other costs, including indirect costs. If you are requesting indirect costs, please explain how you arrived at the amount you are requesting.

3. An invitation to negotiate a contract will be offered to the most highly ranked applicant. The preliminary offer will be made final when an agreement is reached and the contract is executed.
4. If an agreement cannot be reached, the applicant ranked second by the selection committee will be invited to negotiate a contract.
5. The final determination of contract award will be made by the Persevere Board of Directors, informed by the recommendation of the Selection Committee. The decision of the Board is final.

Persevere is bound by the Procurement Standards of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.317 - 200.327 and Persevere’s own Procurement Policy that require the selection of the contractor that best meets the needs of Persevere and the federal program supporting the contract.

Selection Criteria for Written Proposal	Maximum Point Allocation
Qualifications, Experience and Staffing Qualifications and experience of the entity, including capability and experience of key personnel and experience with other public or private agencies to provide these services and meet any required timelines and other requirements; Adequate staff and resources to perform the specified tasks required to meet the services as outlined within the specified timeline; Demonstrated expertise in both qualitative and quantitative data analysis of similar projects	25
Evaluation Plan and Services Proposed approach, including demonstrated understanding of work to be performed and a realistic timeline; technical assistance plan; data collection and analysis plans; plans for human subjects protection; plan for communication with staff	45
Approach to Overcoming Challenges Understanding of potential challenges or barriers to success, and the approach/plan for overcoming those challenges	10
Budget Reasonability of pricing for the services described by this RFP and the proposer’s response; Extent to which budgeted resources are clearly sufficient to complete the scope of work described	20
Total Possible Base Score	100

The selection committee will include several Persevere directors/coordinators, one or two Tech Alliance partner representatives, and one or two professional evaluators.



2.4 Access to and Use of Community Resources – At least 80% of participants will demonstrate increased access to and use of community resources, as measured by the *Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix*. Benchmarks: Final assessment for the achievement of the objective will take place at month 12 for each participant.

2.5 Mental health and substance abuse services – All participants identified with substance abuse or mental health needs by assessments administered at intake and within 30 days of intake will be referred for appropriate services and provided support services for access. Benchmark: Quarterly review of referrals

2.6 Employer Engagement – The project will demonstrate a high level of employer engagement through 1) ongoing employer engagement activities; 2) job commitments made by employers sufficient to meet job placement requirements by end of month 36); and 3) job placements (Benchmark: See Objective 3.3, below).

3.0 - Outcomes

3.1 Recidivism — The recidivism rate among justice-involved participants under Tennessee Department of Correction supervision will not exceed 20% (less than half that state’s current rate of 42%). Benchmark: Assessed every 6 months, beginning with month 12; Final assessment for objective achievement at the end of month 36.

3.2 Completion of Career Training — At least 80% (n=1,410) of participants enrolled in the coding/technology training program for at least 2 months will complete the program and achieve certification.

3.3 Employment Placement — At least 87% (n=1,234) of participants completing the coding program will be placed in employment.