



Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) Grant Application Scoring Solicitation

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Voluntary Pre-K, Competitive Grant

Tennessee Department of Education

Candice McQueen
Commissioner of Education

Elizabeth Alves
Assistant Commissioner

Darlene Estes-Del Re
Executive Director of the Office of Early Learning

Candace Cook
Director, Pre-K Programs

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-6-101, the department awards funding to Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) programs selected through a competitive grant application process. The VPK application addresses the 10 standards of program quality determined by the department's office of early learning and selection is based on applicants' ability to meet rigorous requirements related to quality. Therefore, it is imperative to have a strong review and scoring process for the anticipated 140+ applications that will be submitted on February 14, 2018.

PURPOSES OF THE VPK APPLICATION SCORING

Based on VPK application scores and narrative feedback, the office of early learning will be able to:

- Identify high-quality VPK programs that have a demonstrated need for a VPK program in their area.
- Identify VPK programs whose plans show the need for a plan of action or training.
- Provide narrative feedback to districts to increase quality in all programs.
- Determine the district allocations for the 2018-19 school year.

SOLICITATION INTRODUCTION

Up to fifteen individual contracts will be awarded for the purpose of scoring Voluntary Pre-K Program applications each and providing detailed feedback to districts. The contract period will begin February 12, 2018 and end on April 15, 2018.

The awarded contract(s) funding will begin February 12, 2018 and is estimated at a rate of \$100 per application scored (including providing feedback to the applicant), not to exceed \$10,000 per total contract. Contractors will also be paid \$150 for completion of training and will be reimbursed for travel expenses associated with training.

Contractors must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Be knowledgeable and experienced in early childhood education, be familiar with developmentally appropriate practice, and have experience in program evaluation or leadership.
- Be available for a one day training during the week of February 12-16; (Preferably face-to-face)
- Demonstrate an ability to score applications accurately and in accordance with the scoring rubric;
- Demonstrate strong writing skills to provide substantive narrative feedback in accordance with departmental guidance; and
- Ability to commit to a schedule that will require them to score an average of 3-5 applications each week.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CONTRACTOR(S)

To ensure timely funding decisions and provide feedback to districts, the contractors must agree to complete all scoring no later than April 4, 2018. The contractors must sign a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement and a Confidentiality Statement for each district

they review. No one directly involved in writing a VPK grant for their district will be eligible to apply.

Hiring and Training Personnel

- The contractor(s) will not be responsible for hiring or training additional personnel.

Recruiter Responsibilities

- The contractor(s) will not be responsible for recruiting other personnel or services.

Trainings and Meetings

- The contractor(s) must be available for a one-day face-to-face training during the week of February 12-16 2018.
- To ensure inter-rater reliability, the contractor(s) must attend training and agree to score between 2-5 sample applications, between the training date and the beginning of the scoring process.
- As the need arises, the contractor(s) must also be available for recalibration training throughout the scoring process.

Records and Reports

- The contractor(s) must return scoring documentation with specific, narrative feedback for each application scored.
- The contractor(s) must maintain confidentiality of scoring reports and applications at all times.
- The contractor(s) shall be available to provide follow-up information requested by the State, including clarifying details that assist in the scoring process and recalibration if needed.

Applicants will submit a resume, letter of reference, and letter of interest. In addition, they will be expected to respond to a prompt demonstrating their understanding of the scope of the work. See complete list of application materials below. Responses to this solicitation must be submitted electronically to Candace.Cook@tn.gov no later than 5 p.m. CDT, February 6, 2018.

If you have any questions, please contact Candace Cook at Candace.Cook@tn.gov.

The state reserves the right to determine, at its sole discretion, the appropriateness and adequacy of responses related to this solicitation. Contracts are subject to funds availability and final approval by the state procurement offices.

Applicants should submit a letter of interest, cover letter with responses to items below, and a resume' outlining experiences that apply to this solicitation.

Applicants must address all items (below) and provide, in sequence, the information and documentation as required.

A proposal evaluation team, made up of three or more state employees, will independently evaluate and score the response to each item. Each evaluator will use the following whole number, raw point scale for scoring each item:

0 = little value 1 = poor 2 = fair 3 = satisfactory 4 = good 5 = excellent

The three evaluation scores will be averaged. The department will select the highest scoring applicants meeting the criteria.

RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME:					
Response page # (respondent completes)	Item ref.	Technical qualifications, experience, & approach items	Item score	Evaluation factor	Raw weighted score
	1.	Provide a letter of interest and resume that outlines expertise in early childhood program analysis, grant analysis, and experience(s) in an early childhood setting.		15	
	2.	Provide a narrative that illustrates the respondent's understanding of the state's requirements and project schedule in relation to the requirements of the Voluntary pre-K Grant analysis process.		15	
	3.	Provide a narrative that illustrates how the respondent will complete the scope of services, accomplish required objectives, and meet the state's project schedule.		10	
	4.	Provide a narrative that expresses any conflict(s) of interest the applicant may have from working directly with any of the early childhood programs or professionals in any of the Tennessee school districts.		5	
	5.	Provide a narrative that illustrates the respondent's expertise and prior experience that would enhance the respondent's ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> be able to analyze grant applications effectively against specific criteria, 		25	

RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME:					
Response page # (respondent completes)	Item ref.	Technical qualifications, experience, & approach items	Item score	Evaluation factor	Raw weighted score
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be able to clearly express evaluations in writing, and be interested in contributing to the advancement of knowledge. 			
	6.	Provide a narrative detailing the respondent's experience in the governance of a program budget, allowable expenditures, and/or budget planning. -OR- Provide a narrative detailing the respondent's experience in curriculum analysis and alignment review.		15	
	7.	Provide one letter of recommendation and two references that address the respondent's familiarity with early childhood programs and the ability to analyze program quality.		15	
Total Raw Weighted Score: (sum of raw weighted scores above)					
Total Raw Weighted Score					
Maximum Possible Raw Weighted Score (i.e., 5 x the sum of item weights above)					X 100 (maximum possible score)
					= SCORE: