Request for Proposal Outreach: An Opportunity to Develop Strong and Diverse Technical Assistance Teams

Conducting robust outreach for competitive requests for proposals (RFP) can help your program select a strong and diverse technical assistance (TA) provider team. Contracting with the right team enhances the quality and delivery of your TA and capacity building services. Through your RFP outreach, you can help organizations that have not previously contracted with the state learn of opportunities to do so. Reaching out to community-rooted organizations about serving as a TA provider can help secure more culturally relevant support to TA recipients. It can also help build deeper trust in TA providers and the State. The following checklist is a resource to use as you prepare your outreach to expand the reach and awareness of your RFP.

1. Develop a Proactive Communications Plan

- Research organizations and firms with relevant experience ***before*** the RFP is released and send outreach emails immediately after the RFP is live. It is important to do this research once you have determined the bidder qualifications. This enables you to identify organizations with the skills and experience you are seeking. LinkedIn is a useful platform to help identify organizations with the expertise you are seeking.
  - [ ] Compile the name, contact information, and website for organizations into an outreach tracker.
  - [ ] Conduct your search! Use key terms from your RFP qualifications and tasks in your search for organizations.
- Prepare to conduct multiple forms of outreach
  - [ ] Post an announcement to your agency's website
  - [ ] Create multiple social media posts to promote the opportunity
  - [ ] Circulate the RFP in the SGC newsletter and programmatic e-blasts
  - [ ] Send direct emails to share the opportunity with organizations that might be interested or are able to share with their networks
  - [ ] Ask internal and external colleagues to share the opportunity with their networks
  - [ ] Ask agency partners to circulate in their respective newsletters
  - [ ] Partner with trusted community-serving organizations to circulate the RFP

2. Start Early

Responding to an RFP takes lots of time and resources, especially for RFPs that are seeking a partnership between a team of organizations. Notify potential bidders of this opportunity as early as possible!

3. Host an RFP Overview Webinar

- [ ] Host an RFP overview webinar one to two weeks following the RFP release date. This will give potential bidders time to review the RFP in advance.
- [ ] Encourage registrants to send questions in advance through the webinar registration and/or via email.

- ❑ Record with live transcript and post publicly as soon as possible to ensure those unable to attend have access to the information provided in a timely manner.
- ❑ Leave plenty of time at the end of the webinar for Q&A and send out a Q&A document after the webinar with answers to all the questions, including those that were addressed during the webinar and any that you ran out of time to respond to.

4. Be Accessible

It is important to keep open lines of communication with potential bidders and be responsive to questions.

- ❑ Keep potential bidders informed on changes, such as updates to the RFP or extension of the deadline.
- ❑ Maintain a living Q&A document that is accessible and enables you to answer questions that arise after the RFP Overview Webinar

5. Identify Ways to Support Networking and Collaboration without Impacting the Competitive Process

- ❑ Post the opportunity to SGC's TA Providers Networking Hub or develop a LinkedIn group specific to your agency
- ❑ Consider sharing the list of registrants with the RFP overview webinar registrants through an easily accessible and editable spreadsheet, so interested parties can note if they are seeking partnerships for the RFP opportunity. **Remember to get consent before sharing contact information!**
    - During the webinar, tell attendees that you plan on sharing the registration list and ask them to send you a direct message if they prefer for their contact information not to be shared.
    - Send a follow-up email as well, asking that registrants let you know by a specific date and time if they do not wish for their contact information to be shared.