

National Institute of Corrections

Solicitation for a Cooperative Agreement - Employment Retention
Specialist Training - Curriculum Revision and Certification

AGENCY: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of
Justice

ACTION: Solicitation for a Cooperative Agreement

SUMMARY: The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) is soliciting proposals from organizations, groups, or individuals to enter into a cooperative agreement for a 24-month period to begin no later than September 15, 2014. Work under this cooperative agreement will involve the facilitation of a key informant focus group consisting of subject matter experts specific to career theory, cognitive behavioral principles, motivational interviewing and blended learning techniques and practices; the review of current research related to workforce development, employment retention, recidivism and evidence-based programing; and the identification of the various practices and policies that support successful community transition and the long-term attachment of justice involved adults to the workforce. The major deliverables associated with this project include, but are not limited to a revised 40-hour blended training curriculum based on a university model to ensure

continuity of knowledge between the Employment Retention:
Principles and Practices Training and the Employment Retention
Specialist certified trainings, a professional training protocol
specific to combined motivational interviewing techniques and
cognitive behavioral principles that support skill mastery
and/or proficiency, an assessment process to evaluate
participant progress, and a certification protocol to award
continuing education units for the Employment Retention
Specialist training. This project will be a collaborative
venture with NIC's Community Services Division.

NIC OPPORTUNITY NUMBER:14CS15. This number should appear in the
reference line in your cover letter, on Standard Form 424 in
section 11 with the title of your proposal, and in the right
justified header of your proposal.

NUMBER OF AWARDS AND FUNDS AVAILABLE: Under this solicitation,
one (1) Award will be made. The total amount of funds available
under this solicitation is \$90,000.00 - with the provision for
additional funding for fiscal years 2015 and 2016 based on the
satisfactory performance of the awardee and continued
availability of Federal funding. Funds awarded under this
solicitation may only be used for activities directly related to
the project as described herein unless otherwise amended in
writing by NIC.

APPLICATIONS: All applicants must be submitted electronically via <http://www.grants.gov>. Hand delivered, mailed, faxed, or emailed applications will not be accepted.

DATE: Application must be submitted before midnight on Wednesday, July 30, 2014.

AUTHORITY: Public Law 93-415

ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANTS: An eligible applicant is any public or private agency, educational institution, organization, individual or team with expertise in the described areas.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background: In order to assist justice involved adults with maintaining long-term attachments to the workforce, practitioners must be able to assess those at high risk for job loss, identify specific criminogenic risks, and develop programming in response to identified risk/need areas. In addition, practitioners must maintain a communication style that supports exploration of the values, thoughts and feelings that lead to job loss and recidivism. A proposal responsive to this solicitation should, at a minimum operationalize a training process that combines cognitive behavioral principles with motivational interviewing techniques to provide the core competencies required to assist justice involved adults maintain gainful attachments to the workforce while maintaining a crime-

free lifestyle. In addition, the applicant should incorporate evidence based strategies that successfully meet the diverse needs of adult learners.

Scope of Work: The tasks to be performed under this cooperative agreement should include meeting with subject matter experts to identify measurable training objectives that successfully address employment retention and recidivism; development of a training curriculum based on the Instructional Theory Into Practice (ITIP) model; review of a needs assessment that identified the critical duty bands and job bands of Employment Retention Specialists/practitioners working with justice involved adults; development of an evaluation protocol to assess the effectiveness of the training; development of pre/post evaluations and quizzes and/or questionnaire to measure the trainees' mastery of established competencies and skills. In addition, the awardee should have an established procedure for the provision of professional certification and continuing educational units.

Modules may address the following: Motivational Interviewing; Supportive Case Management; Employability Skills; Employment Readiness Classes/Skills; Labor Market Information; Collaboration with Internal/External Organizations; Responding

to the Needs of the Employer; Cognitive Behavioral Theory, and Evidence Based Practices.

Deliverables: The tasks to be performed under this cooperative agreement include (1) review of documents directly related to NIC's Employment Retention Initiative, (2) participation in an initial meeting with designated NIC staff for a project overview and preliminary planning session, (3) planning and participation in a meeting with subject matter experts specific to employment retention, recidivism, evidence based training for adults learners and the operationalization of motivational techniques with cognitive behavioral principles, (4) submission of eight quarterly reports reflecting the progress of the project, (5) development and delivery of PDF and Word copies of the instructor's manual, participant's manual, teaching aides, assessments/tools and training evaluation forms, (6) electronic process/template for providing training certification and continuing educational units.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: All technical or programmatic questions concerning this announcement should be directed to P. Elizabeth Taylor, Correctional Program Specialist, National Institute of Corrections who may be reached by email at petaylor@bop.gov. In addition to the direct reply, all questions and responses will be posted on NIC's website at www.nicic.gov for public review

(the names or affiliations of those submitting questions will not be posted). The website will be updated regularly and postings will remain on the website until the closing date of this cooperative agreement solicitation.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS: Application Requirements: Applications should be typed, double spaced, in 12-point font, and reference the project by the "NIC Opportunity Number" 14CS15 and title in this announcement, "Employment Retention Specialist Training - Curriculum Revision and Certification". The package must include: a cover letter that identifies the audit agency responsible for the applicant's financial accounts as well as the audit period or fiscal year that the applicant operates under (e.g., July 1 through June 30); a concisely written program narrative, not to exceed 30 numbered pages, in response to the statement of work, and a detailed budget with a budget narrative explaining projected costs. Applicants may submit a description of the project teams' qualifications and expertise relevant to the project, but should not attach lengthy resumes. Attachments to the proposal describing your organization or examples of other past work beyond those specifically requested above are discouraged. These attachments should not exceed 5MB.

The following forms must also be included: OMB Standard Form 424, Application for Federal Assistance; OMB Standard Form 424A, Budget information - Non-Construction Programs; OMB Standard Form 424B, Assurances - Non-Construction Programs (these forms are available at <http://www.grants.gov>) and DOJ/NIC Certification Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and the Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (available at <http://nicic.gov/Downloads/General/certif-frm.pdf>)

Failure to supply all required forms with the application package may result in disqualification of the application from consideration.

Note: NIC will NOT award a cooperative agreement to an applicant who does not have a Dun and Bradstreet Database Universal Number (DUNS) and is not registered in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR).

A DUNS number can be received at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-800-333-0505 (if you are a sole proprietor, you would dial 1-866-705-5711 and select option 1).

Registration in the CRR can be done online at the CCR web site: <http://www.bpn.gov/ccr>. A CCR Handbook and worksheet can also be reviewed at the web site.

REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS: Applications received under this announcement will be subject to the NIC Review Process.

Proposals which fail to provide sufficient information to allow evaluation under the criteria below may be judged non-responsive and disqualified.

The criteria for the evaluation of each application will be as follows:

Programmatic (40%)

Are all of the project tasks adequately discussed? Is there a clear statement of how each task will be accomplished, to include the overall project goal(s), major tasks to achieve the goal(s), the strategies to be employed in completing the tasks, required staffing, and other required resources? Are there any approaches, techniques, or design aspects proposed that are new to NIC and will enhance the project?

Organizational (35%)

Do the proposed project staff members possess the skills, knowledge, and expertise necessary to complete the tasks listed under the scope of work? Does the applicant organization, group, or individual have the organizational capacity to complete all project tasks? Does the proposal contain project management and staffing plans that are realistic and sufficient to complete the project within the project time frame?

Project Management/Administration (25%)

Does the applicant identify reasonable objectives and/or milestones that reflect the key tasks, and measures to track progress? If consultants and/or partnerships are proposed, is there a reasonable justification for their inclusion in the project, and a clear structure to ensure effective coordination? Is the proposed budget realistic, does it provide a sufficient cost detail/narrative, and does it represent good value relative to the anticipated results?

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS: Documents or other media that are produced under this award must follow these guidelines: Prior to the preparation of the final draft of any document or other media, the awardee must consult with NIC's Writer/Editor concerning the acceptable formats for manuscript submissions and the technical specifications for electronic media. For all awards in which a document will be a deliverable, the awardee must follow the guidelines listed herein, as well as follow the Guidelines for Preparing and Submitting Manuscripts for Publication as found in the "General Guidelines for Cooperative Agreements," which can be found on our website at www.nicic.gov/cooperativeagreements.

All final documents and other materials submitted under this project must meet the federal government's requirement for Section 508 accessibility, including those provisions outlined in 1194 Subpart B, Technical Provisions, Subpart C, Functional Performance Criteria; and Subpart D, Documentation and Support, NIC's government product accessibility template (see www.nicic.gov/section508) outlines the agency's minimum criteria for meeting this requirement; a completed form attesting to the accessibility of project deliverables should accompany all submissions.

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) should be entered into box 10 of the SF 424. The CFDA number for this solicitation is 16.601 - Training and Staff Development. You are not subject to Executive Order 12372 and should check box b under section 16.

Robert Brown, Jr.

Acting Director, National Institute of Corrections