



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) – BID# 7497375**

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER**

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Thursday, September 19, 2013 at 11:30 AM (ET)**

**PRE-BID CONFERENCE:**       **NO**  
    **YES** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mandatory:**       **NO**  
                                  **YES:** Any vendor who intends to submit a bid proposal in response to this solicitation must have its designated representative attend the mandatory pre-bid conference. The representative must register at the pre-bid conference and disclose the identity of the vendor whom he/she represents. Because attendance at the pre-bid conference is mandatory, a vendor’s failure to attend and register at the pre-bid conference shall result in disqualification of the vendor’s bid proposal as non-responsive to the solicitation.

**Buyer Name:**    **Gail Walsh**  
**Title:**             **Chief Buyer**

**QUESTIONS** concerning this solicitation must be received by the Division of Purchases at (gail.walsh@purchasing.ri.gov) no later than (Monday, September 09, 2013, 5:00 PM (ET)). Questions should be submitted in a *Microsoft Word attachment*. Please reference the bid number (Bid #7497375) on all correspondence. Questions received, if any, will be posted on the Rhode Island Division of Purchases website as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information.

**SURETY REQUIRED:**            **NO**

**BOND REQUIRED:**                **NO**

**DISK BASED BID:**             **NO**  
    **YES:** See attached Disk Based Bidding Information

**NOTE TO VENDORS:**  
Vendors must register on-line at the Rhode Island Division of Purchases website at [www.purchasing.ri.gov](http://www.purchasing.ri.gov). Offers received without the completed four-page Rhode Island Vendor Information Program (RIVIP) Generated Bidder Certification Cover Form attached may result in disqualification.

**THIS IS NOT A BIDDER CERTIFICATION FORM**



## **Disk Based Bidding Information**

### **File Format**

All disk based bid files are ZIP files that you can open using the WinZip 8.1 software. The ZIP file will contain one or more files based on the type of Bid/RFP.

### **Downloading the Disk Based Bid**

Bids that have a file for download are marked with a "D" in the Info field of the bid search results. The "D" will be an active link to the WinZip file until the bid reaches its opening date. Clicking on the active "D" link will allow you to open or save the ZIP file associated with the bid. Opening the WinZip file will download a copy to your computer's temporary directory.

### **Opening the Disk Based Bid**

Once downloaded, you can open the ZIP file with WinZip and view the Microsoft Office files contained within the WinZip file. Immediately save (extract) the individual files to an appropriate directory on your computer, such as "Desktop" or "My Documents".

## **FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND OTHER SPECIFIC PROJECTS:**

### **Completing the Disk Based Bid**

Once the Microsoft Office files are properly saved, open the individual files and enter the required information in the appropriate fields. Save each file again to capture the new information you entered.

### **Submitting the Disk Based Bid**

Save the completed files to a CD or diskette. Label the CD or diskette with the Bid/RFP number and bidder's name (company name, not contract name). Submit as instructed in the Bid or RFP solicitation document.

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## **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION**

The Rhode Island Department of Administration, Office of Purchases, on behalf of the Rhode Island Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) is requesting Proposals from qualified vendors to provide a Professional Development & Technical Assistance Center (henceforth referred to as the PD/TA Center), in accordance with the terms of this solicitation.

### **INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS TO BIDDERS:**

Potential offerors are advised to review all sections of this solicitation carefully and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejection of the proposal.

Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this procurement are solicited. However, proposals which depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this Request will be rejected as being non-responsive.

All costs associated with developing or submitting a proposal in response to this Request, or to provide oral or written clarification of its content, shall be borne by the offeror. The State assumes no responsibility for these costs.

Proposals are considered to be irrevocable for a period of not less than sixty (60) days following the opening date, and may not be withdrawn, except with the express written permission of the State Purchasing Agent.

All pricing submitted will be considered to be firm and fixed unless otherwise indicated herein.

Proposals misdirected to other State locations or which are otherwise not present in the Division of Purchases at the time of opening for any cause will be determined to be late and may not be considered. The "Official" time clock is in the reception area of the Division of Purchases.

In accordance with Title 7, Chapter 1.1 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, no foreign corporation shall have the right to transact business in the state until it shall have procured a Certificate of Authority to do so from the Rhode Island Secretary of State (401-222-3040). *This will be a requirement only of the successful bidder (s).*

Offerors are advised that all materials submitted to the State of Rhode Island for consideration in response to this Request for Proposals will be considered to be public records, as defined in Title 38 Chapter 2 of the Rhode Island General Laws.

Also, Submitters should be aware of the State's MBE requirements, which addresses the State's goal of ten per cent (10%) participation by MBE's in all State procurements. For further information, contact the State MBE Administrator at (401) 574-8253 or [charles.newton@mbe.ri.gov](mailto:charles.newton@mbe.ri.gov). Visit the website <http://www.mbe.ri.gov>

Interested parties are instructed to peruse the Division of Purchases web site on a regular basis, as additional information relating to this solicitation may be released in the form of an addendum to this LOI.

#### Equal Employment Opportunity (RIGL 28-5.1)

§ 28-5.1-1 Declaration of policy. – (a) Equal opportunity and affirmative action toward its achievement is the policy of all units of Rhode Island state government, including all public and quasi-public agencies, commissions, boards and authorities, and in the classified, unclassified, and non-classified services of state employment. This policy applies in all areas where the state dollar is spent, in employment, public service, grants and financial assistance, and in state licensing and regulation. For further information, contact the Rhode Island Equal Employment Opportunity Office, at 222-3090 or via email [raymond.lambert@hr.ri.gov](mailto:raymond.lambert@hr.ri.gov).

Subcontracts are permitted, provided that their use is clearly indicated in the offeror's proposal, and the subcontractor(s) proposed to be used are identified in the proposal.

RIGL 37-13-3.1 State public works contract apprenticeship requirements. \* (a) Notwithstanding any laws to the contrary, all general contractors and subcontractors who perform work on any public works contract awarded by the state after passage of this act and valued at one million dollars (\$1,000,000) or more shall employ apprentices required for the performance of the awarded contract. The number of apprentices shall comply with the apprentice to journeyman ratio for each trade approved by the apprenticeship council of the department of labor and training.

#### ARRA SUPPLEMENTAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

For contracts and sub-awards funded in whole or in part by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Pub.L.No. 111-5 and any amendments thereto, such contracts and sub-awards shall be subject to the Supplemental Terms and Conditions for Contracts and Sub-awards Funded in Whole or in Part by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Pub.L.No. 111-5 and any amendments thereto located on the Division of Purchases website at [www.purchasing.ri.gov](http://www.purchasing.ri.gov).

## **SECTION 2: BACKGROUND**

In 2011, Rhode Island was one of nine states awarded a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) Grant from the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This successful bid for this highly competitive federal grant both acknowledged the effort being made to improve the field of early learning in Rhode Island and as affirmation for Rhode Island's plans for system-wide change. A major part of Rhode Island's RTT-ELC State Plan was the State's commitment to establish a statewide Professional Development/Technical Assistance Center (henceforth referred to as the PD/TA Center).

The PD/TA Center will provide the early learning workforce across Rhode Island with access to professional development and technical assistance, link to higher education credentials, and address the unique needs of each sector of early childhood education across Rhode Island. The Center will assist both individuals and programs in reaching high-quality standards. The PD/TA Center will use the state's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Frameworks for all sectors of the workforce, including; Early Childhood Educators, Family Child Care Providers, and Administrators and Education Coordinators (to be developed in 2014), as the foundation for all offerings. In addition, the PD/TA Center will use the State's program standards and Early Learning and Development Standards for guidance in developing and/or selecting high-quality, evidence and research based offerings for our diverse workforce. Additionally, the PD/TA Center will ensure that professional development and technical assistance provided under this contract is provided by individuals with the requisite knowledge and skills as outlined by the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework for Professional Development Providers and Higher Education Faculty/Staff (currently under development) and that these individuals are supported in increasing their knowledge, skills, and abilities to support the early care and education workforce.

Historically, the Department of Human Services funds professional development opportunities using federal dollars from the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) and is responsible for overseeing the provision of the State's professional development system. Funding for the PD/TA center will continue to include CCDF funds, with additional funding from RTT-ELC. Additional resources supported with CCDF funding include: the Community College of Rhode Island's *Early Childhood Education and Training Project*, BrightStars Quality Rating and Improvement System, and LISC Rhode Island's Child Care Facilities Fund. In addition, CCDF funds are utilized in partnership with the RI Department of Health to provide mental health consultation and health consultation via the Child Care Support Network, and with the RI Department of Education to provide professional development and technical assistance focused on the State's Early Learning and Development Standards. The successful vendor will leverage these existing opportunities when appropriate.

This Request for Proposals is seeking a vendor to provide high-quality, innovative training, technical assistance, and professional development services to meet the unique needs of early childhood programs and educators across Rhode Island. The center will utilize baseline information from the state's professional workforce study (to be completed in 2013) and ongoing information from the workforce registry (currently in development) to determine and meet the overall needs of the current workforce. This RFP also seeks a vendor with the capacity to review and monitor the provision of Quality Improvement Grants. Improvement grants currently provide early learning programs with up to \$30,000 and family child care providers with up to \$5,000 to improve their programs as outlined in a program Quality Improvement Plan.

The successful bidder will work jointly with the Rhode Island Department of Human Services and the Rhode Island Department of Education and the other Participating State Agencies (e.g. Department of Health, and the Department of Children, Youth and Families) to design and provide statewide professional development offerings. These services will include, but are not limited to:

- Analyzing and using workforce data to develop a comprehensive slate of professional development supports for RI's early learning workforce;
- Ensuring that professional development supports are high-quality, evidence and/or research based and are provided by individuals with the requisite knowledge and skills ;
- Implementing a training approval process to ensure that training content reflects current research, aligns with program standards and/or RI's Workforce Knowledge and Competencies Frameworks, and is delivered in a way that reflects how adults learn best.
- Counseling individual educators in establishing a professional development plan;
- Providing individualized, high-quality technical assistance to providers or connecting providers to existing technical assistance; and
- Approving, distributing, and monitoring grants to providers based to improve program quality,
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the professional development supports provided and refining those supports based on that evaluation.

The PD/TA Center will be a central resource for all professionals in the early education field and will be responsible for supporting individuals in community based programs, Head Start, family childcare homes, license exempt providers approved by the DHS Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), and public schools requesting services, including processing Quality Improvement Grants applications for eligible programs. The PD/TA Center vendor will be an integral partner in raising the quality of early care and education in Rhode Island, as well as empowering and professionalizing the early care and learning workforce.

#### **EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION DEMOGRAPHICS**

There are approximately 900 child care programs operating in Rhode Island today. According to recent data from the RI Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), there are currently 585 licensed family child care homes, and 314 licensed center-based programs. The majority of family child care programs operate in Providence and speak Spanish as their primary language, while center based programs are more evenly dispersed throughout the State and speak English as their primary language. In addition, there are 96 Licensed School-Age Programs that operate independently from a licensed child care center, and serve children before and/or after the school day. There are 34 Local Education Agencies (LEAs) providing preschool programs for children with and without developmental delays and disabilities.

#### **WORKFORCE KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES**

Rhode Island is committed to creating Workforce Knowledge and Competency (WKC) Frameworks for key positions within the early care and education field, including: teachers/teacher assistants, family child care educators, special education teachers and Early Intervention specialists, professional development providers and higher education faculty/staff, and administrators and education coordinators. The WKC are designed to “articulate the

essential skills and knowledge that educators who work with young children in a classroom setting need to know, understand, and be able to do to promote young children's health development and learning."<sup>1</sup> Rhode Island is in the process of finalizing the WKC Framework for Early Childhood Educators, which includes classroom-based teachers and teacher assistants as well as an addendum for special education teachers and Early Intervention specialists. This framework, to be finalized in August 2013, was originally developed by the Department of Human Services, the Department of Education, and other professionals in the early childhood field.

In accordance with its RTT-ELC State Plan, Rhode Island is in the final stages of developing a WKC framework for family child care educators and will complete WKC frameworks for the aforementioned key roles in the early childhood field. Framework development for professional development/technical assistance providers and higher education staff and program administrators and education coordinators will be completed in December 2013 and July 2014, respectively.

### **PROGRAM QUALITY STANDARDS**

Rhode Island's program standards consist of three components (with each governing State Agency indicated in parentheses): Child Care Licensing (Department of Children, Youth, and Families), BrightStars Quality Rating and Improvement System (Department of Human Services), and Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Approval (Department of Education). Together, these standards represent RI's continuum of quality for early childhood programs.

Child Care Licensing is required for the care of 4 or more unrelated children. Licenses are provided for center-based or home-based programming. Licensing regulations establish a strong foundation of health and safety and outline basic educational requirements.

BrightStars serves as the State's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) and will be a major partner of the PD/TA Center. BrightStars builds on the foundation of DCYF licensing regulations and is intended to guide programs on the path to higher-quality and improved child outcomes through program assessment and rating and accompanying Quality Improvement Plan. Part of the PD/TA Center's charge is to provide the supports which will assist programs to achieve higher quality as articulated in this plan and to guide programs toward higher quality. Rhode Island committed to 100% participation in the BrightStars Program.

Comprehensive Early Childhood Education (CECE) Program Approval is voluntary for community-based and public school preschool and kindergarten programs. These regulations establish comprehensive standards-based educational programming at both the classroom and program level.

The professional development supports provided through this contract will support programs and individuals to meet requirements in the various components described above.

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<sup>1</sup> (2011) *The Rhode Island Workforce Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators*. Accessed at: <http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Instruction-and-Assessment-World-Class-Standards/Early-Childhood/Workforce/FINAL-DRAFT-RI-Core-Competencies-12-30-11.pdf>

## SECTION 3 - SCOPE OF WORK

### GENERAL SCOPE OF WORK

#### Tasks

1. Articulation and Coordination with Existing Efforts
  - a. The successful bidder must:
    - i. Create articulation agreements with Higher Education to provide credit for applicable credentials offered through the PD/TA Center,
    - ii. Attend quarterly meetings of the Early Learning Council (Council) as requested,
    - iii. Participate in relevant Council sub-committee meetings as requested to ensure stakeholder input into ongoing growth and evaluation of the professional development system, and
    - iv. Attend regular meetings of the DHS Child Care Community Exchange to report and gather feedback on program activities, as requested,
    - v. Coordinate with each component of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (Licensing, BrightStars, and CECE Approval) to ensure that supports are meeting the quality improvement needs of programs and individuals.
  - b. The successful bidder must have a plan to coordinate with existing trainings, funded through other sources, in Rhode Island. This plan may include, but is not limited to:
    - i. Developing a plan for approving existing trainings and technical assistance opportunities based on quality criteria,
    - ii. Subcontracting with existing providers for the provision of training through the center, or
    - iii. Any other method of linking with existing opportunities deemed appropriate.
2. Trainings
  - a. The PD/TA Center will be responsible for approving and monitoring current and future training curricula to ensure that:
    - i. The content is research and/or evidence based and aligned with WKC Frameworks,
    - ii. The proposed delivery method and duration is appropriate to the training's objective and with principles of adult education,
    - iii. The training is delivered with fidelity to the curriculum,
    - iv. The approved trainings must provide consistent information and uniform content,
    - v. The trainings are offered across sectors, and
    - vi. All trainings and trainers for PD and/or TA related to child assessment and RI Early Learning and Development Standards are approved by RIDE.

- b. The PD/TA center will be responsible for collaborating with the State to develop a process for approving trainers to ensure trainings are delivered by professionals with the appropriate education, knowledge, and skills, aligned with the applicable WKC Framework.
- c. The PD/TA Center will ensure that all educators and relevant professionals have access to ongoing professional development and are knowledgeable about the myriad opportunities in the state. This entails, but is not limited to, the following:
  - i. Ensuring there is adequate training to improve and sustain professional development by setting type (e.g., family child care, public preschool programs), role (e.g., teacher, education coordinator), and primary languages of the workforce (e.g., Spanish, English).
  - ii. Using data-based decision making to ensure that there are myriad offerings available to meet the various needs of the workforce. Initial data is currently being collected through the State’s workforce study and ongoing data will be collected through a statewide workforce registry (currently under development).
  - iii. Providing an up-to-date central calendar to inform the early childhood community about upcoming professional development opportunities in all areas of the state,
  - iv. Maintaining a resource library for the early childhood community and including a listing of available resources in online communications,
  - v. Working with higher education, community organizations, and other quality improvement initiatives to coordinate trainings, and
  - vi. Providing professional development counseling to early childhood professionals and referring these professionals to additional opportunities for career development when appropriate.
  - vii. Collaborating with DHS and DCYF to implement a series of pre-service trainings, in both English and Spanish, for family child care providers applying for DCYF licensure.
  - viii. Collaborating with DHS to implement and verify provider participation in health and safety training, in both English and Spanish, for license exempt providers seeking to become a CCAP approved provider.
- d. In addition to ensuring that trainings are offered across all domains of the Workforce Knowledge and Competency (WKC) Framework and are in alignment with the indicators within, the PD/TA Center must also meet the following deliverables:
  - i. Provide self-assessment and other tools to assist early childhood professionals in establishing their current level on the WKC framework relevant to their position,
  - ii. Ensure that the tools developed assist individuals in assessing their position both across and within levels, as well as provide clear guidance for next steps in planning further professional development.

- e. Elective Training
    - i. The center will be responsible for providing a variety of trainings that allow providers to advance their professional knowledge, and
    - ii. Elective trainings approved by the PD/TA center must be grounded in and reinforce the WKC and may meet requirements for annual professional development hours under DCYF licensing.
3. Technical Assistance
- a. The PD/TA Center will deliver technical assistance that is aligned with the principles established by the State through the WKC frameworks. The successful bidder will demonstrate a plan for delivery for TA that is:
    - i. Relationship-based and builds on the strengths of participants,
    - ii. Process-oriented and targeted on outcomes that matter for improving development and learning of young children,
    - iii. Individualized to participants at different levels of organizational structures, and
    - iv. Collaborative in nature.
  - b. The PD/TA Center will have experienced staff to provide process oriented and task specific technical assistance to an array of early childhood personnel and programs in Rhode Island. The PD/TA Center will seek outside agency contracts to provide TA when deemed necessary to best serve the recipient. The recipients of this service include, but are not limited to, the following:
    - i. Community-based Early Childhood Programs,
    - ii. Head Start Programs,
    - iii. Public Preschool Programs,
    - iv. State Funded Pre-Kindergarten Programs,
    - v. Preschool Programs designed for Children with Special Needs (Public and Private), and
    - vi. Family Child Care Providers.
  - c. Technical Assistance providers will be hired based on an approved staffing policy implemented by the center that includes, at a minimum: minimum staff requirements, preferred qualifications, and performance expectations.
  - d. TA recipients should have ongoing access to a TA Provider who will provide classroom and program level technical assistance. The TA will focus on high-quality supports for improving the knowledge and skills of professionals and assisting programs in achieving high-quality. These supports may focus on a number of areas. Examples of possible areas include:
    - i. Development of detailed program improvement plans and classroom level improvement plans which outline action steps.
    - ii. Development of strategies for administrators to support staff in achieving goals.
    - iii. Developing a sustainable plan to implement improvement plans after TA period is completed.
    - iv. Planning and implementation of professional development opportunities for administrators and teachers.

- e. The PD/TA Center will develop a plan to collaborate with outside agencies to support the implementation of PD/TA needs for recipients of TA when necessary.
4. Career Advancement and Higher Education
- a. The center must assist professionals in developing an individual professional development plan. This responsibility includes, but is not limited to, developing a plan that (1) builds upon the current knowledge, competencies, and education of the professional as outlined in the applicable WKC Framework and (2) allows for further advancement in the field (e.g., can be easily built upon in the future with further credentials or leads to a degree).
  - b. The PD/TA Center will collaborate with institutions of higher education and other relevant organizations, such as Rhode Island's T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Program®, to connect professionals to financial or academic supports to access credentials.
5. Data System
- a. The PD/TA Center must work with the RTT-ELC Data Team to ensure that all requirements of the Workforce Domain of the Early Learning Data System are met. This system is currently in development and led by staff at RIDE, in cooperation with DHS, DCYF, and the Department of Health.
  - b. The PD/TA Center will be responsible for entering relevant information about professional development providers and the workforce that utilizes the professional development system in order to answer the State's policy questions. This includes, but is not limited to, training attendance and verification of credentials. This data will need to be reliable, comprehensive and entered in a timely manner.
  - c. In order to achieve the above task, the PD/TA Center will have a plan for automating and verifying data collection. This includes, but is not limited to, completion of approved trainings and credentials and verifying training hours. In addition, the center must plan to verify individuals' placement within the levels of the WKC, including verification of credentials. The PD/TA Center must respond to data requests and needs from the State in a timely manner. This includes any (to be determined) "data dumps" from the center's system into the state's Early Education and Care Data System.
6. Quality Improvement Funds
- a. The PD/TA Center will be responsible for reviewing and awarding Quality Improvement Grants (henceforth referred to as grants) to early care and education programs. These grants range from a maximum of \$30,000 for centers and \$5,000 for family child care providers and are available to programs with a BrightStars rating and quality improvement plan and to public schools participating in RIDE's

Technical Assistance Project. The State developed an interim process in 2013 and has awarded grants to public schools, family child care homes, and child care centers. This interim process will inform the PD/TA Center's process and will be refined based on experience in administering the first round of grants. The grant awarding process will require the center to:

- i. Develop, in collaboration with the State, clear policies for reviewing applications, awarding money, and tracking grants.
  - ii. Disseminate information to early learning programs about grant award policies and review processes, including collaborating with BrightStars to ensure all eligible programs are knowledgeable about the grant process.
  - iii. Award and tracking grants, based on established policies, in a timely manner to ensure programs are able to increase their quality based on goals in the program's quality improvement plan.
  - iv. Evaluate the effectiveness of grants in improving program quality based on establish criteria.
- b. In addition to granting dollars to early care and education programs, the PD/TA Center will be responsible for awarding up to \$150,000 per year of Quality Improvement Grants to programs rated under BrightStars School Age (K-5) standards. This grant program will be funded by Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) dollars (see cost proposal section for a total dollar amount) and the policies for this portion of the quality improvement initiative will be developed in conjunction with DHS.

## 7. Continuous Quality Improvement

- a. The PD/TA Center will develop a strategic plan to evaluate the effectiveness of professional development opportunities in a reliable and valid way, including a plan on implementing necessary changes identified in evaluation.
- b. The PD/TA Center will be required to form an annual training provision plan. This plan will utilize the workforce registry, and other sources of data as needed, to determine the needs of the workforce. This plan includes the following information, along with any additional information as determined by partnering State Agencies:
  - i. Recommendations to the state for efficient, cost-effective delivery of trainings. This includes identifying opportunities for collaboration across community early education organizations, higher education, and other initiatives,
  - ii. An analysis of gaps in trainings by provider type and location, including higher education opportunities,
  - iii. Training and technical assistance needs for administrators and educational coordinators, including trainings that address effective leadership practices and trainings on fiscal management,
  - iv. An analysis of the cultural and linguistic diversity of trainings across the state,
  - v. A written report summarizing the findings of the needs assessment, emphasizing the current system's capacity, an evaluation of future needs, and recommendations on improving training, and

vi. An annual training delivery plan based on the needs assessment.

c. An ongoing professional development plan, based on the WKC framework for PD and Higher Ed Staff, for each of the center’s trainers, consultants, and leadership staff will be created to ensure the PD/TA Center is grounded in current research and best practices.

8. Operational Requirements

- a. The PD/TA Center may be operated within an existing, larger organization or as a stand-alone agency. The center must be in a location that is accessible to educators, administrators, families, and other key constituencies in the local early learning field. The PD/TA Center must establish and maintain visibility within the community and make services available to all parties.
- b. In order to achieve visibility, the PD/TA Center must have a communication plan that takes into account the most appropriate and effective strategies and media to communicate with each sector of the early care and education field.
- c. The successful PD/TA Center bidder will present a staff that is knowledgeable in the field and in the areas outlined in this RFP. The center vendor agrees to maintain knowledgeable staff through hiring and annual professional development as articulated in a staff professional development plan. This RFP intends to leave room for innovative approaches to staffing, but requires the center to have:
  - i. Executive Director
  - ii. Training/Technical Assistance Director
  - iii. Data Manager/Expert
- d. The PD/TA center will establish an advisory board that is separate from the larger organization’s board. This entity will include representatives of each State Agency with responsibility for early care and education initiatives.
- e. The vision, mission statements, and guiding principles of the successful bidder must demonstrate commitment to implement policy that promotes cross-sector integration; assures continuous quality improvement of the center; uses data-driven decision making; honors diversity; ensures access for all professionals; and helps to achieve compensation parity.

Project Schedule and Deliverables

<b>Task</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Deliverable(s)</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1	Create work plan to ensure vendor has clear goals, deliverables, and timeline to ensure the effective provision of the PD/TA Center	Completed Work Plan	Immediately upon contracting

<b>Task</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Deliverable(s)</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
2	Create articulation agreements with Higher Education to provide credit for applicable credentials	Articulation Agreements	by January 2014 and ongoing
3	Coordinate with each component of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (Licensing, BrightStars, and CECE Approval) and with other state funded Training and Technical Assistance Initiatives	Report on collaboration/coordination efforts	Monthly and upon request
4	Develop a process for approving and monitoring current and future training curricula	Training Approval System	by January 2014
5	Develop a process for approving and monitoring trainers and technical assistance provider in accordance with the WKC for PD Providers and Technical Assistants	Trainer Approval System	By July 2014
6	Use workforce study, workforce registry, and other data as needed to determine the current needs of the workforce, as well as span across all WKC domains	PD Needs assessment	Immediately upon contracting and annually thereafter
7	Establish and maintain central PD calendar to ensure workforce can easily identify opportunities for advancement of knowledge and skills	Centralized PD calendar	within 60 days of contract start and ongoing
8	Provide career development counseling, including crafting individual professional development plans and connecting individuals to academic supports	Professional Development Plan Template  Data on the accessibility and effectiveness of career counseling and number of professional development plans developed	within 60 days of contract start and ongoing
9	Provide innovating professional development opportunities to support the entirety of the ECE workforce, at every career level, across sectors and age-groups, and in alignment with each domain of the WKC frameworks.	Data on PD provided, including the characteristics of population served and the effectiveness of PD content and delivery methods	within 30 days of contract start and ongoing
10	Provide individualized technical assistance to RI Early Childhood programs	Data on TA provided, including data on the characteristics of programs served and the effectiveness of TA	Monthly and upon request

<b>Task</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Deliverable(s)</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
11	Develop a Staffing plan, including at a minimum, professional development plans, qualifications, and performance expectations	Staffing plan	within 60 days of contract start and annually thereafter
12	Develop plan for automating data collection to ensure information about professional development providers, as well as those that utilize the professional development system, is entered into the Early Education and Care Data System in a timely manner.	Data Plan and evidence of data entered into statewide data system	within 90 days of contract start
13	Review, award, administer, and oversee the early care and education Quality Improvement Grant Program (including data tracking and evaluation).	Quality Improvement Grants issued and data on grantees collected and analyzed	within 60 days of contract start and ongoing
14	Develop policies and procedures for school age Quality Improvement Grants (including policies for data tracking and evaluation)	Quality Improvement Grant policies, application, and user guide.	within 90 days of contract start and ongoing
15	Review, award, administer, and oversee the School Age Quality Improvement Grant Program (including data tracking and evaluation).	Quality Improvement Grants issued and data on grantees collected and analyzed	within 30 days of policy development
16	Develop a strategic plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development and technical assistance provided	Evaluation Plan and evaluation data	within 60 days of contract start and ongoing
17	Develop and fulfill communication plan that takes into account the most appropriate and effective strategies and media to communication with each sector of the early care and education field	Communication Plan and visible communication within the early care and education field	within 30 days of contract start
18	Conduct annual needs assessment and utilize data to develop an annual PD provision plan.	Needs Assessment and Outline for Provision of PD in Upcoming Calendar Year	within 60 days of contract start and annually thereafter
19	Provide and verify participation in pre-service trainings in English and in Spanish	Existence and availability of pre-service courses	Within 90 days of contract start and at least quarterly thereafter.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Deliverable(s)</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
20	Oversee the translation of PD curricula into Spanish and the conversion on appropriate content into web-based learning modules	Availability of PD opportunities	Within 30 days of contract start and ongoing

#### **SECTION 4 - TECHNICAL PROPOSAL**

Required elements are referenced below. The technical proposal may no longer than 50 pages, including attachments. Margins must be at least 1 inch on all sides.

##### Understanding of the Issues

Describe your understanding of the importance of high quality early childhood programs and their impact on child outcomes, including the role of education qualifications. Describe your understanding of the challenges facing programs as they attempt to improve quality and facing the early childhood workforce in improving their skills and knowledge. Describe the role of professional development and technical assistance in improving quality. Describe the role of program standards, including quality rating and improvement systems, and workforce competencies.

##### Experience

Please summarize your relevant experience in meeting the objectives outlined in this solicitation. Describe your expertise in the development and provision of professional development opportunities. How do you ensure that the content and delivery method of these opportunities is grounded in recent pedagogy and research? Describe your expertise in the development and provision individual and program level technical assistance. How do you ensure that technical assistance is individualized and effective? Include any examples of organizational experience in managing projects of a similar size/scope.

##### Proposed Work Plan and Capacity to Implement

Describe your plan to implement the PD/TA Center. Include information on your organization's purpose, leadership, staffing structure, and proposed policy development. Include a full description of the objectives, anticipated outcomes, and technical plan for accomplishing the work outlined. Describe your plan to provide Professional Development and Technical Assistance Services. Include information on the evaluation of these services to ensure that the needs of the workforce are met, how your organization will collect and maintain relevant data, and methods that will be used to assess the impacts on program quality improvement.

##### Staff Qualifications

Summarize the background and qualifications of key personnel of the proposed PD/TA Center. Provide evidence that staff have requisite experience in adult education, are knowledgeable about indicators of program quality related to improved outcomes for children, and have the capability to communicate with educators in their native language. Attach resumes and other relevant certificates for individuals already on staff. Include detailed job descriptions for positions that will need to be filled. Please note that evidence that all staff meet the specified qualifications will be required prior to final funding approval. At a minimum, provide information for the following positions:

- Executive Director
- Training/Technical Assistance Director
- Data Manager/Specialist

### Collaboration

Provide evidence of effective and existing collaborative partnerships and/or a plan to develop such partnerships. Describe how potential conflicts of interest will be avoided and/or addressed. Describe how services and activities will be coordinated with other components of the early learning system that provide education, training and technical assistance services.

### ADDITIONAL CONTRACTOR QUALIFICATIONS

- Bidders must submit a letter of transmittal signed by an owner, officer, or other authorized agent.
- Bidders must submit relevant organizational information, a list of similar projects undertaken and/or clients served, agency expertise relative to the services requested, and a statement of existing workload as it impacts the performance of the project.
- Bidders must disclose any work to be sub-contracted including the specific work to be performed and staffing, organizational structure, and business background of the sub-contractor, if known.
- Bidders must submit a proposed mission statement for the PD/TA Center that emphasizes advancing the professionalism of the early learning field.

### Related Proposal Requirements:

- The contract is scheduled to begin **at issuance of purchase order** and will end **December 31, 2015**. The scope of the work and budget may be modified by DHS prior to beginning work on a given task.
- All data, logos, URLs, copyrights, and trademarks related to the project, and all equipment, publications, and materials purchased, developed, or received through this grant remain the property of the Rhode Island Department of Human Services.
- All materials, media releases, publications, presentations, and out of state travel must be approved by the Rhode Island Department of Human Services prior to implementation and/or distribution.
- All costs included in the bidder's proposal should be necessary, reasonable, and required to carry out program functions. **The total cost of the contract is not to exceed \$14,409,587.00**
- Contractor will be responsible for supervision, performance and adherence to contractual language of all of its subcontractors or else seek other partners for continued work.
- Program(s) must comply with all applicable provisions of the general laws and with all applicable rules and regulations of the Department of Human Services and its contractual procedures.
- To ensure compliance, the Department of Human Services or its designee, shall regularly monitor the program(s) under this contract. The contractor must provide access to any

and all materials and data relevant to the evaluation and monitoring of the activities and requirements described herein.

- The successful vendor will be responsible for all federal and state reporting requirements as required by CCDF, RTT-ELC, ARRA, and DHS, and shall separately manage, track, and report expenditures from the Child Care Development Fund and the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant that may support this contract or amendments.
- The cost or the advance deposit for meals or refreshments will not be considered a necessary expense and such requests for payment will not be processed.
- Administrative/Indirect costs are limited to a maximum of 10% of the grant award.

**SECTION 5: COST PROPOSAL**

The contractor must prepare a cost proposal reflecting the salary, hourly rate or other fee structure proposed for this scope of services using the Budget Form provided (Attachment A), including a full descriptive Budget Narrative. All costs included in the proposal should be necessary, reasonable, and required to carry out program functions. Cost proposals should reflect the vendor’s plan and capacity to implement this work over a maximum three year period. Cost proposals should reflect the following annual guidelines:

<b>Budget Category</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>
<i>Professional Development</i>	\$1,734,621.50	\$1,198,081.00	\$596,540.50
<i>Technical Assistance</i>	\$2,451,601.00	\$1,517,134.00	\$756,067.00
<i>Quality Improvement Grants</i>	\$2,286,151.00	\$2,286,152.00	\$1,203,239.00
<i>Quality Improvement Grants for school-age only</i>	\$150,000.00	\$150,000.00	\$80,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6,622,373.50</b>	<b>\$5,151,367.00</b>	<b>\$2,635,846.50</b>

All costs included in the bidder’s proposal should be necessary, reasonable, and required to carry out program functions. **The total cost of the contract is not to exceed \$14,409,587.00**

**SECTION 6 – EVALUATION AND SELECTION**

A Selection Committee will first evaluate Technical Proposals. The Technical Proposal will constitute a maximum of 70 points. Only those scoring at or above 50 on the Technical Proposal will warrant review of the Cost Proposal which constitutes the final available 30 points, for a maximum score of 100 points.

Respondents may be invited to appear before the Selection Committee for in-person presentations to clarify statements made in their proposal. The Selection Committee will then make a qualifications-based recommendation.

Notwithstanding the above, the State reserves the right not to award this contract or to award on the basis of cost alone, to accept or reject any or all responses, and to award in its best interest.

Responses found to be technically or substantially non-responsive at any point in the evaluation process will be rejected and not considered further. The State reserves the right to reject any or all responses submitted.

Proposals will be reviewed and scored based upon the following criteria:

Criteria	Possible Points
Understanding of the Issues	10 Points
Experience	15 Points
Work Plan and Capacity to Implement	20 Points
Staffing Capacity	15 Points
Collaboration	10 Points
<b>Total Possible Technical Points</b>	<b>70 Points</b>
Cost [calculated as (lowest responsive cost proposal) divided by (this cost proposal) times 30 points]	30 Points
<b>Total Possible Points</b>	<b>100 Points</b>

## **SECTION 7 - PROPOSAL SUBMISSION**

Questions concerning this solicitation may be e-mailed to the Division of Purchases at [gail.walsh@purchasing.ri.gov](mailto:gail.walsh@purchasing.ri.gov) no later than the date and time indicated on page one of this solicitation. Please reference the RFP number on all correspondence. Questions should be submitted in a Microsoft Word attachment. Answers to questions received, if any, will be posted on the Internet as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information. If technical assistance is required to download, call the Help Desk at (401) 222-3766 or [lynda.moore@doit.ri.gov](mailto:lynda.moore@doit.ri.gov).

Offerors are encouraged to submit written questions to the Division of Purchases. **No other contact with State parties will be permitted.** Interested offerors may submit proposals to provide the services covered by this Request on or before the date and time listed on the cover page of this solicitation. Responses received after this date and time, as registered by the official time clock in the reception area of the Division of Purchases will not be considered.

Responses (**an original plus seven (7) copies**) should be mailed or hand-delivered in a sealed envelope marked “**RFP #7497375 - Professional Development & Technical Assistance Center (RACE TO THE TOP-EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE)**” to:

RI Dept. of Administration  
Division of Purchases, 2nd floor  
One Capitol Hill  
Providence, RI 02908-5855

NOTE: Proposals received after the above-referenced due date and time will not be considered. Proposals misdirected to other State locations or those not presented to the Division of Purchases by the scheduled due date and time will be determined to be late and will not be considered. Proposals faxed, or emailed, to the Division of Purchases will not be considered. The official time clock is in the reception area of the Division of Purchases.

## **RESPONSE CONTENTS**

Responses should include the following:

1. A completed and signed four-page R.I.V.I.P generated bidder certification cover sheet downloaded from the RI Division of Purchases Internet home page at [www.purchasing.ri.gov](http://www.purchasing.ri.gov).
2. A completed and signed W-9 downloaded from the RI Division of Purchases Internet home page at [www.purchasing.ri.gov](http://www.purchasing.ri.gov). **Please attach to original proposal only.**
3. **A separate Technical Proposal** describing the qualifications and background of the applicant and experience with and for similar projects, and all information described earlier in this solicitation. The Technical Proposal is limited to fifty (50) pages (including any appendices). As appropriate, include resumes of key staff that will provide services covered by this request.
4. **A separate, signed and sealed Cost Proposal** reflecting the hourly rate, or other fee structure, proposed to complete all of the requirements of this project.
5. In addition to the multiple hard copies of proposals required, Respondents are requested to provide their proposals in **electronic format (CDRom, diskette, or flash drive)**. Microsoft Word / Excel OR PDF format is preferable. Only 1 electronic copy is requested and it should be placed in the proposal marked "original".

## **CONCLUDING STATEMENTS**

Notwithstanding the above, the State reserves the right not to award this contract or to award on the basis of cost alone, to accept or reject any or all proposals, and to award in its best interest.

Proposals found to be technically or substantially non-responsive at any point in the evaluation process will be rejected and not considered further.

The State may, at its sole option, elect to require presentation(s) by offerors clearly in consideration for award.

## **APPENDIX A: RELATED DOCUMENTS**

More information about standards and organizations referenced in this RFP may be found at the following hyperlinks:

- Workforce Knowledge and Competencies Framework for ASYD Professionals:  
<http://afterschoolri.org/for-professionals/quality-standards>
- Draft Workforce Knowledge and Competencies Framework for Early Childhood Educators:  
<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/EarlyChildhoodEducation/Workforce.aspx>
- Draft Workforce Knowledge and Competencies Framework for Family Child Care Educators: <http://earlylearningri.org/professional-sub>
- BrightStars QRIS standards for Child Care Centers and Preschools-  
[http://www.brightstars.org/documents/BrightStarsCenterFramework120808\\_000.pdf](http://www.brightstars.org/documents/BrightStarsCenterFramework120808_000.pdf)
- BrightStars QRIS standards for Family Child Care Homes -  
[http://www.brightstars.org/documents/BrightStarsFamilyChildCareFramework090109\\_000.pdf](http://www.brightstars.org/documents/BrightStarsFamilyChildCareFramework090109_000.pdf)
- BrightStars QRIS standards for School Age Programs -  
[http://www.brightstars.org/providers/brightstars-quality-rating/school-age-child-care/documents/School-Age\\_framework\\_FINAL\\_000.pdf](http://www.brightstars.org/providers/brightstars-quality-rating/school-age-child-care/documents/School-Age_framework_FINAL_000.pdf)
- RIDE Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Approval:  
<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/EarlyChildhoodEducation/Programs.aspx>
- DCYF Child Care Center Licensing Regulations  
[http://www.dcyf.ri.gov/docs/center\\_regs.pdf](http://www.dcyf.ri.gov/docs/center_regs.pdf)
- DCYF Family Child Care Homes Licensing Regulations -  
[http://www.dcyf.ri.gov/docs/family\\_child\\_care\\_home.pdf](http://www.dcyf.ri.gov/docs/family_child_care_home.pdf)
- RTT-ELC Application and Scopes of Work - <http://earlylearningri.org/early-learning-challenge>
- Interim Quality Improvement Grant info - <http://earlylearningri.org/quality-sub>

**ATTACHMENT 1: BUDGET FORM AND BUDGET NARRATIVE**

**BUDGET FORM - MULTI-YEAR PROJECTS**

The Contractor estimates that its budget for work to be performed under this Agreement is as follows:

<u>Expense Category</u>	<u>Estimated Expenditures</u>			<b><i>TOTAL</i></b>
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	
1. Salary	0	0	0	
2. Fringe Benefits	0	0	0	
3. Consultant/ Contract Services	0	0	0	
4. In-State Travel	0	0	0	
5. Out-of-State Travel	0	0	0	
6. Space Costs	0	0	0	
7. Office Supplies	0	0	0	
8. Telephone	0	0	0	
9. Marketing Materials	0	0	0	
10. Equipment	0	0	0	
11. Other	0	0	0	
12.	0	0	0	
13.	0	0	0	
14.	0	0	0	
15.	0	0	0	
Subtotal	0	0	0	
Indirect Cost	0	0	0	
<b>TOTAL</b>	0	0	0	
	0	0	0	

**BUDGET NARRATIVE**

Please complete the following tables to provide an explanation of how the proposed project annual budget was derived. Also, please provide a detailed explanation of each budget category line item, including the information below.

**1. SALARY DETAIL**

**2. FRINGE BENEFIT DETAIL**

Provide:

- The title and role of each position to be compensated under this grant.
- The salary for each position.
- The amount of time, such as hours or percentage of time, to be expended by each position.
- The fringe benefit for all personnel.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

NAME	POSITION TITLE	NUMBER OF HOURS	TOTAL SALARY	FRINGE BENEFITS	HOURLY RATE	SALARY & FRINGE TOTAL
<b>TOTAL REQUEST</b>						

**3. CONSULTANT/CONTRACT SERVICES DETAIL**

Provide:

- The products to be acquired and/or the professional services to be provided.
- The title and role of each consultant to be compensated under this grant.
- The hourly rate for each position.
- The amount of hours to be devoted to the project
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose and relation to the scope of work

NAME	POSITION TITLE	HOURLY RATE	NUMBER OF HOURS	TOTAL COST
<b>TOTAL REQUEST</b>				

**4. In State Travel Detail**

**5. Out of State Travel Detail**

Provide:

- An estimate of the number of trips.
- An estimate of transportation and/or subsistence costs for each trip.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

*Explain:*

- *The purpose of the travel, how it relates to the scope of work, and how it will contribute to the project's success.*

<b>EXPENSE CATEGORY</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>COST</b>

#### **6. Space Cost Detail**

<b>EXPENSE CATEGORY</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>COST</b>

#### **7. Office Supplies Detail**

*Provide:*

- *An estimate of materials and supplies needed, by nature of expense or general category (e.g., instructional materials, office supplies).*
- *The basis for cost estimates or computations.*

*Explain:*

- *The purpose and relation to the Scope of Work*

<b>EXPENSE CATEGORY</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>COST</b>

#### **8. Telephone Detail**

<b>EXPENSE CATEGORY</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>COST</b>

#### **9. Marketing Materials Detail**

*Provide:*

- *An estimate of materials and supplies needed*

- *The basis for cost estimates or computations.*

*Explain:*

- *The purpose and relation to the Scope of Work*

<b>EXPENSE CATEGORY</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>COST</b>

### **10. Equipment Detail**

*Provide:*

- *The type of equipment to be purchased.*
- *The estimated unit cost for each item to be purchased.*
- *The definition of equipment used by the State.*
- *Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.*

*Explain:*

- *The justification of the need for the items of equipment to be purchased.*

<b>EXPENSE CATEGORY</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>COST</b>

### **11. Other Detail**

*Provide:*

- *Other items by major type or category.*
- *The cost per item (printing = \$500, postage = \$750).*
- *Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.*

*Explain:*

- *The purpose of the expenditures.*

<b>EXPENSE CATEGORY</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>COST</b>