



# Center for Effective Public Policy

## Request for Qualifications

## Application Instructions

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## 1 Background: The Center for Effective Public Policy

The Center for Effective Public Policy (the Center) is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization that was incorporated in Pennsylvania in 1981 and now has its principal office in Silver Spring, Maryland. The Center has over three decades of experience providing training and technical assistance to justice system and allied agencies. Our highly regarded approach to training and technical assistance has been instrumental in helping to forge strong collaborative teams in jurisdictions across the country and to facilitate important changes in philosophies and policies that support fair, just, and effective practices throughout the system

### The Center's Vision and Mission

#### Our Vision

Safe communities achieved through humane, rational, and well-informed justice.

#### Our Mission

To assist justice system professionals and their partners to collaboratively identify and implement effective, evidence-based strategies that reduce harm and improve justice system outcomes.

The Center has administered projects funded by federal and non-federal government agencies, and foundations. Most of these projects have included training or technical assistance. These projects have taken us to every state and to thousands of local communities on topics as diverse as pre-trial justice; diversion and deferred prosecution; evidence-based decision making, sentencing practices; problem-solving courts; probation and parole supervision and responses to violations; local and state correctional practices; jail, prison, and parole release decision making; jail and prison re-entry; and institutional and community service delivery. This work has spanned various justice-involved populations including men and women, youth and adults, and special populations such as justice-involved women and individuals convicted of sex offenses. We have specific expertise in facilitation, team-building, and collaborative decision making using objective, research-informed, and data-driven processes to facilitate policy and practice change. The

Center's staff and network of expert consultants are configured into project teams that have diverse qualifications and backgrounds in corrections, organizational development, nonprofit management, training, criminal justice, human services research, agency administration, and policy development.

Further information about the Center can be obtained at the Center's web site: [www.cepp.com](http://www.cepp.com).

## 2 Overview of the Request for Qualifications

The Center is seeking applications in response to this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) in order to maintain a "prequalified" list of subcontractors and individual consultants to provide assistance to and support the efforts of the Center in its work. This RFQ is part of an ongoing, multiphase process that will include:

- Advertising the RFQ to the public;
- Accepting applications from interested organizations and individuals;
- Evaluating and scoring submissions in terms of demonstrated knowledge, skills, and experience to assist the Center in its work;
- Assigning qualified applicants to either a "prequalified" or "standard" bidders list based on scores; and
- Notifying applicants of the Center's decision regarding their status.

This prequalification process is one of multiple competitive procurement methods used by the Center to satisfy the requirements of 2 CFR Part 200, §§200.318 – 200.326.

Applicants placed on the prequalified bidders list will be required to update their qualification annually to maintain this status. Applicants placed on the standard bidders list will have an opportunity to qualify for the prequalified bidders list annually, and will receive notifications of any Requests for Proposals issued by the Center.

### 3 Request for Qualifications Definitions

General terms used in this RFQ are defined as follows:

- Applicant: A company or an individual submitting an application in response to this RFQ. Applicants may include corporations and limited liability companies, both non-profit and for-profit. Individual consultants may also be prequalified.
- Application: An application is a formal response to this RFQ, which must contain all of the information required, and may include optional attachments. The application must include the following:
  - Completed RFQ Application Form;
  - A narrative package, explained further in Section 5.5; and
  - Optional attachments.
- Company: A legal entity established according to state regulations dictating the creation of a business. Companies may include C Corporations, S Corporations, Limited Liability Corporations (LLC), and Limited Liability Partnerships (LLP).
- Individual Consultants: Individual consultants are sole proprietors who have not established a legal entity under which to conduct business, and operate as individuals. A collection of individual consultants who frequently work and bid for funding together will not be considered a company for these purposes unless they have established themselves a legal entity in accordance with relevant state law. In such a case, each individual consultant must apply for and be prequalified.
- Prequalified Bidders List: A list of subcontractors and individual consultants whose sets of knowledge, skills, and experiences have been found to meet the required level of excellence, based on scores assigned as part of the Center's evaluation process.
- Standard Bidders List: A list of subcontractors who demonstrated valuable sets of knowledge, skills, and experience but who did not score highly enough to be placed on the pre-qualified bidders list. Applicants placed on the standard bidders list will receive special notification of competitive RFP opportunities made available by the Center.

## 4 Target Audience

The target audience for this RFQ is any company or individual consultant that can demonstrate the specific sets of knowledge, skills, and experience needed to assist the Center in its training and technical assistance projects. Applicants must be able to demonstrate not only the substantive capacity to engage in the work conducted by the Center, but also the organizational capacity to respond effectively to contractual assignments.

This RFQ is not seeking applications in response to a particular piece of work or proposed project. Rather, it is intended to help the Center establish a pool of prequalified bidders. Pre-qualification as a subcontractor or individual consultant is not a guarantee of a contract.

The Center seeks applications from companies and individual consultants interested in potential contracts in the following topic areas:

- **TOPIC AREA #1: JUSTICE SYSTEM MANAGEMENT:** Policy, practice, and research in justice system management including but not limited to system change, collaboration, strategic planning, action planning, justice reinvestment, and organizational development.
- **TOPIC AREA #2: CORRECTIONAL PRACTICE:** Policy, practice, and research in correctional practice including but not limited to institutional and community based offender management, re-entry, community supervision, and responses to offender behavior.
- **TOPIC AREA #3: EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE:** Policy, practice, and research in evidence-based decision making and evidence-based practice.
- **TOPIC AREA #4: SPECIAL POPULATIONS:** Policy, practice, and research in the management of special populations including but not limited to women offenders and sex offenders.

## 5 Request for Qualifications Applications

### 5.1 Inquiries

All inquiries related to this RFQ are to be directed to:

Susan Gibel  
Chief Operating Officer  
Center for Effective Public Policy  
Email: [sgibel@cepp.com](mailto:sgibel@cepp.com)

Questions must be submitted in writing, via email. Information obtained from any other source is not official and should not be relied upon.

### 5.2 Submission Requirements

Submission requirements include:

- A completed RFQ Application Information Form
- A narrative package

There are two RFQ Application Information Forms available:

- RFQ Application Information Form—Subcontractors: This form should be used by all companies. <http://cepp.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/RFQ-Application-Information-Form—Subcontractors.pdf>
- RFQ Application Information Form—Individual Consultants: This form should be used by all individual consultants. <http://cepp.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/RFQ-Application-Information-Form—Independent-Consultants.pdf>

### 5.3 Format of Applications

Applications should be submitted in electronic copy, in pdf format, to [sgibel@cepp.com](mailto:sgibel@cepp.com). The application should be submitted as two separate files (the RFQ Application Information Form and a separate narrative package). Applications must include the name and address of the RFQ

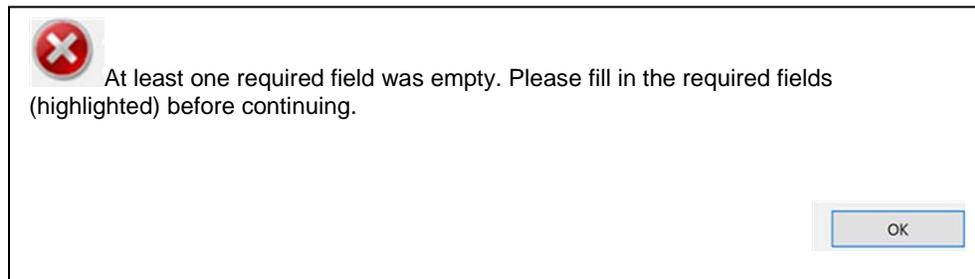
applicant contact in the body of the email. Email submissions should have “CEPP RFQ 2017” in the subject line.

#### 5.4 RFQ Application Information Form

The RFQ Application Information Form is a fillable form. Although it may be saved and re-opened for editing, submission will require a verification process (automatic) to ensure that all required information is provided. If the package is not completed properly, when the applicant presses the “Submit” button at the end of the application:



The applicant will receive an error message, indicating that there are required fields not yet completed:



Information required in the RFQ Application Form is slightly different depending whether the applicant is a subcontractor or an individual consultant. Information required in the RFQ Application Information Form—Subcontractors includes:

- Contact information;
- DUNS and FEIN numbers;
- Confirmation of the company’s registration in the System for Award Management (SAM) system;
- Confirmation of the company’s status on federal debt or disbarment;
- Two professional references from non-Center sources; and

- A rate table for staff, which must remain effective through March 2018. The rate table submitted with the RFQ will be the basis for contract negotiations for services. A new rate table must be submitted annually with each requalification.

Information required in the RFQ Application Information Form—Individual Consultants includes:

- Contact information;
- Social Security number;
- Confirmation of the individual consultant’s status on federal debt or disbarment;
- Two professional references from non-Center sources; and
- A rate table, which must remain effective through March 2018. The rate table submitted with the RFQ will be the basis for contract negotiations for services. A new rate table must be submitted annually with each requalification.

Both RFQ Application Information Forms provide a list of the skill sets sought by the Center for selection under each topic area. For a general listing of skill sets sought, see Section 5.6.

A total of 10 points will be awarded for the RFQ Application Form.

## 5.5 The Narrative Package

Some restrictions are placed on the format of the narrative package. Page restrictions are imposed, as follows:

- An Explanation of Delinquency or Disbarment (if applicable): 1 page
- An Explanation of Conflicts of Interest (if applicable): 1 page
- Statement of Interest: 1 page
- Summary of Qualifications: 5 pages per topic area
- Summary of Staff Capacity: 2 pages per topic area

Although the application may be single or double spaced, font size should not be smaller than Times Roman 12 point, and one inch margins are required. The narrative should be paginated, using the format "Page X of X" pages.

Headings, headers, or footers should be used to ensure the narrative package is clear in its presentation of information. For expediency, topic areas may short-handed as follows:

- Topic 1: Justice System Management
- Topic 2: Correctional Practice
- Topic 3: Evidence-Based Practices
- Topic 4: Special Populations

The goal of the narrative package is to establish the qualifications of the company or individual consultant. The narrative package should focus on:

- Years of experience in the field;
- Demonstrated expertise within the topic area (providing services and developing publications and other tools); and
- Proven capacity to deliver contracted work on time and within budget.

### **5.5.1 Potential Services to Be Provided**

Applicants may be asked to provide services to include:

- Writing: Create or contribute to publications.
- Training: Serve as faculty or as a facilitator for in-person training and webinars.
- Coaching: Consult one-on-one with corrections staff to evaluate and advise them on their interactions with offenders and other staff.
- On- and/or off-site Consultation: Meet with small group of policymakers/practitioners on-site to provide information and facilitate discussions, or consult with policymakers/practitioners off-site (via telephone and email) to provide information and facilitate discussions.

- Site Coordination Services: Serve as the primary liaison between a site (jurisdiction) and a project, including providing training/technical assistance.
- Strategic Planning: Consult with an agency/jurisdiction to assist them in developing a strategic organization plan and determining how best to implement it.
- Research: Assist a jurisdiction with collecting and analyzing data, and improving their data collection and mining systems.
- Multi-media production: Assist the Center in developing multi-media presentations (e.g., video, on-line learning modules).

These are general descriptions of skill sets. The RFQ Application Information Form will allow applicants to indicate skills sets with greater specificity (for example, the RFQ Application Information Form will allow an entity to select Research-Qualitative, Research-Quantitative, or both).

The applicant must disclose conflicts of interest. The Qualifications Review Committee will consider the nature of the applicant's potential responsibilities and the degree of potential or apparent conflict in deciding the course of action that the applicant needs to take to remedy the conflict of interest. In any situation where the conflict of interest cannot be resolved, the applicant will be disqualified.

Applicants who have previously worked for or who are currently working with the Center are not considered to have a conflict of interest based on that relationship alone.

The following sections (5.6.1 – 5.6.6) provide instructions for developing the content of the narrative package.

### **5.5.2 An Explanation of Delinquency or Disbarment**

The Center is subject to the non-procurement debarment and suspension regulations implementing Executive Orders 12549 and 12689, [2 CFR part 180](#). These regulations restrict

awards, subawards, and contracts with certain parties that are debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in Federal assistance programs or activities.

If you or your company is delinquent on a federal debt, or is disbarred, an explanation of the delinquency or disbarment must be provided. If you believe you or your company may not be subject to the restrictions, please include provide a detailed explanation and include any documentation you may have that supports such an interpretation.

No points are awarded for the Explanation of Delinquency or Disbarment

### **5.5.3 Conflict of Interest Statement**

A conflict of interest is defined as follows:

A conflict of interest exists wherever an individual or company could benefit directly or indirectly from access to information or from a decision over which they may have influence. A conflict of interest occurs when a company or one of its staff attempts to promote a private or personal interest that results in an interference with the objective exercise of their job responsibilities, or gains any advantage by virtue of their position. Conflicts of interest may be real, potential, or perceived.

If a conflict of interest exists between you or your company, and the Center, whether real or perceived, a Conflict of Interest Statement must be provided. The statement should explain the basis of the conflict (including whether it is real or perceived), and explain what safeguards are in place to prevent or lessen the potential for the conflict to harm the Center.

No points are awarded for the Statement of Conflict of Interest.

#### **5.5.4 Statement of Interest**

A Statement of Interest is required. The Statement of Interest should summarize your (for individual consultants) or your company's (for subcontractors) interest in working with the Center for Effective Public Policy. Include in the statement of interest details regarding how your or your company's work and mission intersects with the Center's work and mission (see Page 1). Describe your or your company's general experience working with partners, including your or your company's approach to sharing and exchanging information. Describe your or your company's ability to work independently within defined parameters.

The Statement of Interest may receive up to 25 points.

#### **5.5.5 Summary of Qualifications**

A Summary of Qualifications is required for each topic area for which you or your company are applying for prequalification. The Summary of Qualification should be a narrative focused on your or your company's experience in the topic area. The narrative should cover your or your company's general experience, but also provide examples of specific projects. The narrative may include previous work accomplished and/or work currently on-going, but should not include work previously or currently ongoing with the Center. The narrative may include links to online publications that were developed under this topic area.

Please remember to use headings, headers, or footers to clearly label each page of the narrative so that we can determine what information is being provided in support of prequalification for each topic area.

The Statement of Qualifications may receive up to 20 points for each topic area.

#### **5.5.6 Summary of Staff Capacity**

A Summary of Staff Capacity is required for each topic area for which you or your company is applying for prequalification. The narrative should include key staff and their general experience, but should also include examples of specific projects and deliverables. The narrative may include previous work accomplished and/or work currently on-going, but should not include work previously or currently ongoing with the Center.

In your narrative package, the summary of staff capacity should immediately follow the summary of Qualifications for each topic area. For example, the Summary of Qualifications—Justice System Management should be followed immediately by the Summary of Staff Capacity—Justice System Management.

The Summary of Staff Capacity may receive up to 10 points per topic area.

#### **5.5.7 Additional Attachments**

Additional attachments are allowed; however, applicants are encouraged to limit materials provided outside the specific requirements of the RFQ. Subcontractors may attach up to three resumes for key organizational personnel. Up to one product sample may be submitted for each topic area for which an application is submitted; however, links to products developed under the topic area by the entity are preferred, and may be included in the Summary of Qualifications without limitation (keeping in mind the page limit and the need to summarize other relevant information).

When determining whether to include additional attachments, applicants should consider including only those additional attachments that will contribute to the Center's overall understanding of the knowledge, skills, and experience of the company or individual consultant, and enhance the information contained narrative package (i.e., resumes cannot be substituted for a summary of the applicant's staff qualifications, but may be offered to enhance the summary information provided). Providing resumes does not limit future

negotiations for key personnel under a specific contract for work; rather, resumes should be chosen to inform the Center's understanding of the company's overall capabilities.

Additional points are not awarded for including Additional Attachments.

## 5.6 Closing Date

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. This RFQ will be withdrawn in February 2018, and a new RFQ will be posted in March 2018. Applicants should use the most recent version of the RFQ available in order to be considered for pre-qualification.

## 6 Review and Selection

### 6.1 Qualifications Review Committee

The Qualifications Review Committee will be comprised of the Center's Board of Directors, Senior Associates, and the Chief Operating Officer.

### 6.2 Evaluation Criteria

Applicants will be evaluated according the following criteria:

- Years of experience in the field;
- Demonstrated expertise with the topic area (providing services and developing publications and other tools); and
- Proven capacity to deliver contracted work on time and within budget.

Written products will be reviewed as part of the qualifying process if provided; however, writing samples are not required and the applicant is limited to one writing sample as an additional attachment per topic area. Additional points are not given for providing written products; however, to the extent that they may enhance the Qualifications Review

Committee’s understanding of the entity’s capabilities, they may improve scores. Links to online products may be included in the Summary of Qualifications.

### 6.3 The Review and Selection Process

The Qualifications Review Committee will evaluate applications on a rolling basis, and applicants will be notified if they have qualified for the pre-qualified bidders’ list when their review is completed.

Step 1: The Chief Operating Officer will check applications against the mandatory criteria. Applications not meeting all mandatory criteria will not be considered for review and applicants will be notified of discrepancies.

Step 2: Once applications have passed this preliminary review, the Qualifications Review Committee will evaluate and score each application based on a standardized scorecard. To be prequalified, the company or individual consultant must score 90% or better in the review process, based on an average of individual scores by Qualifications Review Committee members. Up to 100 points are available for applications seeking prequalification under one topic area: up to 15 points for the RFQ Application Information Form; up to 25 points for the Statement of Interest; up to 40 points for the Summary of Qualifications; and up to 20 points for the Summary of Staff Qualification. If the applicant seeks prequalification under multiple topic areas, the number of points available increases.

<b>Number of Topics</b>	<b>Number of Available Points</b>	<b>Required Score for Prequalification</b>
1	100	90
2	160	144
3	220	198
4	280	252

Step 3: The Chief Operating Officer will notify the applicant in writing regarding their qualification status for the prequalified or standard bidders list. Applicants will be notified within 30 days of submission of an application.

#### 6.4 Applicants Who Do Not Qualify for the Prequalified Bidders List

Applicants whose scores did not permit prequalification will be notified. These applicants will be placed on a standard bidders list and will be notified when the Center issues a Request for Proposals. Applicants who are not prequalified may apply to have their status re-evaluated on an annual basis.

Applicants whose application did not meet minimum standards or were disqualified from all bidders' lists will be notified. These applicants may apply to have their status re-evaluated on an annual basis.

### 7 Acceptance of an Application Does Not Create a Binding Agreement

This RFQ is not a binding agreement to purchase goods or services. Applications will be assessed in light of the qualification review criteria and, if chosen for the prequalified list, will be contacted when contract opportunities become available.

### 8 Checklist

Have you completed the RFQ Application Information Form?

- Is it the appropriate form (Subcontractor versus Individual consultant)?
- Does it contain all of the required information?

Have you submitted a full narrative package?

- An Explanation of Delinquency or Disbarment (if applicable): up to 1 page
- An Explanation of Conflicts of Interest (if applicable): up to 1 page
- Statement of Interest: up to 1 page
- Summary of Qualifications: up to 5 pages *per topic area*
- Summary of Staff Capacity: up to 2 pages *per topic area*
- Is your narrative package properly formatted with headings for each part of the narrative?
- Is your narrative package properly paginated (Page X of X)?

If you have included additional attachments:

- Are they properly labelled for each topic area?
- Do they meet application limitations (no more than three staff resumes for key personnel and no more than one publication for each topic area)?

Ready to begin?

- RFQ Application Information Form—Subcontractors  
<http://cepp.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/RFQ-Application-Information-Form—Subcontractors.pdf>
- RFQ Application Information Form—Individual Consultants  
<http://cepp.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/RFQ-Application-Information-Form—Independent-Consultants.pdf>