



Request for Proposals (RFP)

*“State Evaluation Partner for
Michigan’s Build Initiative Grant”*

Proposals Due By 12:00 Noon (EST) on June 30, 2008

Project Summary

The Michigan Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) is seeking a state evaluation partner to produce specific, required, *Build Initiative* evaluation reports and provide counsel to ECIC in conducting research and evaluation on ECIC initiatives at the state and local levels.

Scope of Work

The State Evaluation Partner shall be responsible for serving as Michigan's state evaluation partner for the *Build Initiative* and for providing advice to the Early Childhood Investment Corporation regarding other research and evaluation activities. The scope of work for each is provided below:

Build Initiative - State Evaluation Partner.

- Complete a detailed case study of early childhood systems development and implementation efforts, based on interviews with state leaders, participation in Build meetings, and guided by a protocol, based upon Build's theory of change, provided by Build's national evaluation partner, the Child and Family Policy Center (protocol attached).
- Conduct a baseline survey of the status of Michigan's early childhood systems building efforts, based upon the Build protocol, and complete an annual Build accomplishments table.
- Participate in the annual Build national meeting with Michigan's Build team. (Event to be held in October of 2008)

Early Childhood Comprehensive System's Evaluation Consultation

- Work with ECIC Vice President for Great Start System Planning and Evaluation and ECIC Leadership Team to identify and quantify ECIC's research and evaluation needs.
- Assist in drafting Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and grant sections relating to evaluation and research related to ECIC work.
- Assist in identifying potential applicants to conduct research and evaluation and review applications and proposals.
- Conduct selected additional research and evaluation activities for ECIC, as mutually agreed upon, and in accordance with state contracting requirements.

Qualifications

The State Evaluation Partner should have the following qualifications:

- Background and expertise in participatory, interactive, or empowerment evaluation, as well as traditional qualitative and quantitative social science evaluation methodologies.
- Substantive knowledge of and experience with comprehensive, early childhood systems development.
- Ability to build relationships with and present evaluation issues to stakeholders involved in early childhood systems building activities who do not have research or evaluation background.
- Prior experience leading research or evaluation efforts in the social sciences and working on evaluations that involve cross-program or system efforts to plan and implement change.
- Willingness to designate a senior member to be directly involved in collaborative, cross-agency planning efforts and serving as an evaluation resource to collaborative teams.

- Willingness to designate a senior member to be part of a national evaluation team including Michigan and other states.

The State Evaluation Partner may be a single individual or a senior member of a research and evaluation organization. The individual or senior member should have at least a Master's degree that includes substantial study in social science research methodologies and at least five years of practical experience in conducting social science research and evaluation.

Budget

Final budget for this initial start up period of two months will be negotiated with the successful applicant.

Schedule

- 1) Address all inquiries about this Request for Proposals (RFP) to Joan Blough, Vice President for Great Start System Planning and Evaluation. Background information on ECIC may be gained at the ECIC website – www.ecic4kids.org.
- 2) The responses to the Request for Proposals (RFP) are due **June 30, 2008, by 12:00, noon.**
- 3) ECIC will establish a rating and reading review team and complete the review by **July 15, 2008.**
- 4) Selection of consulting firm or contractor will occur by **July 30, 2008.**
- 5) Successful bidder will begin **August 1, 2008,** with the goal of all deliverables for this initial phase completed not later than **September 30, 2008.**

Payment Schedules

The successful bidder will be responsible for the specific deliverables and timelines specified in an initial two month contract with ECIC for the project. A payment schedule will be developed that will link reimbursement to completion of, or indicators of substantiated progress on these deliverables, which will be negotiated, based on the overall *Scope of Work*.

Selection Criteria

Responses to this RFP will be judged, based on the following criteria:

1. The proposal presents a clear and concise description of the work to be undertaken in this initial period (two months) as well as a credible presentation of how the applicant proposes to achieve the full the *Scope of Work* described in this RFP.
2. The bidder has experience and expertise necessary to conduct the work being proposed.
3. The proposed price is reasonable given the proposed scope of work.
4. The applicant demonstrates a consistent record of research excellence, data integrity, analysis, and methodology in previous work.

5. The bidder has successfully completed equally specialized studies.
6. The consulting firm and principal consultant(s) or consultant will bring a name and reputation to the study that will attract support and have cachet with policymakers, early childhood advocates and the business community.
7. The bidder must demonstrate through their submissions an understanding of the complexity of a comprehensive early childhood system, and the purpose of the project.
8. The demonstrated ability to attain ECIC's goals as related to this initiative based on previous successfully completed projects.
9. A demonstration of past team collaborations involving data collection and research, including the coordination of work with state department heads, associations, colleges, and other such project team members.

RFP Contents

Submittal Requirements should be organized in the following manner:

1. Summary response to the RFP (1 page).
2. Methodological approach (no more than 6 pages). Please address the work to be accomplished within the initial two month start up phase, as well as how the applicant would approach the full scope of work as outlined in this RFP.
3. A statement of organizational capabilities including relevant effort in the past 5 years to indicate appropriate experience and expertise to successfully complete the work as described in this RFP. The statement should include a list of proposed staff and/or contractors including their roles and experience and expertise related to the *Scope of Work* to be performed.
4. **Please include in a separate, sealed envelope the following:** A financial proposal with a proposed line item budget and narrative as well as the following: a detailed budget breakdown by task that is organized into the following categories below. (Each task should be estimated separately.)

Budget Items

- Labor costs
- Other direct costs
- Materials and reproduction
- Travel and per diem
- Data entry
- Miscellaneous – Please specify.
- Indirect Costs/administrative overhead

General Information

This Request for Proposal (RFP) provides interested bidders with sufficient information to prepare and submit proposals for consideration by the Early Childhood Investment Corporation.

1. Contract Award

Contract award negotiations will be undertaken with those bidders whose proposals, as to price and other factors, show them to be qualified, responsible, and capable of performing the work.

The contract entered into will be that contract most advantageous to ECIC, price and other factors considered. ECIC reserves the right to consider proposals or modifications thereof received at any time before the award is made, if such action is in the best interest of ECIC.

If a contract is awarded, the selected bidder will be required to comply with the General Provisions, which will be a part of the contract.

2. Rejection of Proposals

ECIC reserves the right to propose modifications to an applicant's team. ECIC also reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, call for additional submittals, or to negotiate separately with any source whatsoever in any manner necessary to serve the best interest of ECIC. ECIC may call previous clients of other economic impact studies completed by a prospective bidder even if they are not listed as a reference. ECIC reserves the right to negotiate a final project cost with any bidder the ECIC determines to have the best experience and expertise to successfully deliver the products described in this RFP. The study may be modified or canceled at any time prior to contracts being awarded. This RFP is made for information or planning purposes only. ECIC does not intend to award a contract solely on the basis of any response made to this request or otherwise pay for the information solicited or obtained.

3. Incurring Costs

The ECIC is not liable for any cost incurred by the Contractors prior to issuance of a contract.

4. All submissions must be bound securely, in an 8 1/2" X 11" format.

5. Inquiries

Questions that arise as a result of this RFP must be submitted in writing to the ECIC. All questions must be submitted on or before the date specified on the cover letter. Please email questions to the attention of: Joan Blough at jblough@ecic4kids.org.

Deliver one original and three copies of the response no later than June 30, 2008, to the attention of:

**Robin Ross
Executive Administrative Assistant
Early Childhood Investment Corporation
221 N. Pine Street
Lansing, Michigan 48933**