

RACIAL JUSTICE INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY PROVIDERS
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS



SEPTEMBER 9, 2022

State of Connecticut

Department of Children and Families

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
505 Hudson Street
Hartford, CT 06106**

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

TITLE:

Racial Justice Institute for Community Service Providers

OVERVIEW

The Department of Children and Families (DCF/Department) is seeking to meet the State of Connecticut's need for a Racial Justice Institute for Community Service Providers serving populations who have been disparately affected by COVID. DCF is seeking to strengthen our community engagement with service providers throughout CT by launching a Racial Justice Institute. The contractor awarded as a result of this RFQ would help design and lead the advancement our racial justice mandate and sustain equity in service provision. This Institute will strengthen DCF's efforts to engage providers of mental health and other community services in our Racial Justice and equity work through participation in ongoing learning collaboratives, involvement with change initiatives and design of data-informed strategies to enhance collaboration and promote equitable outcomes for all families served by DCF. This award will be through a Personal Service Agreement.

SCHEDULE

RFQ Published	September 9, 2022
Bidder's Conference	September 20, 2022 / 1:00 PM <u>Virtual (Teams):</u> Click here to join the meeting <u>Call In:</u> 860 840-2075 Conference ID: 806524661#
RFQ Questions Due	September 30, 2022
RFQ Questions and Answers Posted	October 5, 2022
RFQ Letter of Intent Due	October 14, 2022
RFQI Response Deadline	October 21, 2022

Additional details about the Schedule and RFQ process can be found in the Technical Assistance Discussion section.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this RFQ is to fairly and equitably determine the qualifications of potential applicants to develop a Racial Justice Institute for Community Service Providers as described herein.

The Department anticipates making one award, for \$500,000, as a result of this RFQ.

BACKGROUND

The State of Connecticut is seeking to establish a Racial Justice Institute for Community Service Providers.

DCF remains committed to becoming an anti-racist organization whose beliefs, values, policies, and practices achieve racially just and equitable outcomes for those we serve. As we examine our evolution to becoming an anti-racist agency, our progress will be measured by our structures, policies, practices, norms, and values. CTDCF has acknowledged that the child welfare

system has ongoing systemic racist structures embedded (i.e., policies, practices, and programs) that are antithetical to our values and goals we seek to attain through our racial justice work. We recognize that dedicated and intentional action will assist us in moving the needle on the agency's strategic goal of racial justice more quickly through more direct engagement with our community providers. DCF's anti-racism work is being reflected in a conscious effort to ensure safety of children, preservation of family bonds, racially conscious and competent service delivery, and incorporation of the voices of community members with lived expertise.

To achieve DCF's racial justice mandate, we must engage service providers in our communities who work directly with families to address the root causes of disparity and disproportionality that commonly affect families of color who are served by the child welfare and other human service agencies. COVID has exacerbated these inequities with families of color experiencing more disparate health outcomes, challenges with access to quality medical, behavioral, and mental health services, educational disruptions, and barriers in meeting their basic needs. All of this puts families at greater risk for coming to the attention of child welfare systems in the U.S.

DCF has received a \$400,000 allocation of funding from the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) which is dedicated to enhancing the engagement of community providers in our Racial Justice and equity work.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility to respond to this RFQ is limited to Connecticut-based, organizations with demonstrated experience/capacity to work in Connecticut with a range of partners at the community level. The agency must possess a current, valid Connecticut Business License, and must provide proof of such. Preference will be given to minority owned or operated organizations.

RFQ CONFERENCE

An RFQ conference will be held to answer questions from prospective proposers. Attendance at the conference is non-mandatory, but highly recommended. Copies of the RFQ will not be available at the RFQ Conference. Prospective proposers are asked to bring a copy of the RFQ to the conference. At the conference, attendees will be provided an opportunity to submit questions, which the Department's representatives may (or may not) answer at the conference. Any oral answers given at the conference by the Department's representatives are tentative and not binding on the Department. All questions submitted will be answered in a written amendment to this RFQ, which will serve as the Department's official response to questions asked at the conference. If any answer to any question constitutes a material change to the RFQ, the question and answer will be placed at the beginning of the amendment and noted as such. The agency will release the amendment on the date established in the Procurement Schedule. The Department will publish all amendments to this RFQ on the State Contracting Portal and, if available, on the Department's RFQ Web Page.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, CLARIFICATION AND QUESTIONS

Questions related to submission of responses to this RFQ must be submitted, via email, to the contact listed below no later than September 30, 2022.

Subject line of any email sent containing a question related to this RFQ must be: 'Racial Justice Institute for Community Service Providers'.

Answers to all submitted questions will be de-identified and compiled into a Question & Answer document and posted as an addendum to the RFQ on the Department's website on October 5, 2022.

LETTER OF INTENT

A letter of Intent (LOI) is required for this RFQ, utilizing the form included as Appendix 1 of this RFQ. The LOI is non-binding and does not obligate the sender to submit a proposal. The LOI must be submitted to the Official Contact via e-mail by the deadline established in the Procurement Schedule. The subject line of the email must read, Racial Justice Institute / Letter of Intent. The LOI must clearly identify the sender, including name, postal address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address and DCF being applied for. It is the sender's responsibility to confirm the Department's receipt of the LOI. The Department will not accept proposals from any applicant for any Team for which a Letter of Intent was not submitted. Failure

to submit the required LOI in accordance with the requirements set forth herein shall result in disqualification from further consideration.

RFQ SUBMISSION DEADLINE

The Department welcomes your response to this RFQ. Submissions must be emailed to the contact person at the email address listed below, **no later than 3:00 PM**, local time, **October 21, 2022**, with an email subject heading Name of the organization submitting the application / **“Racial Justice Institute RFQ”**:

One attachment must be submitted inclusive of the entire proposal in Portable Document Format (PDF) or similar file format and one attachment inclusive of the Budget and Narrative in Excel or similar file format. The following naming convention shall be used:

Proposal: **Name of organization / Racial Justice Institute**

Budget: **Name of organization / Racial Justice Institute**

Official Contact
Melanie Sparks
CFO
E: Melanie.Sparks@ct.gov

RFQ RESPONSE FORMAT

Responses to this RFQ must be submitted using the following outline:

Page 1: Cover Sheet (utilizing Appendix 2 to this RFQ)

Pages 2-11: Concept Question Responses

Page 13: Attachment 1

Page 14: Attachment 2

Submissions are not to exceed 10 pages (exclusive of supplemental documentation defined herein). Please number all pages of the submission and include the question number and the question written out above each response.

Page Limit	10, concept question responses only
Submission Format	Email Only

Please ensure all pages of the RFQ submission are numbered and include the number of the question with the question written out above your response.

Submissions should include a cover page (not counted in the page limit), included in this document as an attachment (RFQ Response Outline).

CULTURALLY & LINGUISTICALLY COMPETENT CARE

The Department of Children and Families is committed to ensuring that its service providers deliver effective, equitable, understandable, trauma informed and respectful quality care. The services delivered must be responsive to diverse cultural health beliefs and practices, experiences of racism and/or other forms of oppression, preferred languages, health literacy, and other communication needs. Within a broad construction of culture, service provision must also be tailored to age, diagnosis, developmental level, geographical, economical, and educational needs.

RFQ CONCEPTS AND PARAMETERS

The Department has allocated \$400,000 Racial Justice Institute for Community Service Providers over 2 years, with the possibility for an extension pending the availability of funds.

The following oversight and activities will be expected of the proposed contractor:

1. Overall management of funded project to design, lead, advance, and sustain racial equity in service provision;
2. Facilitate the design of values centered strategies to promote shared understanding and accountability with our community providers of racism in our work with families and communities with a goal of achieving racial equity;
3. Develop curriculum design and implementation plan with input and guidance from an advisory board to guide the launch of the Racial Justice Institute for Community Service Providers;
4. Design marketing strategy and promotional materials and website content to promote the Institute online and on social media platforms;
5. Create and execute training and ongoing learning collaboratives;
6. Coordination of all project logistics, track participation and ongoing evaluation of all RJI activities;
7. Fiduciary for overseeing the disbursement of stipends to support the involvement of persons with lived experience in the design, advisory activities, and participation in the Institute once launched; and
8. Propose a detailed data collection plan will be developed to collect participation, engagement, and positive change in program participants and organizations as a result of participation. This data collection tool will be created in partnership with the proposed contractor.

RFQ CONCEPT QUESTIONS & DEMONSTRATION OF EXPERTISE

1. **Describe the agency's demographic composition, including all staffing levels. This documentation should be delineated on the Workforce Analysis form (Appendix 3 to this RFQ), included in your response as Attachment 1. Please demonstrate your agency's internal initiatives to recruit and retain a diverse workforce in the narrative response to this question. (15 points)**
2. **What experience do you have in training, education, and engagement of community partners in racial justice and equity work? With your response, please submit a document, report or proposal that reflects your organization's capacity to do this work in collaboration with communities recognizing their unique needs, including socio-economic, racial, ethnic, and other social/demographic variables, to be taken into account in order to be successful in community engagement. This documentation should be included as Attachment 2 in your proposal. (20 Points)**
3. **What experience do you have partnering with a government agency in engaging community partners in large scale racial justice initiatives? (5 Points)**
4. **Share a detailed strategy with objectives on how you would launch the RJI with an initial cohort that could be scaled up statewide? Include a description of how your organization is experienced with serving DCF-involved families and understanding their unique needs. (15 Points)**
5. **Please describe your agency's experience with engaging persons with "lived experience" and detail your strategies to engage persons with lived experience in the RJI work. (15 Points)**
6. **How will you track progress, measure benchmarks, and assess the impact for participants who participate in the RJI? Please specify the technology and data collection tools you have access to, will utilize, and your experience using the specific technology/tools. (15 Points)**
7. **Describe your agency's specific strengths to lead this initiative. This includes specifying any related experience you have in community engagement and convening of community partners and small and large government agencies in anti-racist work. (10 Points)**
8. **Describe any challenges that you foresee in the development and leading of the RJI and provide some insights on how your organization will navigate these challenges. (5 Points)**

RFQ PROCESS CLOSURE

Following the submission date, the RFQ process will be considered closed.

**LETTER OF INTENT
(MANDATORY NON-BINDING)**

Date: _____

Our agency is planning to apply for funding in response to the RFQ entitled ***Racial Justice Institute for Community Providers***

AGENCY NAME:
FEIN:
AGENCY ADDRESS: (street, city ,state, zip)
AGENCY CONTACT:
POSITION/TITLE:
TELEPHONE NUMBER:
FAX NUMBER:
EMAIL ADDRESS:

Mandatory Letter of Intent must be received by **3:00 p.m.** on **October 14, 2022** to **Melanie Sparks (Melanie.Sparks@ct.gov)**.

PROPOSAL COVER SHEET
Racial Justice Institute for Community Providers
Request for Qualifications

Name of Agency: _____

Agency Address _____

Application
Contact Person: _____

Contact Person
Phone & Fax: _____

Contact Person
Email Address: _____

This application must be signed by the applicant's executive director or other individual with executive oversight for agency services delivered in Connecticut

By submitting this application, I attest that all the information included within the application is true.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name (Printed): _____ Title: _____

WORKFORCE ANALYSIS
Racial Justice Institute for Community Providers
Request for Qualifications

JOB CATEGORY	OVERALL TOTALS	WHITE (not of Hispanic origin)		BLACK (not of Hispanic origin)		HISPANIC		ASIAN or PACIFIC ISLANDER		AMERICAN INDIAN or ALASKAN NATIVE	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	male	female
Management											
Business & Financial Ops											
Computer Specialists											
Architecture/Engineering											
Office & Admin Support											
Bldg/ Grounds Cleaning/Maintenance											
Construction & Extraction											
Installation , Maintenance & Repair											
Material Moving Workers											
TOTALS ABOVE											
Total One Year Ago											
FORMAL ON THE JOB TRAINEES (ENTER FIGURES FOR THE SAME CATEGORIES AS ARE SHOWN ABOVE)											
Apprentices											
Trainees											