REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

WEST VIRGINIA HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY COMMISSION

RFP#25292 EVALUATOR SERVICES
ADDENDUM #2 APRIL 25, 2025

Question	RFP Section	RFP Paragraph	QUESTION	COMMISSION RESPONSE
1			Is there an anticipated budget for this evaluation project?	The Not to Exceed Amount for the remaining three years is $225,000
2			When in the annual evaluation schedule (i.e., ahead of the Interim Evaluation Report, the Annual Evaluation Report, other timeframe) is the complete and finalized annual EDOCS dataset made available to the evaluator for analysis?	The External Evaluators will be added to EDOCS and have access to the EDOCS dataset throughout the project. For annual reporting/analysis purposes a cut-off date will be set for each year to meet annual report due dates. EDOCS is a living document that remains open and editable during the current year until the Annual Report is submitted.
3			What additional external assessment and/or advisory mechanisms is the WV EPSCoR RII Track-1 project currently using to secure scientific, technical, and programmatic guidance?	The project has a Board, an External Advisory Board, and an Industry Advisory Board.
4			Approximately when and where is the team's Annual Meeting held?	The Annual All Hands meeting typically occurs over the summer in June, July, or August. The date is set annually in coordination with the NSF Program Officer and Project personnel. The location of the meeting is intended to rotate each year, so each institution involved has the opportunity to host. Year 1, The HEPC hosted in South Charleston, WV. Year 2 All Hands is being planned currently. It is expected that the External Evaluator will participate in person.
5			Can you confirm the submission email address? Is it bid.receipt@wvhepc.edu or a different email address?	The email for submitting proposals is bid.receipt@wvhepc.edu
6			Can the logic model, from the proposal to NSF, be shared with bidders?	The Evaluation Plan, which includes the logic model, will be available by the end of day Monday, 4/28/25 and will be posted as an addendum to the RFP.
7			From the RFP it seems like a prior evaluator is no longer able to evaluate WV-NFNT. Is this correct or is there an incumbent evaluator?	The orginal firm is no longer evaluating the WV-NFNT. We are working with an independent contractor for evaluation services in April and May.
8			How many days is the annual face-to-face project meeting? Who from WV-NFNT attends this meeting?	The annual face-to-face (All Hands) meeting is one day. All participants in the WV-NFNT are invited to attend.
9			Outside of the annual face-to-face project meeting, are there other opportunities or expectations for in-person data collection or site visits?	Outside of the All Hands, annual meeting, there are not additional face-to-face, in person, data collection or site visit expectations, however there are opportunities for additional face-to-face, in person, interactions/site visits, if desired.
10			Has baseline data been collected and will the new evaluator have access to this data?	Baseline data has been collected for the Year 2 report. The new evaluator will have access to the data in the Evaluation Report and the raw data that we have available to us.
11			Is the former evaluator or their documents, instruments, or data available to transition to the new evaluator?	Yes, the new evaluator will have access to the documents, instruments, and any data we have.
12			Is there a budget range, or upper limit, for the evaluation budget?	see response to question 1
13			Is there a desired format for the evaluation budget and cost proposal?	No, there is not a desired format for the evaluation budget and cost proposal except that no pricing should be included with the technical portion of the proposal as indicated in the RFP.

Question	RFP Section	RFP Paragraph	QUESTION	COMMISSION RESPONSE
14			Can our cost proposal be marked as confidential?	A portion of the bid may be designated as confidential as follows: A bidder by designating certain information or data submitted with a bid as confidential, proprietary, or a trade secret may as a result establish an exception to the public inspection policy for the information or data so designated. Such designation shall be in accordance with Chapter 29B of the West Virginia Code and shall be made in writing by the bidder at the time the bid is submitted. A bidder may not claim this designation after bids have been opened. Information or data so designated shall be readily separable from the bid in order to facilitate public inspection of the non-confidential portion of the bid. Prices, brands, model, or catalog numbers of the items offered, deliveries, and terms of payment shall be available for public inspection following the bid opening regardless of any designation to the contrary.
15			Can proposers include an appendix with supporting documents such as: senior staff CVs; example evaluation reports; an example evaluation timeline, etc.?	The respondent should organize the proposal in a manner that most advantagously demonstrates their ability to perform the tasks required by the RFP.
16	Section 3		Has evaluation data been collected for the first two years of the project? If yes, what types of data and for which outcomes? If yes, will the entity awarded the evaluation contract have access to the data?	Year one produced an External Evaluation Plan. In year two an External Evaluation Report was completed which included multiple survey responses across all participants and qualitative data from small focus group and interview. Data was collected across all Year 1 and Year 2 outcomes. The new evaluator will have access to the documents, instruments, and any data we have.
17			Per the RFP, The Commission/Council/Institution will disclose any document labeled or labeled with any other claim against "confidential," "proprietary," "trade secret," "private," public disclosure of the documents, by West Virginia to include any "trade secrets" as defined Code § 47-22-1 et seq. All submissions are subject to public disclosure without notice. Per §29B-1-4. Exemptions Trade secrets, as used in this section, which may include, but are not limited to, any formula, plan, pattern, process, tool, mechanism, compound, procedure, production data, or compilation of information which is not patented which is known only to certain individuals within a commercial concern who are using it to fabricate, produce, or compound an article or trade or a service or to locate minerals or other substances, having commercial value, and which gives its users an opportunity to obtain business advantage over competitors Can we submit a table identifying confidential information or provide a redacted copy for use in the event of a FOIA request?	see response to question 14
18	SECTION 3:		(Regarding Evaluation Scope) Are any evaluation activities related to EQs 1-5 currently on-going with stakeholders and partners or have been previously completed in Years 1 and 2?	Yes, evaluation is on-going and a Year 2 External Evaluator Report has been generated. Year 1 focused on the developement of the Evaluation Plan.
19	SECTION 3:		(Regarding Evaluation Scope) Will in-person/on-site meetings be required by the state or can evaluation activities be performed remote or virtually?	See response to question #4

Question	RFP Section	RFP Paragraph	QUESTION	COMMISSION RESPONSE
20	SECTION 3:		Regarding Impact on Research Infrastructure - Do we have access to data on the total usage hours of research facilities and equipment? Specifically, are there logs of who is using the equipment, and can this data be linked to demographics?	Equipment training information and usage informaiton is logged. If there is additional information needed, it can be requested.
21	SECTION 3:		Regarding Impact on Research Infrastructure - Is there information available about the training and supervision provided for individuals using this infrastructure? Specifically, are there designated times or set-a-sides to ensure students have access to equipment for learning purposes? Related to this, is there a mechanism in place to allocate pilot time for students or early-stage research initiatives?	A detailed equipment training log is maintained. All participant information is in EDOCS and the external evaluators will have access to EDOCS.
22	SECTION 3:		Regarding Research Productivity - Do we have access to logs or records identifying the professors, graduate students, and post-doctoral researchers involved in this grant, as well as baseline data for individuals in the department prior to the grant's implementation in terms of publication rates, grant acceptance rates, conference paper presentations, and the prestige or impact factor of these over time?	Yes, all products generated from the project, such as publications, grants, presentations, etc. are recorded in quarterly reports and in EDOCS. The researchers have baseline data on their previous productivity.
23	SECTION 3:		Regarding Impact on Students - Do we have access to logs from these events (e.g., workshops) that include demographic information? Can we contact students that have participated in these events for interviews or have participants volunteer to complete surveys?	Participants, including students over 18, who agree, can voluntarily complete surveys and participate in interviews.
24		3.2	Are existing logic models considered a component of the current Evaluation Plan? Will these logic models be made available prior to or after contract award?	See response to question 6.
25		3.3	"Development of baselines, goals, metrics, targets, and milestones to measure program Success." - What baseline data was collected prior to or in Years 1 and 2?	Year 2 Annual Survey was conducted.
26			"Attend annual face-to-face project meetings." - Is this one annual meeting each year?	Yes, one face to face, All Hands, meeting per year. In addition, there are at least 2 virtual (Executive Leadership Team and Educatio/Workforce) meetings per month, plus individual virtual meetings as requested by exteral evaluator or PI.
27			Building capacity in neuroscience and data science is mentioned multiple times in the Project Summary section, however, the overall document seems to focus largely on neuroscience. To what extent should either topic be weighted?	There are specific objectives within the project that have a data science focus and have clear data science activities associated with meeting yearly goals.
28			Can you provide clarification regarding "higher education clients" mentioned in Section 4.7?	The requirement is to provide references from higher education clients that are comparable to the type and scope of services solicited in this RFP.
29			Is there a target budget or not-to-exceed amount for the RFP in Years 3-5 (annually or in total)?	see response to question 1
30			Section 3.2 indicates that the Evaluation Plan will be made available to the winning bidder. Will the winning bidder also have access to any or all data (e.g., individual-level data, aggregate-level data) collected by previous evaluators in Years 1-2 (observing all IRB protocols)?	see response to question 11
31			What type of feedback does NSF provide to the WV-NFNT project and how frequently? (Section 3.2)	The NSF provides feedback during the annual review process, virtual reverse site visit, and through driect responses to PI inquiry.

Question	RFP Section	RFP Paragraph	QUESTION	COMMISSION RESPONSE
32			How frequently do the PI and co-PIs expect to request de-identified data for publication purposes? (Section 3.2)	At this time, we are uncertain how frequently de-eidentified data will be requested by PI/Co-PI for publication.
33			Is there already a common form used by all program leaders for collecting enrollment and demographic data -- or will the evaluator need to set that up? (Section 3.2)	There is an existing process in place for entering participants and collecting demographic data, EDOCS and a supplmentary survey. The supplemental survey may need modified.
34			What types of program documents are available for evaluator review? (Section 3.2)	See response to question 6.
35			Is there one institution providing IRB services to all the programs needing data collection or do data collections go through multiple IRBs? If the latter, how many?	There are four institutions conducting reserach supported by the WV-NFNT. Each institution provided their own IRB approvals.
36			Are participating institutions aware of the evaluation?	Yes.
37			Can the most current logic model be shared?	See response to question 6.
38			Is there preference for a local evaluator?	Respondents should include any information that may be deemed advantagous to their ability to perform the tasks.
39			Is preference given if the vendor is registered with the WV Purchasing Division at the time of submission?	Each proposal will be evaluated per the criteria set forth in Section 5.3 of the RFP.
40			Are there any budgetary expectations or limitations?	See response to question 1
41			What is the status of the student longitudinal database?	The student longitudinal database has not been fully created, it has been initiated and in early stages of development.
42			What are the current participation numbers for each category of activity? For example, how many faculty, how many graduate/undergraduate/K-12 students, etc.	PI: 1; Co-PI: 4; Board Member: 12; Technical Support Staff: 6; Non-technical Support Staff: 11; Faculty: 37; Postdoc: 6; Graduate Student: 19; Undergraduate Student:42; K-12 Teacher: 21 Totals: 163
43			Is there an expectation that the winner of the contract would implement the existing evaluation plan, or is there an expectation that a new one would be developed? What about data collection instruments; have they been developed or would new instruments be needed?	Current evaluation plan and tools, including surveys, are in place and being utilized. The expectatioon is that the plan and tools will be reviewed and updated/refined annually, as needed.
44			In addition to IRB, are there data sharing agreements that are in place and transferable?	Yes.
45			What are expectations about in-person data collection or in-person attendance at meetings?	One in person meeting per year. Year 1 included an in person focus group of project leadership led by the evaluator. In person data collection not required but an option to consider as opprotunities arise.
46			On page 7 of the RFP, there is mention of "Additional evaluation activities as requested by the project administrators." Is there a sense of what these activities might include going forward into Year 3, 4, and 5 of the work?	No, not at this time. As the project receives additional feedback from NSF and/or stakeholders any needs will become more apparent.
47			What contract structure is anticipated for the evaluation contract?	The Grant has three remaining years with specific deliverables required in each year. The respondents should propose a fee structure that allows for successful completion of all deliverables within the required timeline.
48			Evaluators are asked to document local, national, and international community engagement in the research process over time. Can you share which communities have been engaged to date?	All External Engagments are reported in EDOCS which will be available to evaluators.
49			Given that pricing is a strong factor in the evaluation of proposals, is it okay to share if there is a "not to exceed" value for this evaluation work?	See response to question 1

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

WEST VIRGINIA HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY COMMISSION

RFP#25292 EVALUATOR SERVICES
ADDENDUM #2 APRIL 25, 2025

Question	RFP Section	RFP Paragraph	QUESTION	COMMISSION RESPONSE
50			Since the evaluation is in progress, are there any concerns about the quality of the data that have been collected to date? Are there any missing data sources or variables that the client would like to see in these proposals?	Year 2 Annual Survey was on a tight timeline which led to shorter reponse period. Any information you would like to provide on your typical survey, focus group, and interview practices is welcomed.
51			The deliverable of "development of baselines, goals," etc. suggests that perhaps this wasn't done by the previous evaluator. Is that the case, or is there a desire for a fresh start?	This has been started but intent to revisit annually to incorpoate feedback / improvements.
52			Can you make available any of the annual evaluation reports to date for this project?	See response to question 6.
53			Given that the evaluation proposals will be made public, can you share how evaluators can obtain a copy of the previous winning proposal?	FOIA requests for public records should be sent to Cindy.Anderson@wvhepc.edu
54			Is the successful vendor expected to use existing measures (e.g., surveys, interview protocols) from the initial evaluation for this project?	Following contract, previously used surveys and interview protocols can be reviewed and feedback welcomed on suggested changes. Abilitiy to compare objective progress from year to year on each objective is important so ideally information gathered on surveys will remain similar.
55			What is to be included in the 20-page limit? Are cover pages, budget files, resumes, and table of contents excluded?	The Cover page, and table of contents are excluded as well as any exhibits with additional material. Pricing information should not be included with the Main proposal.
56			For section 3.3, how would the client prefer a response? Should we submit this section as a separate Word file?	Responses should be submitted in pdf format.