JACK, JOSEPH AND MORTON MANDEL SCHOOL OF APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES
CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY

Partnership for Evaluation, Research and Implementation

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The Partnership for Evaluation, Research and Implementation has its administrative home within the Begun Center for Violence Prevention Research and Education; Daniel J. Flannery, PhD, is director.

Partnership for Evaluation, Research, and Implementation (PERI)
Request for Proposals

Deadline for Submission: July 10th, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. EST

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to invite health and human service-focused nonprofit and governmental organizations in Cuyahoga County to apply for data collection consultation and/or evaluation services through the Partnership for Evaluation, Research, and Implementation (PERI) at the Begun Center for Violence Prevention Research and Education at Case Western Reserve University (begun.case.edu/peri). PERI is designed to be a high quality/low-cost resource for nonprofit organizations seeking information and expertise on program outcomes and quality improvement.

II. ELIGIBILITY

Nonprofit and governmental agencies in Cuyahoga County working in the health and human services sector are eligible to apply, including past PERI applicants. Agencies previously selected to work with PERI are welcome to submit new proposals. Agencies who previously applied, but were not selected, can feel free to reapply with the same proposal, if the desired services have not changed. If you have any questions about eligibility, please email peri@case.edu or call Jeff Kretschmar at 216.368.2305.

III. BACKGROUND

Nonprofit organizations face increased pressure to show the effectiveness of their programs and services through measurable, positive outcomes. These outcomes ensure that organizations are effectively advancing their missions. As such, funding organizations have placed increased importance on outcomes in determining funding priorities. Although nonprofits provide critical services to the community, they are often unable to evaluate the effectiveness of their programming. Even when organizations collect adequate data on their programs, those data often sit idly waiting for analysis. The lack of demonstrable outcomes can compromise an organization's ability to advocate for additional funding. PERI aims to fill this gap through its innovative service provision model. The Begun Center recognized the need for nonprofit organizations to have access to affordable program evaluation services. Though not exclusively, this appears to be especially true for small and midsized organizations, which typically do not have the staff or resources to conduct these activities.

IV. PERI SERVICES

PERI provides services via a team of expert evaluators led by Jeff Kretschmar, Ph.D., Research Associate Professor and Managing Director of the Begun Center. PERI services are focused on three main areas: consultation, evaluation, and training. While not an exhaustive list, the following services will be available through PERI:

- *Evaluation consultation*: Intended for organizations that:
    - Are not currently collecting data for the program/service they are interested in evaluating, but would like assistance with developing an evaluation plan
    - Are currently collecting data, and would like input on
        - Whether the data they are collecting are accurate, sufficient, and/or appropriate for the outcomes they are interested in measuring
        - How to improve their data collection tools, procedures, and systems in order to produce the best data for evaluation in the future
- *Program evaluation*: Developing evaluation plans, collecting/analyzing data, interpreting results, writing reports
- *Data collection training*: Training staff on appropriate evaluation methodologies and data collection practices

V. PERI PROJECT SCOPE

PERI projects are designed to be completed in a short time frame, ideally no longer than 3-4 months. Proposed projects must therefore be focused. One method for focusing a proposal is limiting the request for services to one program or service within an organization. In most cases, a request for consultation and/or evaluation services for an entire organization would be outside the scope of a PERI project. For example, "Agency X" is a youth-focused nonprofit and provides mentoring, mental health treatment, educational services, physical health services, and substance use services. It is likely beyond PERI's scope to request evaluation services for all of those programs. In this instance, we would advise narrowing the focus of the application to one (or two) areas.

If your organization is interested in organization-wide evaluation services, beyond what would be feasible for a PERI project, it may be possible to contract with the Begun Center for services of this scale. If you have questions about project scope or are interested in organization-wide evaluation services, please email peri@case.edu or call Jeff Kretschmar at 216.368.2305.

VI. PERI FUNDING MODEL

PERI's funding model is designed to address the reality that many nonprofit organizations are unable to pay current market rates for consultation and/or evaluation services. The model was developed with input from many local nonprofit organizations and Foundations. The funding structure has three key components:

1. *Agencies*: Each nonprofit organization selected to work with PERI provides a reasonable amount of funding as a way to demonstrate their commitment.
2. *PERI*: PERI provides dedicated staff effort and support to all selected projects.
3. *Foundations*: The remainder of the project cost is supported by participating Foundations.

We do not expect the applicant to determine the total cost of the project. Project costs are determined by PERI staff. Once a project cost is established, PERI will work with the applicant to determine an appropriate amount for the agency to contribute. Agency contributions are in large part determined by the agency's annual budget (i.e. we utilize a sliding scale). In prior rounds, participating agencies contributed between 15%-35% of the total evaluation costs. For example, if we estimate that a project costs $10,000 to complete, agencies generally would be responsible for between $1,500 and $3,500. Applicants are not bound to enter into agreement with PERI if selected for participation. This RFP process will allow PERI staff to identify potential projects, at which point additional discussion between PERI and the selected applicant will occur. These additional discussions, including specific terms related to financial commitments from the applicant, will determine if PERI and the applicant move forward contractually with the proposed project.

VII. HOW TO APPLY

Proposals received on time and that meet eligibility criteria will be reviewed. All proposals should include:

1. Organizational Description

A brief description of the focus and mission of your organization, as well as the specific program(s) for which you are requesting PERI services. Please include the populations you serve and the services you provide.

2. Proposed Project

Please describe, in detail, the proposed project for which you are requesting PERI assistance. As a reminder, proposed projects should be focused and feasible to complete in a three-month timeframe. At a minimum, be sure to answer all of the following items:

- What is the specific nature of the request (i.e. what service(s) are you requesting?). Why did you choose this/these options?
- Describe the program/service data currently available related to your request (i.e. what data, if any, are you currently collecting from clients/to evaluate the program/service).
- Provide BLANK copies of any paper or electronic forms used to collect/track these data (e.g. intake forms, program data, satisfaction surveys). Forms are not counted against the page limit.
- Describe any previous or current evaluation efforts related to this program/service.
- Explain what your organization hopes to gain/learn from PERI's work.
- Describe how you intend to use the results within/outside of your organization.

If you are requesting an evaluation of a program with available data, please include the following about the data:

- Are the data available on paper or electronically?
- How much data do you currently have? For example, do you have data on 10 clients, 100 clients, 1,000 clients?
- How long have you been collecting each data source?
- Were there different versions of the collection tools used?

3. Additional Information

Please provide information about the following:

- From which Foundations, if any, does your organization receive support?
- Is the proposed program partially or fully funded by a specific Foundation(s)? If so, please identify which one(s).
- What is the overall operating budget of your organization?
- Please include a statement recognizing that if selected for further consideration, ultimately chosen to partner with PERI on the project, and agree to such partnership, that your organization understands there will be a required financial commitment to the project. This commitment will be negotiated with PERI during the contractual phase of the award process. Submitting an application during this RFP phase does not obligate the applicant to agree to work with PERI if the terms of such work cannot be negotiated.
- **Be sure to indicate in the proposal the agency contact, including name, phone number, and email address.**

VIII. OTHER SPECIFICATIONS

- Length of proposal – **NO MORE** than 6 double-spaced pages, 12-point Times New Roman or similar font, and 1 inch margins.
- Deadline for submission: Friday, July 10th, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. EST.
- No fax or mailed copies will be accepted; electronic submission only as a single pdf.
- Submit proposals as a single PDF file via email to peri@case.edu with the subject "2020 PERI proposal – YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NAME"
- Organizations may submit more than one application for distinct projects.

IX. PROPOSAL SELECTION

PERI plans to select two proposals for services this round. All activities and proposed awards described throughout this announcement are contingent upon funding availability and the number of proposals received. PERI reserves the right to make no award, ask clarifying questions, issue conditional awards, and negotiate a best and final proposal with one or more applicant(s).

There are no established scoring criteria by which these proposals will be evaluated. For example, the description of your organization and mission does not contribute 10 percent to your proposal scoring. Instead, reviewers will be looking for broad themes when determining strength of the application. We will be evaluating several areas within the proposal, including, but not limited to:

- Agency compatibility and proposed project fit with PERI
- Quality of responses received
- Impact of PERI work/results on the agency and clients
- Feasibility of proposed project
- Estimated cost of the project

Errors and omissions may negatively impact proposal selection; however, PERI reserves the right to waive errors or omissions that do not materially affect the proposal.

X. CHANGE IN RFP SCHEDULE

In the past, PERI released an RFP approximately every 18 months and selected about six agencies to work with in that time frame. Based on feedback from agencies and our stakeholders, we decided to change our format and release RFPs more frequently, but accept fewer proposals each round. This allows agencies selected to begin working with PERI immediately.

After this RFP, PERI anticipates releasing the next RFP in the winter of 2020-2021.

XI. QUESTIONS

If you have questions regarding this RFP, email peri@case.edu or call Jeff Kretschmar at 216.368.2305.