



**Solicitation Information
June 23, 2016**

RFP#7550732

TITLE: Consultant for Title III Part “A” Strengthening Institutions Grant Writing

Submission Deadline: July 20, 2016 @ 11:00 am (Eastern Time)

PRE-BID/ PROPOSAL CONFERENCE: NO

Questions concerning this solicitation must be received by the Division of Purchases at doa.purquestions3@purchasing.ri.gov no later than **July 6, 2016 @ 4:00 pm (EST)**. Questions should be submitted in a *Microsoft Word attachment*. Please reference the RFP# on all correspondence. 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.

SURETY REQUIRED: NO

BOND REQUIRED: NO

Gary P. Mosca
Senior Buyer

Applicants must register on-line at the State Purchasing Website at www.purchasing.ri.gov

Note to Applicants:

Offers received without the entire completed three-page RIVIP Generated Bidder Certification Form attached may result in disqualification.

THIS PAGE IS NOT A BIDDER CERTIFICATION FORM

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The Rhode Island Department of Administration/Division of Purchases, on behalf of the Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI), is soliciting proposals from qualified individuals or firms for Grant Writing Consultant(s), in accordance with the terms of this Request for Proposals and the State's General Conditions of Purchase, which may be obtained at the Rhode Island Division of Purchases Home Page by Internet at www.purchasing.ri.gov. The Title III Grant Writing Consultant will be responsible for developing a competitive Title III proposal for the Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP). The consultant will be responsible for writing the text as well as creating the budget for this five-year U.S. Department of Education Grant Program. The initial contract period will begin approximately September 1, 2016 to April 30, 2017.

This is a Request for Proposals, not an Invitation for Bid. Responses will be evaluated on the basis of the relative merits of the proposal, in addition to price; there will be no public opening and reading of responses received by the Division of Purchases pursuant to this Request, other than to name those offerors who have submitted proposals.

INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS TO OFFERORS:

1. Potential vendors are advised to review all sections of this RFP carefully and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejection of the proposal.
2. 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 RFP will be rejected as being non-responsive.
3. All costs associated with developing or submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, or to provide oral or written clarification of its content shall be borne by the vendor. The State assumes no responsibility for these costs.
4. Proposals are considered to be irrevocable for a period of not less than 120 days following the opening date, and may not be withdrawn, except with the express written permission of the State Purchasing Agent.
5. All pricing submitted will be considered to be firm and fixed unless otherwise indicated herein.
6. Proposals misdirected to other state locations, or which are otherwise not present in the Division at the time of opening for any cause will be determined to be late and will not be considered. For the purposes of this requirement, the official time and date shall be that of the time clock in the reception area of the Division.
7. It is intended that an award pursuant to this RFP will be made to a prime vendor, or prime vendors in the various categories, who will assume responsibility for all

aspects of the work. Joint venture and cooperative proposals will not be considered. Subcontracts are permitted, provided that their use is clearly indicated in the vendor's proposal and the subcontractor(s) to be used is identified in the proposal.

8. All proposals should include the vendor's FEIN or Social Security number as evidenced by a W9, downloadable from the Division's website at www.purchasing.ri.gov.
9. The purchase of services under an award made pursuant to this RFP will be contingent on the availability of funds.
10. Vendors are advised that all materials submitted to the State for consideration in response to this RFP will be considered to be Public Records as defined in Title 38, Chapter 2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, without exception, and will be released for inspection immediately upon request once an award has been made.
11. Interested parties are instructed to peruse the Division of Purchases website on a regular basis, as additional information relating to this solicitation may be released in the form of an addendum to this RFP.
12. Equal Employment Opportunity (G.L. 1956 § 28-5.1-1, et seq.) – § 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 to all areas where State dollars are spent, in employment, public services, grants and financial assistance, and in state licensing and regulation.
13. In accordance with Title 7, Chapter 1.2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, no foreign corporation, a corporation without a Rhode Island business address, 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 is a requirement only of the successful vendor(s).
14. The vendor should be aware of the State's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) requirements, which address the State's goal of ten percent (10%) participation by MBE's in all State procurements. For further information visit the website www.mbe.ri.gov

SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

CCRI is a public, open access institution with an ethnically and economically diverse student body. The College offers almost 90 associate degree and certificate options to prepare students for high-wage job opportunities and/or for transfer to four-year institutions. As the only community college in the state, and the largest in New England, CCRI serves as the point of entry to higher education and training for thousands of Rhode Islanders, and is a natural starting point for many individuals who are looking to re-enter the work force, jumpstart their education, or change or advance their careers.

The CCRI student body enjoys considerable diversity in ages, cultures, and experiences. CCRI students are overwhelmingly first-generation (70%) and predominately female (61%), with an average age of 26; and most are enrolled on a part-time basis (69%). More than 35% of CCRI's students are members of minority groups; a vast majority (87%) work while pursuing their education; 70% of students are awarded some form of financial aid; 14% speak English as a second language; and 8% are single parents.

SECTION 3: SCOPE OF WORK

Specific Activities / Tasks

The purpose of the legislation that established the Title III-A program is to improve the academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability of eligible institutions, in order to increase their self-sufficiency and strengthen their capacity to serve low-income students and make a substantial contribution to the higher education resources in the U.S.

CCRI invites individuals or firms with substantive experience writing and securing Federal, State, and Local grants for higher education institutions to apply. The successful applicant will write a competitive SIP proposal focused on improving student achievement while reducing costs and enhancing operational efficiencies.

The Title III consultant will meet with CCRI's Title III Team to assess the strengths, weaknesses, and problem areas for the college's academic programs, institutional management, and fiscal stability. Once these areas of problem/opportunity are defined and ranked in order of priority, the consultant will develop an evidence-based approach to strengthening these areas and design specific strategies to address and possibly resolve these problems as delineated in the written proposal. The consultant will ensure that the SIP proposal addresses the following:

- The strengths, weaknesses, and significant problems of the institution's academic programs, institutional management, and fiscal stability are clearly and comprehensively analyzed and result from a process that involved major constituencies of the institution.

- The goals for the institution’s academic programs, institutional management, and fiscal stability are realistic and based on comprehensive analysis.
- The objectives stated in the plan are measurable, related to institutional goals, and if achieved, will contribute to the growth and self-sufficiency of the institution.
-The plan clearly and comprehensively describes the methods and resources the institution will use to institutionalize practices and improvements developed under the proposed project, including how operational costs for personnel, maintenance, and upgrades of equipment will be maintained with institutional resources at the end of the grant period.

Specifically, the grant writing consultant will:

- Define the goals the College is trying to achieve;
- Develop the objectives to meet those goals;
- Define how those goals and objectives will be measured;
- Detail the implementation strategy;
- Outline the timetable for the goals and objectives to be achieved;
- Develop the project management plan;
- Design the evaluation plan based on What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards;
- Develop a detailed five-year budget; and
- Design a sustainability plan for after the grant period ends.

The consultant will adhere to the U.S. Department of Education’s Selection Criteria and Point Value in drafting each section of the proposal.

It is important to note that the applicant selected will be responsible for completing all sections of the Title III final proposal, and collecting all project deliverables required for submission.

Proposal Preparation and Submission

The proposal shall include a cover letter addressing the applicant’s interest and qualifications; a current résumé of the applicant’s, including previous experience writing federal grants; a relevant writing sample not to exceed five pages; and a list of three professional references familiar with your grant writing skills. At least one reference must be from a representative of a higher education institution.

Proposals must conform to all requirements stated below, and elsewhere in this RFP. Disregarding these requirements may result in disqualification of the proposal.

Before submitting a proposal, each individual/firm shall familiarize itself with the entire RFP, including the Scope of Work. The firm shall be responsible for fully understanding the requirements of a subsequent contract and otherwise satisfy itself as to the expense and difficulties accompanying the fulfillment of contract requirements. The submission of a proposal will constitute a representation of compliance by the firm. There will be no subsequent financial adjustment for lack of such familiarization.

SECTION 4: TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

Narrative and format: The separate technical proposal should address specifically each of the required elements

- **Experience:** Provide a summary of your experience in writing, submitting and securing grants for higher education institutions, particularly your experience with Title III funding.
- **Project Completion:** Provide a timeline for the completion of this project, from analysis through proposal submission, in accordance with all Federal filing requirements that meets a criteria of beginning no later than 9/1/2016 and providing the college with a completed work product no later than 3/15/16.
- **Approach/Methodology:** Describe in detail your approach to address the requirements outlined in the Scope of Work, including sample deliverables from past projects of similar size and scope and particularly how you would solicit and coordinate college input.
- **References:** Provide a list of three clients comparable to our organization whom we can contact for references. Include contact name, telephone number, email address, services provided, and length of service. At least one reference must be from a representative of a higher education institution.

SECTION 5: COST PROPOSAL

Detailed Budget and Budget Narrative:

Cost structure should be an hourly rate with a not to exceed total, travel should be included in the hourly rate not as a separate measure.

SECTION 6: EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Proposals will be reviewed by a Technical Review Committee comprised of staff from state agencies. To advance to the Cost Evaluation phase, the Technical Proposal must receive a minimum of 60 (85.7%) out of a maximum of 70 technical points. Any technical proposals scoring less than 60 points will not have the cost component opened and evaluated. The proposal will be dropped from further consideration.

Proposals scoring 60 technical points or higher will be evaluated for cost and assigned up to a maximum of 30 points in cost category, bringing the potential maximum score to 100 points.

The State reserves the exclusive right to select the individual(s) or firm (vendor) that it deems to be in its best interest to accomplish the project as specified herein; and conversely, reserves the right not to fund any proposal(s).

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

Criteria	Possible Points
Experience	15 Points
Project Completion	15 Points
Approach/Methodology	25 Points
References	15 Points
Total Possible Technical Points	70 Points
Cost calculated as lowest responsive cost proposal divided by (this cost proposal) times 30 points *	30 Points
Total Possible Points	100 Points

*The Low bidder will receive one hundred percent (100%) of the available points for cost. All other bidders will be awarded cost points based upon the following formula:

$$(\text{low bid} / \text{vendors bid}) * \text{available points}$$

For example: If the low bidder (Vendor A) bids \$65,000 and Vendor B bids \$100,000 for monthly cost and service fee and the total points available are Thirty (30), vendor B's cost points are calculated as follows:

$$\$65,000 / \$100,000 * 30 = 19.5$$

Points will be assigned based on the offeror's clear demonstration of his/her abilities to complete the work, apply appropriate methods to complete the work, create innovative solutions and quality of past performance in similar projects.

Applicants may be required to submit additional written information or be asked to make an oral presentation before the technical review committee to clarify statements made in their proposal.

SECTION 7: PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Questions concerning this solicitation may be e-mailed to the Division of Purchases at doa.purquestions3@purchasing.ri.gov no later than the date and time indicated on page one of this solicitation. Please reference **RFP #7550732** 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) 574-9709.

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 four (4) copies**) should be mailed or hand-delivered in a sealed envelope marked "**RFP#**" 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 shall include the following:

1. A completed and signed three-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.
2. A completed and signed W-9 downloaded (insert in "Original" copy only) from the RI Division of Purchases Internet home page at www.purchasing.ri.gov.
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. As appropriate, resumes of key staff that will provide services covered by this request.
4. **A separate, signed and sealed Cost Proposal** hourly rate with a not to exceed total, travel should be included in the hourly rate not as a separate measure 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 proposal in **electronic format (CD-Rom, disc, 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.

The State's General Conditions of Purchase contain the specific contract terms, stipulations and affirmations to be utilized for the contract awarded to the RFP. The State's General Conditions of Purchases/General Terms and Conditions can be found at the following URL: <https://www.purchasing.ri.gov/RIVIP/publicdocuments/ATTA.pdf>