



## **Request for Proposals**

**TITLE: Preschool Development Grant Project Manager and Facilitator**

**ISSUE DATE: February 4, 2019**

**ISSUING AGENCY: NC Early Childhood Foundation**  
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**For consideration, proposals must be emailed to [mableidinger@buildthefoundation.org](mailto:mableidinger@buildthefoundation.org) by February 22, 2019 at 5 PM EST.**

### **Introduction to the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation:**

The vision of the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation (NCECF) is that each North Carolina child has a strong foundation for lifelong success and reading proficiency, supported by the nation's best birth-to-eight system.

To drive policies and strategies that unleash the potential of each North Carolina child, the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation brings together those working to promote children's health and development, to support families and communities and to advance high quality birth-to-eight learning.

Our work includes:

- Promoting public understanding of and support for policies that promote children's birth-to-eight years for academic and lifelong success.
- Convening and spearheading collaboration to bridge North Carolina's birth-to-five and kindergarten-to-third grade systems.
- Advancing policies that create a stronger NC today and tomorrow by supporting each child's birth-to-eight development.

### **Purpose of Request for Proposals:**

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to acquire the services of a qualified contractor to (1) support a process to gather stakeholder input from across North Carolina to inform the implementation of the statewide early childhood birth-to-five strategic plan, (2) create and manage a supported process to convene experts, review research and best practices, and make recommendations for what measure – or portfolio of proxy measures – would best track children's outcomes at kindergarten entry, and (3) coordinate with a Racial Equity Consultant and a Data Analysis and Evaluation Consultant.



## **Background**

The Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) was awarded funding through the federal Preschool Development Grant B-5 (PDG) for activities to strengthen its early childhood education system. The PDG requires states to develop a B-5 strategic plan to improve the quality and access of services for children and families across programs through coordination and collaboration among state and local agencies, early childhood partners, and stakeholders. The NC Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC), the state’s organizational entity that works to strengthen the early childhood system across multiple agencies and services, has already begun development of NC’s Early Childhood Action Plan (ECAP) that will guide the development of the state’s B-5 strategic plan. The PDG provides opportunity for NC to develop its B-5 strategic plan to ensure the state’s early childhood education system best meets the needs of young children, particularly the most vulnerable, and their families.

NCECF has already been involved in developing the ECAP. This contract will build on work that has already been done on the ECAP. Through the *Pathways to Grade-level Reading Initiative*, NCECF conducted the research and developed and led the process to establish the metrics the ECAP is based on. The plan itself will be written by staff from DHHS, using data, analysis and community engagement work from NCECF.

NCECF will work to support the development of the strategic plan by:

1. Engaging stakeholders across the state to get input on the plan.
2. Developing an early childhood data development strategy, including engaging in a supported process to convene experts, review research and best practices, and make recommendations for what measure – or portfolio of proxy measures – would best track children’s outcomes at kindergarten entry at the population level.
3. Applying a racial equity lens to the work, including in the engagement processes used to inform the strategic plan, and building the capacity of the data development groups to use a racial equity lens.

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

This RFP is to hire a contractor to do numbers (1) and (2) above, and to coordinate with a Racial Equity Consultant and a Data Analysis and Evaluation Consultant. *NCECF will also be hiring for two other contractors: a Racial Equity Consultant to apply a racial equity lens to the data development and stakeholder engagement processes, and a Data Analysis and Evaluation Consultant to analyze and report on the data gathered from the stakeholder engagement process and evaluate the stakeholder engagement and data development processes. Those RFPs are available at [www.buildthefoundation.org](http://www.buildthefoundation.org). Consultants are invited to respond to more than one RFP if they desire.*

The Contractor will engage stakeholders to obtain input on the strategic plan by:



- (1) Gathering local community input: Engage with Smart Start through assisting an estimated 14 partnerships in convening early childhood professionals and through the annual national Smart Start conference, to ensure that the strategic plan is responsive to and reflects community priorities.
  - Work through the Smart Start conference in early May 2019 to obtain local feedback to the strategic plan.
  - Manage mini-grant process to award small grants to 14 local Smart Start partnerships to host community meetings in the second half of 2019.
  - Develop detailed facilitation guide for meetings, with input from Data Analysis and Evaluation Consultant and Racial Equity Consultant. **Example from past community meeting:**
  - Prepare materials as needed for community meetings.
  - Liaise with grantees as they plan and host community meetings.
  - Attend the first two community meetings to review and adapt the process.
  - Collect community input reports. (*Data Analysis and Evaluation Consultant will perform the quantitative and qualitative data synthesis and analysis of the 14 reports.*)
  
- (2) Gathering family input: Partner with groups that regularly meet with families of young children to host conversations on the opportunities and challenges that parents face in supporting their children’s development; what information families need knowledge to exercise choice about NC’s mixed delivery system; and how NC’s early childhood education system can most effectively support them in their role as their children’s most important teacher.
  - Manage mini-grant process for family input partners.
  - Identify partner organizations that regularly meet with families of young children and work with those partners to identify 14 family support groups to gather input from.
  - Prepare materials as needed to collect family input (i.e., written and electronic surveys, focus group questions), with input from Data Analysis and Evaluation Consultant and Racial Equity Consultant.
  - Manage translation of materials into Spanish.
  - Collect family input during family support groups in second half of 2019 (*Data Analysis and Evaluation Consultant will perform the quantitative and qualitative data synthesis and analysis of the 14 family support group reports.*)

The contractor will engage in a supported process to convene experts, review research and best practices, and make recommendations for what measure – or portfolio of proxy measures – would best track children’s outcomes at kindergarten entry, by:

- Convening relevant data experts for four half-day meetings between March and September, 2019.



- Creating a meeting arc and facilitating a process that results in workgroup members finding consensus around measures to track children’s outcomes at kindergarten.
- Conducting research and data analysis as needed to support the workgroup.
- Creating a detailed meeting facilitation plan and meeting materials.
- Inviting and managing logistics for national expert(s) to speak at workgroup meetings.
- Creating a final report documenting the workgroup’s process and final consensus recommendations by mid September 2019.
- *Data Analysis and Evaluation Consultant will evaluate the data process.*

The contractor will coordinate with the Racial Equity Consultant and Data Analysis and Evaluation Consultant by:

- Meeting as needed with the consultants and NCECF staff.
- Working with the Racial Equity Consultant to integrate a racial equity lens as the processes for stakeholder engagement and data development are being created and implemented.
- Integrating input from the Data Analysis and Evaluation Consultant in the creation of:
  - The facilitation guide for community stakeholder meetings
  - Parent surveys and focus group questions
- Collecting community input reports and parent group reports and submitting them to the Data Analysis and Evaluation Consultant.
- Working with the Data Analysis and Evaluation Consultant to facilitate evaluation of the community stakeholder meetings and the data development meetings.

#### **DELIVERABLES**

- A workplan and timeline for accomplishing the work.
- Regular meetings with NCECF and other consultants as needed during the process.
- For community meetings:
  - Meetings in 14 local communities across the state to provide input on the plan.
  - Attendance at first two community meetings to review and adapt the process.
  - Facilitation guide and other materials needed for community meetings.
  - Written reports from community meetings.
- For family input:
  - 14 family support groups consulted.
  - Materials needed for gathering family input.
  - Collection of family input from 14 groups.
- For data workgroup:
  - Four meetings of the data workgroup.
  - Attendance at all data workgroup meetings.
  - Facilitation plan and materials needed for data workgroup meetings.
  - Final report documenting workgroup’s process and final consensus recommendations.



Deliverables are considered final when they are completed to NCECF's satisfaction.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

The Contractor must have demonstrated competency in performing services defined in the Scope of Work Section of this RFP. Contractor should provide the name, address, and telephone number for a reference for three projects completed in the last year.

The Contractor must provide details of any pertinent judgment, criminal conviction, investigation or litigation pending against the Contractor or any of its officers, directors, employees, agents or subcontractors of which the vendor has knowledge, or a statement that there is none. NCECF reserves the right to reject a proposal based on this information.

### **PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS**

Responses to the RFP must include:

- **Cover letter** – The proposal must include a cover letter signed by the individual authorized to legally bind the contractor. The cover letter must also contain a statement that the person signing the proposal is a legal representative of the contractor and is authorized to bind the contract.
- **Background and experience of the applicant** – Information and examples of work that show the experience and skills of the applicant to complete Scope of Work.
- **Project staffing** – This section must include the proposed staffing to be assigned to this project, including resumes citing experience with similar projects and the responsibilities to be assigned to each person.
- **Technical approach** – The proposal should describe the approach the contractor will take to complete work, including a timeline.
- **References** – Two references of clients including name and contact information and the nature of the project.
- **Cost** – Total not-to-exceed cost, representing the maximum of all work to be performed must be clearly indicated.