

STATE OF CONNECTICUT PROCUREMENT NOTICE



Request for Proposals (RFP)

For

**The Launch Program
(Formerly Work to Learn)**

RFP Number: 24041806

Issued By:

Department of Children and Families

April 18, 2024

The Request for Proposal is available in electronic format on the State Contracting Portal by filtering by Organization for Department of Children & Families:

<https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/BidBoard>

on the Department's website:

<https://portal.ct.gov/DCF/Contract-Management/Home>

or from the Agency's Official Contact:

Name: Catherine Santiago
Address: 505 Hudson Street / Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: (860) 937-3832
E-Mail: DCF.FISCALCONTRACTS@ct.gov

RESPONSES DUE NO LATER THAN: 3:00PM / June 6, 2024

The State of Connecticut and the Department of Children & Families is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. The Agency reserves the right to reject any and all submissions or cancel this procurement at any time if deemed in the best interest of the State of Connecticut (State).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Procurement Notice	1
Section I – GENERAL INFORMATION	3-6
A. Introduction	3
B. Instructions	3-6
Section II – PURPOSE OF RFP AND SCOPE OF SERVICES.	7-13
A. Agency Overview	6-7
B. Program Overview	7-10
C. Scope of Service Description.	11-13
D. Budget & Financial Obligations	13
Section III – PROPOSAL SUBMISSION OVERVIEW	14-16
A. Submission Format Information	13-14
B. Evaluation of Proposals	14-16
Section IV – PROPOSAL SUBMISSION OUTLINE AND REQUIREMENTS	17
Section V – MANDATORY PROVISIONS	18-22
A. POS Standard Contract, Parts I and II	18
B. Assurances	18-19
C. Terms and Conditions	19
D. Rights Reserved to the State	20
E. Statutory and Regulatory Compliance	20-22
Section VI – APPENDIX	23-26
A. Abbreviations / Acronyms / Definitions	23
B. Appendix #1 Proposal Checklist	24
C. Appendix #2 Letter of Intent	25
D. Appendix #3 Proposal Cover Sheet	26

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

■ A. INTRODUCTION

1. **RFP Name and Number.** RFP #24041806/ The Launch Program
2. **RFP Summary.** The Launch Program is an intensive community-based program that will provide support comprised of both the Casey Life Skill Assessments (CLSA) and learning modules as well as skill building interventions designed to improve outcomes and completion of vocational and educational programs while advancing in employment and developing and maintaining strong permanent supportive adult relationships.
3. **RFP Purpose.** The Department is seeking to procure six (6) The Launch Programs.

Site	DCF Area Offices Served
Site 1	Bridgeport, Norwalk
Site 2	New Haven, Milford, Meriden
Site 3	Norwich, Middletown
Site 4	Manchester, Willimantic
Site 5	Hartford, New Britain
Site 6	Danbury, Torrington, Waterbury

4. **Commodity Codes.** The services that the Agency wishes to procure through this RFP are as follows:

- 93140000: Community and Social Services

■ B. INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Official Contact.** The Agency has designated the individual below as the Official Contact for purposes of this RFP. The Official Contact is the **only authorized contact** for this procurement and, as such, handles all related communications on behalf of the Agency. Proposers, prospective proposers, and other interested parties are advised that any communication with any other Agency employee(s) (including appointed officials) or personnel under contract to the Agency about this RFP is strictly prohibited. Proposers or prospective proposers who violate this instruction may risk disqualification from further consideration.

Name: Catherine Santiago
 Address: 505 Hudson Street / Hartford, CT 06106
 Phone: (860) 937-3832
 E-Mail: DCF.FISCALCONTRACTS@ct.gov

Please ensure that e-mail screening software (if used) recognizes and accepts e-mails from the Official Contact.

2. **Registering with State Contracting Portal.** Respondents must register with the State of CT contracting portal at <https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/Registration> if not already registered. Respondents must submit the following information pertaining to this application to this portal (on their supplier profile), which will be checked by the Agency contact.
 - Secretary of State recognition (CT Business License)– Click on appropriate response
 - Non-profit status, if applicable
 - Notification to Bidders, Parts I-V (<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/CHRO/NotificationtoBidderspdf.pdf>)
 - Campaign Contribution Certification (OPM Ethics Form 1): <https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/Fin-PSA/Forms/Ethics-Forms>
3. **RFP Information.** The RFP, amendments to the RFP, and other information associated with this procurement are available in electronic format from the Official Contact or from the Internet at the following locations:

- Agency's RFP Web Page
<https://portal.ct.gov/DCF/Contract-Management/Home>
- State Contracting Portal (go to CTsource bid board, filter by "Department of Children and Families"
<https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/BidBoard>

It is strongly recommended that any proposer or prospective proposer interested in this procurement check the Bid Board for any solicitation changes. Interested proposers may receive additional e-mails from CTsource announcing addendums that are posted on the portal. This service is provided as a courtesy to assist in monitoring activities associated with State procurements, including this RFP.

- 4. Procurement Schedule.** See below. Dates after the due date for proposals ("Proposals Due") are non-binding target dates only (*). The Agency may amend the schedule as needed. Any change to non-target dates will be made by means of an amendment to this RFP and will be posted on the State Contracting Portal and, if available, the Agency's RFP Web Page.

- RFP Planning Start Date: **January 2024**
- RFP Released: **April 18, 2024**
- RFP Conference: **April 22, 2024 / 9:00am *VIRTUAL***
- Deadline for Questions: **3:00PM, April 23, 2024**
- Answers Released: **April 25, 2024**
- Letter of Intent Due: **3:00PM, May 9, 2024**
- Proposals Due: **3:00PM, June 6, 2024**
- (*) Proposer Selection: **June 12, 2024**
- (*) Start of Contract Negotiations: **June 20, 2024**
- (*) Start of Contract: **July 1, 2024**

- 5. Contract Awards.** The award of any contract pursuant to this RFP is dependent upon the availability of funding to the Agency. The Agency anticipates the following:

- Total Funding Available: **\$ 2,478,045**
- Number of Awards: Six
- Per Contract Funding: **\$ 413,007**
- Contract Term: 1-3 years, at the discretion of the Department

- 6. Eligibility.** Private provider organizations (defined as nonstate entities that are either nonprofit or proprietary corporations or partnerships), CT State agencies, and municipalities are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP. Individuals who are not a duly formed business entity are ineligible to participate in this procurement.

*Entities with a pending application for establishment as a private provider organization may respond to this procurement, but DCF reserves the right to reject any proposal that does not detail status of pending application and certify that such status will be granted by the start date of services indicated in Section 4, above. No contract shall be awarded to any entity not meeting this specification.

- 7. Minimum Qualifications of Proposers.** To qualify for a contract award, a proposer must have the following minimum qualifications:

- The agency must possess a current, valid Connecticut Business License, and must provide proof of such through the State procurement website (CTSource);
- Staff assigned to the program must be able to successfully pass DCF and State child and criminal background checks.

- 8. Letter of Intent.** A Letter of Intent (LOI) **is required** for this RFP. 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, "**Name of Provider / The Launch Program RFP/ Letter of Intent**". The LOI must clearly identify the sender, including name, postal address, telephone number, fax number and e-mail address. It is the sender's responsibility to confirm the Department's receipt of the LOI. Failure to submit the required LOI in accordance with the requirements set forth herein shall result in disqualification from further consideration.

- 9. Inquiry Procedures.** All questions regarding this RFP or the Agency's procurement process must be directed, in writing, electronically, (e-mail) to the Official Contact before the deadline specified in the Procurement Schedule. The early submission of questions is encouraged. Questions will not be accepted or answered verbally – neither in person nor over the telephone. All questions received before the deadline(s) will be answered. However, the Agency will not answer questions when the source is unknown (i.e., nuisance or anonymous questions). Questions deemed unrelated to the RFP or the procurement process will not be answered. At its discretion, the Agency may or may not respond to questions received after the deadline. If this RFP requires a Letter of Intent, the Agency reserves the right to answer questions only from those who have submitted such a letter. The Agency may combine similar questions and give only one answer. All questions and answers will be compiled into a written amendment to this RFP. If any answer to any question constitutes a material change to the RFP, the question and answer will be placed at the beginning of the amendment and duly noted as such.

The agency will release the answers to questions on the date(s) established in the Procurement Schedule. The Agency will publish any and all amendments to this RFP on the State Contracting Portal and, if available, on the Agency's RFP Web Page.

- 10. RFP Conference.** An RFP conference will be held to answer questions from prospective proposers. Attendance at the conference is non-mandatory, but highly recommended. Copies of the RFP will not be available at the RFP Conference. Prospective proposers are asked to bring a copy of the RFP 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 RFP, 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 RFP, the question and answer will be placed at the beginning of the amendment and duly noted as such. The agency will release the amendment on the date established in the Procurement Schedule. The Department will publish any and all amendments to this RFP on the State Contracting Portal and, if available, on the Department's RFP Web Page.

- Date: April 22, 2024
- Time: 9:00AM
- Virtual (Teams): [Join the meeting now](#)
- Call In: [+1 860-840-2075.582200240#](tel:+18608402075582200240) United States, Hartford

- 11. Proposal Due Date and Time.** The Official Contact is the **only authorized recipient** of proposals submitted in response to this RFP. Proposals must be received by the Official Contact on or before the due date and time:

- Due Date: June 6, 2024
- Time: 3:00PM

The original proposal must carry original signatures and be clearly marked on the cover as "Original." Unsigned proposals will not be evaluated. The original proposal must be complete, properly formatted and outlined, and ready for evaluation by the Screening Committee.

Proposals received after the due date and time may be accepted by the Department as a clerical function, but late proposals will not be evaluated. At the discretion of the Department, late proposals may be destroyed or retained for pick up by the submitters.

An acceptable submission must include the following:

- one (1) signed electronic copy of the original proposal (unsigned proposals will not be evaluated);

The electronic copy of the proposal must be emailed to the Official Agency Contact for this procurement. The subject line of the email must read: **Name of Provider / The Launch Program Electronic Proposal Submission**. 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 Provider / The Launch Program**
- Budget: **Name of Provider / The Launch Program**

12. Multiple Proposals. The submission of multiple proposals is an option with this procurement.

II. PURPOSE OF RFP AND SCOPE OF SERVICES

A. AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Department's mission is: "*Partnering with communities and empowering families to raise resilient children who thrive.*" The Department seeks to sharpen the safety lens through primary prevention across the child welfare system through 5 strategic goals:

- Keep children and youth safe, with focus on the most vulnerable populations
- Engage the workforce through an organizational culture of mutual support
- Connect systems and processes to achieve timely permanency
- Contribute to child and family wellbeing by enhancing assessments and interventions
- Eliminate racial and ethnic disparate outcomes within the Department

The mission and vision are grounded in a core set of beliefs that encompass the Department's vision for how to provide services to Connecticut's children and families. This philosophy and approach is reflected in the following graphic, inclusive of the Department's aspirational goals:



The Department is aligning all of its efforts to these core set of 7 Key Performance Indicators to ensure that the best outcomes are reached for all children. These key indicators drive the Department's strategic goals for how to best meet the needs and serve Connecticut's children and families. The Department believes that children do best when living safely at home with their family of origin. When living at home with a parent is not reasonably safe, the best alternative is to live with relatives, kin, or someone who they know who can provide a safe and nurturing home. If no family member can provide a suitably safe home that meets the child's needs, the child should receive care and services in an appropriate foster home or a setting that is able to meet their needs, while concurrently working towards a timely permanency outcome. Foster care should only be used as a short-term intervention. The Department believes that when foster care is necessary, while in foster care, regular and ongoing contact with parents and siblings should be maintained. Congregate care, such as group homes and residential treatment centers, should not be used for most children. If absolutely required, children who need to be in congregate care settings should be placed there for as brief a time as possible and these settings should be designed to address specific treatment needs rather than serve as long term placement options. For older youth, treatment in congregate care is expected to be used in a targeted manner with extensive family involvement built into the treatment process. All youth are to exit the Department's care with legal and/or relational permanency.

The Department of Children and Families was instituted by the Connecticut General Assembly as the Department of Children and Youth Services in May, 1969. In 1974, child welfare services were transferred to the Department, with children's mental health services and a unified school district for children in the Department's care and custody added one year later and substance abuse services for children and youth 13 years after that (in 1988). The Department's name (Children and Families) was officially changed through legislation in 1993, to reflect the

Department's still-evolving mission of providing child-centered, family focused, community-based programs and services throughout Connecticut.

In 1987, the Department instituted a regional management model, strengthening community-based services through grants and child-centered social work practice. Fourteen Area Offices, comprising six Regions began managing grants and contracted services within assigned geographical locations, thus cementing the Department's partnerships with local, area community service providers. Since that time, the Department's contracted service milieu has grown to encompass approximately 80 contracted service types overseen by 100 community service agencies providing 350 individual programs to Connecticut's children and their families.

■ B. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Launch Program is an intensive community-based program that will provide support comprised of both the Casey Life Skill (CLS) assessments and learning modules as well as skill building interventions designed to improve outcomes and completion of vocational and educational programs while advancing in employment and developing and maintaining strong permanent supportive adult relationships.

The Launch Program (Launch) model incorporates lessons learned from many years of providing evidence informed services, listening to; DCF Social Workers, consultants, philanthropic foundations, contracted providers, other stakeholders, young people in care and their families. The Department's Transitional Services and Success team's focus is grounded in rigorous youth engagement and is based on youth centered planning and incorporating consumer voice in all programming. The Program design will provide intensive one to one community-based support and will incorporate both the Casey Life Skill Assessments (CLSA) and learning modules as well as skill building interventions and opportunities for adolescents to practice newly acquired skills designed to improve outcomes.

Participants will have a unique individual plan developed with their direct insight and collaboration. During the initial phase of the program, they will complete various assessments, including the Casey Life Skill Assessment (CLSA) to determine the most appropriate vocational and educational program for them while addressing any gaps or needs identified. Participants will be connected to and supported while obtaining and advancing in employment and developing and maintaining strong permanent supportive relationships.

Each Life Skill Specialist (LSS) will carry a caseload of 8-10 youth at a time. The LSS will have 2-3 years minimum work experience in the areas of; employment coaching, conducting educational or vocational assessments, administering life skill development, housing supports, mentoring, or other related programs. Preference will be given to candidates who have a bachelor's degree. However, other training, relevant work experience and "lived experience" will be considered. The LSS, who must have strong mentoring and engagement skills, will assist the young adult participants to assess and develop the necessary skills to successfully transition to adulthood. The LSS will encourage and support the young adults to work towards achieving desired outcomes to successfully transition to adulthood. The LSS will use evidenced based interventions such as Motivational Interviewing to help the young adults determine what matters to them, set a vision for the future, set realistic goals and necessary steps to achieve those goals. The topics covered and the activities that take place during sessions with young adults and the LSS will vary depending on the needs and goals of each young person. However, the LSS will be required and have access to numerous interventions and methods that are included in the Casey Life Skill practitioner's guide, as well as, the Jim Casey Youth Opportunity Initiatives (JCYOI) foundation Opportunity Passport Data System (OPPDS) which is a Youth Survey and contains financial capability training modules. Topics covered include money management and job-seeking skill development, as well as practices to reduce alcohol and other substance abuse. The LSS will spend significant time, 3-5 hours per week, building rapport and establishing a trusting relationship with the young adult while assisting them to obtain essential documents needed to apply for a job or open a bank account. When appropriate, based on the young adult's individualized Life Skill Plan, the LSS will help the young adult search for and apply to part-time jobs and to gather information about careers and programs of interest to the participant. Each Level 2 participant will have a bank savings Individual Development Account (IDA) and will be encouraged to actively save in this account. The provider will match eligible savings contributions annually, dollar for dollar, up to a maximum of \$1000 for each eligible participant. Each provider will be required to have an established policy on file describing the specific aspects of the matched IDA program.

1. Target Population

The target population is all DCF committed youth ages 14-17. DCF committed young adults will be required to enroll into the program. The provider can also enroll participants that are not committed to DCF as long as the participant has an open case with DCF. Priority will be given to DCF committed youth.

Based on the young adults age upon enrollment into the program, they will follow one of two tracks:

Track 1 (for initial referral and ages 14-15)

- Casey Life Skill assessment (CLSA)
- Life Skill work -self quided and staff assisted fostering practice in natural settings
- Individualized Life Skill assessment Plan- guided by the Casey Life Skill instrument
- Opportunity Passport Survey
- Essential Document Portfolio started.
- Summer Youth Employment referral and assistance

Track 2 (for returning participants and those aged 16-17)

- Casey Life Skill assessment
- Individualized Life Skill assessment plan
- Full Opportunity Passport with financial capability training modules
- Assistance with job applications, FAFSA and college application process
- Job training opportunities
- Access to the matched IDA Bank savings program
- Essential document portfolio-updated

2. Length of Service

Length of service will be a minimum of six (6) months of service with a maximum of one (1) year enrollment per adolescent. After the initial thirty (30) day engagement/intake process if the youth is not participating or engaged, they will be withdrawn from the referral process. The youth can be referred again, six (6) months from the date of withdrawal. The youth can continue to be referred until they are successfully participating in the program or leave state care. Prior to turning age 18 or leaving state care, all participants will be given an updated Casey Life Skill Assessment and their individual plan for skill building will be revised.

3. Service Location and Operating Hours

The Contractor will provide a flexible open staffed site schedule to accommodate the needs of the participants and be able to develop strong collaborations with other services providers in the community.

4. Staffing

Each region will have access to a Launch program. Each Launch program will consist of six (6) full-time equivalent (FTE) staff comprised of five (5) Life Skill Specialists (LSS), one (1) team Supervisor, and one (1) .50 Program Director.

Life Skill Specialist (LSS): Preferred educational and experience level for the LSS will be bachelor's degree in a social work or other related field with three to five years of relevant and acceptable work experience. The LSS must have experience working with hard to reach, difficult to engage and/or vulnerable youth.

Life Skill Specialist Supervisor: The LSS Supervisor will have a master's degree in a social work (related field) or bachelor's degree with acceptable experience. The Supervisor should have some experience in the area of mental health and three to five years' direct experience working with hard to reach or vulnerable youth, as well as one year of supervisory experience.

All staff comprising The Launch Program team must demonstrate experience and the skills required to effectively engage a diverse population of youth including youth of different races, gender identities, sexual orientations, ethnicities, and religious backgrounds.

5. Case Capacity

Each LSS will have an annual case load of no more than 8-10 clients with a required minimum of two (2) face to face sessions per week, with a target of 3-5 hours per week of direct one to one engagement or other activities structured to meet the individual needs of the youth/young adult.

LSS must have the ability to engage youth in the community in which they reside, as well as at the program site. The provider will provide transportation to the site for the Level I participants and Level II participants for a minimum of three (3) days a week. The program will provide transportation for all participants, if needed, and requested by the participant or DCF.

6. Services

The provider will have demonstrated experience working with young adults experiencing a life history of abuse and neglect, school disruptions, housing instability, trauma, and other hardships making transitioning to adulthood successfully more difficult.

The provider will also be experienced in developing and/or strengthening permanent relationships and support systems for young adults through culturally and linguistically informed approaches to client engagement and treatment.

To reach the goal of successfully guiding young people to lead productive and supported lives, the provider will employ up to five (5) Life Skill Specialist (LSS) each with caseloads of no more than ten (10) young adults to meet the comprehensive objectives in the following life areas: daily living, self-care, work study habits, effective communication, navigating the child welfare system, civic engagement, networking, relationship building, educational and vocational preparedness, money management, life-long supportive adult connections, and employment skill development. The Contractor will be required to incorporate the Opportunity Passport Data System (OPPDS) and participate in the annual conference hosted by the Jim Casey Youth Opportunity initiative (JCYOI).

The Contractor will be required to provide financial capability training and ensure that each Level 2 Participant has an IDA Bank savings account and is eligible to receive an annual savings match for every dollar saved by the participant from employment up to a maximum of \$1000 per year while enrolled as an active participant in the VLSL program.

Data Collection and Outcomes

1. Reporting Requirements

The Provider will submit child and family specific data, and administrative service data as required by the Department. Under the Results-based Accountability framework in place for service evaluation throughout the state, the Department will assist the Provider(s) to provide information about the quantity of service delivered, its consistency with Strengthening Families principles and the effect of the services. The Department requires the Provider(s) to use data to ensure the quality of their services, including identifying program challenges or barriers, identify potential best practices, and achievement of the program's goals, objectives, and outcomes.

The child and family specific data for this service will be collected using an electronic, web-based application. This system will either be the Program and Services Data Collection and Reporting System (PSDCRS), or other Department sponsored application. The Provider will receive training regarding the use of the data collection system.

The data to be collected includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Demographic Information (e.g., name, date of birth, gender, race, ethnicity, referral source, and living situation/address.)
- Care Plan (e.g., safety, risk and protective factors, families self-identified needs and goals)
- Case Activity (e.g., case management contacts, referrals)
- Episode Data (face to face contacts)
- Service Data (e.g., Family Participation in Services in services)
- Service Transition Information

2. Outcome Expectations

DCF applies the RBA framework to all of its contracted programs to measure program effectiveness and intends to use RBA performance measures in The Launch Program. There will be a variety of key performance data that will be collected from the contracted providers to ensure optimal program delivery and outcomes by our PIE data system and through RBA performance measures. Key outcomes that DCF would like to be evaluated for youths in The Launch Program will include increased percentages of youth who experience:

- Improved life skill development
- Permanent relationships and social connections to caring adults/communities
- Improved educational performance and vocational opportunities
- Sustained employment opportunities
- Completion of Opportunity Passport Surveys

In addition, DCF will be measuring the referrals, program completion rate, and outcome attainment of all participants by age, gender, race, and ethnicity.

■ C. SCOPE OF SERVICE DESCRIPTION**1. Organizational Profile (15 points)**

- (a) Describe your agency's qualifications, training, background and experience in providing services to emerging adults. Describe how your agency's philosophy, values and vision ensure emerging adults receive and are connected to appropriate prevention/intervention and support services. Include examples of how your agency supports families within the region that you expect to serve. Please identify all department-related corrective action plans and their outcomes related to health, safety or service delivery over the past two years.
- (b) Describe your ability to serve the target population, and provide examples of how your agency currently supports emerging adults in the region that you expect to serve. What specific strategies do you implement to engage and facilitate involvement of parents, extended family, guardians and other supportive adults in planning during and following your involvement? What are your agency's current relationships with local and community providers in the region(s) being proposed? What presence does your agency have in the region(s) being proposed?

2. Program Model (30 points)

- (a) Describe the agency's experience, practice, and/or approach regarding the following key areas:
- Engaging hard to reach and vulnerable emerging adult populations;
 - Successfully launching new programs;
 - Implementing and running life skill acquisition learning programs;
 - Managing programs that promote the independent life skills of emerging adults;
 - Ensuring that your agency is a learning organization; and
 - Operating data driven and outcome focused programs as evidenced by quality data collection and analysis.
- (b) Describe and demonstrate through specific concrete examples, your agency's connections with the community(ies) you are proposing to serve and your ability to network with formal/informal supports to meet the needs of target aged emerging adults who have struggled to effectively transition to adulthood, including but not limited to:
- Other state agencies (DCF, DMHAS, DSS, DDS)
 - Community providers (mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence, medical)
 - Family members/extended family and family identified supports
 - Parent Advocacy groups/organizations
 - Grass roots organizations
 - Housing Authorities/supportive housing
 - Local education, Early Child-hood programs
 - Employment Assistance/vocational programs
 - Transportation
 - Respite/Daycare Services
 - Basic needs
- (c) Location of Proposed Services: Proposers are not required to obtain possession of physical space prior to submission of a proposal, although preference will be given to proposals indicating possession of space and zoning compliance, but the Department will require retention of space for all programs prior to contract execution. If space is not secured at the time of proposal submission, the proposer must affirm when such will be obtained. The Department reserves the right to cancel any negotiations or subsequent contracts if the proposer fails to obtain space. Furthermore, the Department reserves the right to deem a proposed site as unsuitable for the operation of any program. Proposals must address the following:
- Where is the proposed site located?
 - Is the site easily accessible through public transportation?
 - Does your agency currently control the site? If no, provide details of how and when the site will be available.
 - Is the site fully compliant with ADA standards? If no, describe the degree to which the site is ADA compliant?
- (d) Describe in detail your approach in working with emerging adult aged individuals between 17 and 21 years of age and how this program would fit into your current service array for emerging adults.

- (e) What specific strategies have you implemented to gain consumer feedback and how has this feedback been used to improve service delivery to emerging adults in the last 2 years? Please submit evidence of this in [Attachment 1](#).

3. Implementation (10 Points)

- (a) Identify challenges you may face in implementing, planning and coordinating the service outlined in this RFP and your approach to overcoming these challenges.
- (b) Describe your agency's plan to achieve the requirements stated within this RFP and include action steps and a timeline for successful implementation of the service after the contract is executed. Assume a July 2024 start date and provide specific dates when action steps will be completed. Identify who would be the project lead that will be overseeing the planning and implementation of this program and their level of experience. Which members of the leadership team will be involved in planning and implementing this service?
- (c) Provide an organizational chart illustrating where this program will be housed in the larger organization.

4. Cultural & Linguistically Competent Care (15 Points)

Provide a detailed description of your agency's knowledge, expertise and understanding of diversity (including, but not limited to: racial, ethnic, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, culture, linguistic, immigrant, disabilities, and religion) as it relates to the provision of services. (15 points overall) Detail your response according to the following:

- (a) Culturally Diverse Communities: Describe your organization's successes & challenges serving diverse communities. Include any data your agency has that reveals the ability to effectively serve and achieve positive outcomes for children and families of multiple diverse groups. Additionally, describe how your organization overcame previous challenges.
- (b) Culturally Diverse Families: Please detail how your program/service will effectively meet the needs of the community/communities you propose to service through this application. Describe policies, practices, and data collection mechanisms. Include supporting data about the race, ethnicity, and languages of the communities you are seeking to serve. Also, include how your organization works to establish rapport and trust with families related to experiences of racism and how this influences and guides client engagement and treatment planning. (Supporting data may be included as [Attachment 2](#))
- (c) Culturally Diverse Staff: Describe your plan and current activities to recruit, retain, train, supervise, and facilitate dialogue amongst a diverse staff, including those who are bicultural and bilingual, for this program/service and across all levels of your organization. Please include a description of what progress your organization made to increase the diversity of the workforce in the past three years.

The Department of Children & 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, preferred languages, health literacy, and other communication needs. Applicants must demonstrate throughout all their responses, that the children and families receiving services in their program are approached, engaged and cared for in a culturally and linguistically competent manner, including but not limited to: Cultural identity, racial and/or ethnic, religious/spiritual ascription, gender, physical capability, cognitive level, sexual orientation, and linguistic needs. Within a broad construction of culture, service provision must also be tailored to age, diagnosis, developmental level, geographical and educational needs.

5. Data and Technology (10 points)

Please provide a full description of your current data collection system to include how you analyze data to drive action in all Quality Assurance functions, implementing program improvements, and to ensure that the service you are providing is helping children and families. Please also provide information about dedicated staff that responsible for these activities. Contracted providers will be submitting to the

Department additional client and family level data through DCF's Provider Information Exchange (PIE) or other Department sponsored application. If applicable, the contractor will receive training regarding the use of the data collection system. For more information regarding PIE, go to the DCF website as follows: <https://portal.ct.gov/DCF/ORE/PIE>.

6. Staffing Requirements (15)

Proposals must describe a detailed plan for the below stated staffing components:

- a) Staff Qualifications
- b) Staff Training
- c) Staff Retention
 - A staff retention plan detailing measures taken to reduce staff turnover;
 - A description of how staff will be recruited and selected;
 - A description of how the staffing plan will be appropriate to the language, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and ethnic/racial/cultural factors of the target population;
 - A description of how the program will continue to provide services that are timely, effective, and true to the model if sickness, training, vacancies, leaves of absence, etc. make regularly scheduled staff unavailable.

D. BUDGET AND FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

1. Financial Requirements (2 Points)

Proposers must submit cover letters from their auditor for the last three (3) annual audits of their agency and a copy of their most recent financial audit, included as **Attachment 3**. If the three (3) most recent audits are available via the Office of Policy and Management's EARS system, such must be noted in the proposal, and cover letters and the last audit should **not** be included in the proposal.

If less than three (3) audits were conducted, detail must be provided as to why, and any supporting documentation assuring the financial efficacy of the applicant agency should be included (i.e. an accountant prepared financial statement, a tax return, a profit and loss statement, etc.).

2. Budget Requirements (3 Points)

Proposals must contain an itemized annual budget on the budget form delineated in Section IV, of this RFP. All startup costs must be clearly identified as 1 line item in the budget.

A budget narrative must be provided, explaining all costs contained in the budget. All start-up costs must be listed separately and clearly detailed in the budget narrative.

All other funding, including agency financial support must be identified.

III. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION OVERVIEW**A. SUBMISSION FORMAT INFORMATION**

- 1. Required Outline.** All proposals must follow the required outline presented in Section IV – Proposal Outline. Proposals that fail to follow the required outline will be deemed non-responsive and not evaluated.
- 2. Cover Sheet.** The Cover Sheet is Page 1 of the proposal. Proposers must complete and use the Cover Sheet form provided by the Department in Section IV– Forms.
- 3. Table of Contents.** All proposals must include a Table of Contents that conforms with the required proposal outline.
- 4. Attachments.** Attachments other than the required Appendices or Forms identified in the RFP are not permitted and will not be evaluated. Further, the required Appendices or Forms must not be altered or used to extend, enhance, or replace any component required by this RFP. Failure to abide by these instructions will result in disqualification.
- 5. Style Requirements.** Submitted proposals must conform to the following specifications:
 - Paper Size: Standard Letter
 - Print Style: 2-sided
 - Page Limit: 20 Single-Sided (10 sheets of Paper, printed Double-Side) for Section IV.E (Main Proposal)
 - Font Size: 12
 - Font Type: Times New Roman
 - Margins: Normal
 - Line Spacing: 1.5
- 7. Pagination.** The proposer’s name must be displayed in the header of each page. All pages, including the required Appendices and Forms, must be numbered in the footer.
- 8. Packaging and Labeling Requirements.** All proposals must be submitted in sealed envelopes or packages and be addressed to the Official Contact. The Legal Name and Address of the proposer must appear in the upper left corner of the envelope or package. The RFP Name and Number must be clearly displayed on the envelope or package. Any received proposal that does not conform to these packaging or labeling instructions will be opened as general mail. Such a proposal may be accepted by the Agency as a clerical function, but it will not be evaluated. At the discretion of the Agency, such a proposal may be destroyed or retained for pick up by the submitters.
- 9. Declaration of Confidential Information.** Proposers are advised that all materials associated with this procurement are subject to the terms of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the Privacy Act, and all rules, regulations and interpretations resulting from them. If a proposer deems that certain information required by this RFP is confidential, the proposer must label such information as CONFIDENTIAL prior to submission. In Section C of the proposal submission, the proposer must reference where the information labeled CONFIDENTIAL is located in the proposal. *EXAMPLE: Section G.1.a.* For each subsection so referenced, the proposer must provide a convincing explanation and rationale sufficient to justify an exemption of the information from release under the FOIA. The explanation and rationale must be stated in terms of (a) the prospective harm to the competitive position of the proposer that would result if the identified information were to be released and (b) the reasons why the information is legally exempt from release pursuant to C.G.S. § 1-210(b).
- 10. Conflict of Interest- Disclosure Statement.** Proposers must include, in Section D of their proposal, a disclosure statement concerning any current business relationships (within the last three (3) years) that

pose a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85. A conflict of interest exists when a relationship exists between the proposer and a public official (including an elected official) or State employee that may interfere with fair competition or may be adverse to the interests of the State. The existence of a conflict of interest is not, in and of itself, evidence of wrongdoing. A conflict of interest may, however, become a legal matter if a proposer tries to influence, or succeeds in influencing, the outcome of an official decision for their personal or corporate benefit. The Agency will determine whether any disclosed conflict of interest poses a substantial advantage to the proposer over the competition, decreases the overall competitiveness of this procurement, or is not in the best interests of the State. In the absence of any conflict of interest, a proposer must affirm such in the disclosure statement. *Example: "[name of proposer] has no current business relationship (within the last three (3) years) that poses a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85."*

■ **B. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS**

1. Evaluation Process. It is the intent of the Agency to conduct a comprehensive, fair, and impartial evaluation of proposals received in response to this RFP. When evaluating proposals, negotiating with successful proposers, and awarding contracts, the Agency will conform with its written procedures for POS and PSA procurements (pursuant to C.G.S. § 4-217) and the State’s Code of Ethics (pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 1-84 and 1-85). Final funding allocation decisions will be determined during contract negotiation.

2. Evaluation Review Committee. The Agency will designate a Review Committee to evaluate proposals submitted in response to this RFP. The Review Committee will be composed of individuals, Agency staff or other designees as deemed appropriate. The contents of all submitted proposals, including any confidential information, will be shared with the Review Committee. Only proposals found to be responsive (that is, complying with all instructions and requirements described herein) will be reviewed, rated, and scored. Proposals that fail to comply with all instructions will be rejected without further consideration. The Review Committee shall evaluate all proposals that meet the Minimum Submission Requirements by score and rank ordered and make recommendations for awards. The Agency Head will make the final selection. Attempts by any proposer (or representative of any proposer) to contact or influence any member of the Review Committee may result in disqualification of the proposer.

3. Minimum Submission Requirements. To be eligible for evaluation, proposals must (1) be received on or before the due date and time; (2) meet the Proposal Format requirements; (3) meet the Eligibility and Qualification requirements to respond to the procurement, (4) follow the required Proposal Outline; and (5) be complete. Proposals that fail to follow instructions or satisfy these minimum submission requirements will not be reviewed further. The Agency will reject any proposal that deviates significantly from the requirements of this RFP.

4. Evaluation Criteria (and Weights). Proposals meeting the Minimum Submission Requirements will be evaluated according to the established criteria. The criteria are the objective standards that the Review Committee will use to evaluate the technical merits of the proposals. Only the criteria listed below will be used to evaluate proposals. The weights are disclosed below:

- Organizational Requirements **15 points**
- Program Model **30 points**
- Implementation **10 points**
- Cultural & Linguistically Competent Care **15 points**
- Data and Technology Requirements **10 points**
- Staffing Requirements **15 points**
- Financial Profile **2 points**
- Budget and Budget Narrative **3 points**

Note: As part of its evaluation of the Staffing Plan, the Review Committee will review the proposer’s demonstrated commitment to affirmative action, as required by the Regulations of CT State Agencies § 46A-68j-30(10).

- 5. Proposer Selection.** Upon completing its evaluation of proposals, the Review Committee will submit the rankings of all proposals to the Commissioner or Agency Head. The final selection of a successful proposer is at the discretion of the Commissioner or Agency Head. Any proposer selected will be so notified and awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract with the Agency. Such negotiations may, but will not automatically, result in a contract. Any resulting contract will be posted on the State Contracting Portal. All unsuccessful proposers will be notified by e-mail or U.S. mail, at the Agency's discretion, about the outcome of the evaluation and proposer selection process. The Agency reserves the right to decline to award contracts for activities in which the Commissioner or Agency Head considers there are not adequate respondents.
- 6. Debriefing.** Within ten (10) days of receiving notification from the Agency, unsuccessful proposers may contact the Official Contact and request information about the evaluation and proposer selection process. The e-mail sent date or the postmark date on the notification envelope will be considered "day one" of the ten (10) days. If unsuccessful proposers still have questions after receiving this information, they may contact the Official Contact and request a meeting with the Agency to discuss the evaluation process and their proposals. If held, the debriefing meeting will not include any comparisons of unsuccessful proposals with other proposals. The Agency may schedule and hold the debriefing meeting within fifteen (15) days of the request. The Agency will not change, alter, or modify the outcome of the evaluation or selection process as a result of any debriefing meeting.
- 7. Appeal Process.** Proposers may appeal any aspect the Agency's competitive procurement, including the evaluation and proposer selection process. Any such appeal must be submitted to the Agency head. A proposer may file an appeal at any time after the proposal due date, but not later than thirty (30) days after an agency notifies unsuccessful proposers about the outcome of the evaluation and proposer selection process. The e-mail sent date or the postmark date on the notification envelope will be considered "day one" of the thirty (30) days. The filing of an appeal shall not be deemed sufficient reason for the Agency to delay, suspend, cancel, or terminate the procurement process or execution of a contract. More detailed information about filing an appeal may be obtained from the Official Contact.
- 8. Contract Execution.** Any contract developed and executed as a result of this RFP is subject to the Agency's contracting procedures, which may include approval by the Office of the Attorney General. Fully executed and approved contracts will be posted on State Contracting Portal and the Agency website.

IV. REQUIRED PROPOSAL SUBMISSION OUTLINE AND REQUIREMENTS

	<u>Page</u>
A. Cover Sheet	1
B. Table of Contents	2
C. Declaration of Confidential Information	Etc.
D. Conflict of Interest - Disclosure Statement	
E. Main Proposal	
1. Organizational Profile	
a. Agency Qualifications	
b. Ability to Serve Population.	
2. Program Model	
a. Agency Engagement	
b. Community Connections	
c. Location of Program	
d. Approach to Engaging Emerging Adults	
e. Strategies on Consumer Feedback	
3. Implementation	
a. Implementation Challenges	
b. Implementation Timelines	
c. Organizational Chart.	
4. Cultural & Linguistically Competent Care	
a. Culturally Diverse Communities	
b. Culturally Diverse Families	
c. Culturally Diverse Organization	
5. Staffing Requirements	
a. Staff Qualifications.	
b. Staff Training.	
c. Staff Retention	
6. Data and Technology Requirements	
F. Cost Proposal	
1. Financial Profile	
2. Budget and Budget Narrative	
G. Attachments	
1. Attachment #1 Consumer Feedback Data.	
2. Attachment #2 Culturally Diverse Families	
3. Attachment #3 Financial Profile	

V. MANDATORY PROVISIONS**■ A. POS STANDARD CONTRACT, PARTS I AND II**

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the proposer implicitly agrees to comply with the provisions of Parts I and II of the State's "standard contract" for POS:

Part I of the standard contract is maintained by the Department and will include the scope of services, contract performance, quality assurance, reports, terms of payment, budget, and other program-specific provisions of any resulting POS contract. A sample of Part I is available from the Department's Official Contact upon request.

Part II of the standard contract is maintained by OPM and includes the mandatory terms and conditions of the POS contract. Part II is available on OPM's website at: http://www.ct.gov/opm/fin/standard_contract

Note:

Included in Part II of the standard contract is the State Elections Enforcement Commission's notice (pursuant to C.G.S. § 9-612(g)(2)) advising executive branch State contractors and prospective State contractors of the ban on campaign contributions and solicitations. If a proposer is awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract with the Department and the resulting contract has an anticipated value in a calendar year of \$50,000 or more, or a combination or series of such agreements or contracts has an anticipated value of \$100,000 or more, the proposer must inform the proposer's principals of the contents of the SEEC notice.

Part I of the standard contract may be amended by means of a written instrument signed by the Department, the selected proposer (contractor), and, if required, the Attorney General's Office. Part II of the standard contract may be amended only in consultation with, and with the approval of, the Office of Policy and Management and the Attorney General's Office.

■ B. ASSURANCES

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly gives the following assurances:

- 1. Collusion.** The proposer represents and warrants that the proposer did not participate in any part of the RFP development process and had no knowledge of the specific contents of the RFP prior to its issuance. The proposer further represents and warrants that no agent, representative, or employee of the State participated directly in the preparation of the proposer's proposal. The proposer also represents and warrants that the submitted proposal is in all respects fair and is made without collusion or fraud.
- 2. State Officials and Employees.** The proposer certifies that no elected or appointed official or employee of the State has or will benefit financially or materially from any contract resulting from this RFP. The Agency may terminate a resulting contract if it is determined that gratuities of any kind were either offered or received by any of the aforementioned officials or employees from the proposer, contractor, or its agents or employees.
- 3. Competitors.** The proposer assures that the submitted proposal is not made in connection with any competing organization or competitor submitting a separate proposal in response to this RFP. No attempt has been made, or will be made, by the proposer to induce any other organization or competitor to submit, or not submit, a proposal for the purpose of restricting competition. The proposer further assures that the proposed costs have been arrived at independently, without consultation, communication, or agreement with any other organization or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition. Nor has the proposer knowingly disclosed the proposed costs on a prior basis, either directly or indirectly, to any other organization or competitor.
- 4. Validity of Proposal.** The proposer certifies that the proposal represents a valid and binding offer to provide services in accordance with the terms and provisions described in this RFP and any amendments or attachments hereto. The proposal shall remain valid for a period of 180 days after the submission due

date and may be extended beyond that time by mutual agreement. At its sole discretion, the Agency may include the proposal, by reference or otherwise, into any contract with the successful proposer.

- 5. Press Releases.** The proposer agrees to obtain prior written consent and approval of the Agency for press releases that relate in any manner to this RFP or any resultant contract.

■ **C. TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly agrees to comply with the following terms and conditions:

- 1. Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action.** The State is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action employer and does not discriminate in its hiring, employment, or business practices. The State is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs, services, or activities.
- 2. Preparation Expenses.** Neither the State nor the Agency shall assume any liability for expenses incurred by a proposer in preparing, submitting, or clarifying any proposal submitted in response to this RFP.
- 3. Exclusion of Taxes.** The Agency is exempt from the payment of excise and sales taxes imposed by the federal government and the State. Proposers are liable for any other applicable taxes.
- 4. Proposed Costs.** No cost submissions that are contingent upon a State action will be accepted. All proposed costs must be fixed through the entire term of the contract.
- 5. Changes to Proposal.** No additions or changes to the original proposal will be allowed after submission. While changes are not permitted, the Agency may request and authorize proposers to submit written clarification of their proposals, in a manner or format prescribed by the Agency, and at the proposer's expense.
- 6. Supplemental Information.** Supplemental information will not be considered after the deadline submission of proposals, unless specifically requested by the Agency. The Agency may ask a proposer to give demonstrations, interviews, oral presentations or further explanations to clarify information contained in a proposal. Any such demonstration, interview, or oral presentation will be at a time selected and in a place provided by the Agency. At its sole discretion, the Agency may limit the number of proposers invited to make such a demonstration, interview, or oral presentation and may limit the number of attendees per proposer.
- 7. Presentation of Supporting Evidence.** If requested by the Agency, a proposer must be prepared to present evidence of experience, ability, data reporting capabilities, financial standing, or other information necessary to satisfactorily meet the requirements set forth or implied in this RFP. The Agency may make onsite visits to an operational facility or facilities of a proposer to evaluate further the proposer's capability to perform the duties required by this RFP. At its discretion, the Agency may also check or contact any reference provided by the proposer.
- 8. RFP Is Not An Offer.** Neither this RFP nor any subsequent discussions shall give rise to any commitment on the part of the State or the Agency or confer any rights on any proposer unless and until a contract is fully executed by the necessary parties. The contract document will represent the entire agreement between the proposer and the Agency and will supersede all prior negotiations, representations or agreements, alleged or made, between the parties. The State shall assume no liability for costs incurred by the proposer or for payment of services under the terms of the contract until the successful proposer is notified that the contract has been accepted and approved by the Agency and, if required, by the Attorney General's Office.

■ **D. RIGHTS RESERVED TO THE STATE**

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly accepts that the following rights are reserved to the State:

1. **Timing Sequence.** The timing and sequence of events associated with this RFP shall ultimately be determined by the Agency.
2. **Amending or Canceling RFP.** The Agency reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFP on any date and at any time, if the Agency deems it to be necessary, appropriate, or otherwise in the best interests of the State.
3. **No Acceptable Proposals.** In the event that no acceptable proposals are submitted in response to this RFP, the Agency may reopen the procurement process, if it is determined to be in the best interests of the State.
4. **Award and Rejection of Proposals.** The Agency reserves the right to award in part, to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part, for misrepresentation or if the proposal limits or modifies any of the terms, conditions, or specifications of this RFP. The Agency may waive minor technical defects, irregularities, or omissions, if in its judgment the best interests of the State will be served. The Agency reserves the right to reject the proposal of any proposer who submits a proposal after the submission date and time.
5. **Sole Property of the State.** All proposals submitted in response to this RFP are to be the sole property of the State. Any product, whether acceptable or unacceptable, developed under a contract awarded as a result of this RFP shall be the sole property of the State, unless stated otherwise in this RFP or subsequent contract. The right to publish, distribute, or disseminate any and all information or reports, or part thereof, shall accrue to the State without recourse.
6. **Contract Negotiation.** The Agency reserves the right to negotiate or contract for all or any portion of the services contained in this RFP. The Agency further reserves the right to contract with one or more proposer for such services. After reviewing the scored criteria, the Agency may seek Best and Final Offers (BFO) on cost from proposers. The Agency may set parameters on any BFOs received.
7. **Clerical Errors in Award.** The Agency reserves the right to correct inaccurate awards resulting from its clerical errors. This may include, in extreme circumstances, revoking the awarding of a contract already made to a proposer and subsequently awarding the contract to another proposer. Such action on the part of the State shall not constitute a breach of contract on the part of the State since the contract with the initial proposer is deemed to be void *ab initio* and of no effect as if no contract ever existed between the State and the proposer.
8. **Key Personnel.** When the Agency is the sole funder of a purchased service, the Agency reserves the right to approve any additions, deletions, or changes in key personnel, with the exception of key personnel who have terminated employment. The Agency also reserves the right to approve replacements for key personnel who have terminated employment. The Agency further reserves the right to require the removal and replacement of any of the proposer's key personnel who do not perform adequately, regardless of whether they were previously approved by the Agency.

■ **E. STATUTORY AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE**

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the proposer implicitly agrees to comply with all applicable State and federal laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. **Freedom of Information, C.G.S. § 1-210(b).** The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) generally requires the disclosure of documents in the possession of the State upon request of any citizen, unless the content of the document falls within certain categories of exemption, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-210(b). Proposers are generally advised not to include in their proposals any confidential information. If the proposer indicates that certain documentation, as required by this RFP, is submitted in confidence, the

State will endeavor to keep said information confidential to the extent permitted by law. The State has no obligation to initiate, prosecute, or defend any legal proceeding or to seek a protective order or other similar relief to prevent disclosure of any information pursuant to a FOIA request. The proposer has the burden of establishing the availability of any FOIA exemption in any proceeding where it is an issue. While a proposer may claim an exemption to the State's FOIA, the final administrative authority to release or exempt any or all material so identified rests with the State. In no event shall the State or any of its employees have any liability for disclosure of documents or information in the possession of the State and which the State or its employees believe(s) to be required pursuant to the FOIA or other requirements of law.

2. Contract Compliance, C.G.S. § 4a-60 and Regulations of CT State Agencies § 46a-68j-21 thru 43, inclusive. CT statute and regulations impose certain obligations on State agencies (as well as contractors and subcontractors doing business with the State) to ensure that State agencies do not enter into contracts with organizations or businesses that discriminate against protected class persons.

3. Consulting Agreements, C.G.S. § 4a-81. Consulting Agreements Representation, C.G.S. § 4a-81. Pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 4a-81 the successful contracting party shall certify that it has not entered into any consulting agreements in connection with this Contract, except for the agreements listed below. "Consulting agreement" means any written or oral agreement to retain the services, for a fee, of a consultant for the purposes of (A) providing counsel to a contractor, vendor, consultant or other entity seeking to conduct, or conducting, business with the State, (B) contacting, whether in writing or orally, any executive, judicial, or administrative office of the State, including any department, institution, bureau, board, commission, authority, official or employee for the purpose of solicitation, dispute resolution, introduction, requests for information, or (C) any other similar activity related to such contracts. "Consulting agreement" does not include any agreements entered into with a consultant who is registered under the provisions of chapter 10 of the Connecticut General Statutes as of the date such contract is executed in accordance with the provisions of section 4a-81 of the Connecticut General Statutes. Such representation shall be sworn as true to the best knowledge and belief of the person signing the resulting contract and shall be subject to the penalties of false statement.

4. Campaign Contribution Restriction, C.G.S. § 9-612. For all State contracts, defined in section 9-612 of the Connecticut General Statutes as having a value in a calendar year of \$50,000 or more, or a combination or series of such agreements or contracts having a value of \$100,000 or more, the authorized signatory to the resulting contract must represent that they have received the State Elections Enforcement Commission's notice advising state contractors of state campaign contribution and solicitation prohibitions, and will inform its principals of the contents of the notice, as set forth in "Notice to Executive Branch State Contractors and Prospective State Contractors of Campaign Contribution and Solicitation Limitations." Such notice is available at:

https://seec.ct.gov/Portal/data/forms/ContrForms/seec_form_11_notice_only.pdf

5. Gifts, C.G.S. § 4-252. Pursuant to section 4-252 of the Connecticut General Statutes and Acting Governor Susan Bysiewicz's Executive Order No. 21-2, the Contractor, for itself and on behalf of all of its principals or key personnel who submitted a bid or proposal, represents:

(1) That no gifts were made by (A) the Contractor, (B) any principals and key personnel of the Contractor, who participate substantially in preparing bids, proposals or negotiating State contracts, or (C) any agent of the Contractor or principals and key personnel, who participates substantially in preparing bids, proposals or negotiating State contracts, to (i) any public official or State employee of the State agency or quasi- public agency soliciting bids or proposals for State contracts, who participates substantially in the preparation of bid solicitations or requests for proposals for State contracts or the negotiation or award of State contracts, or (ii) any public official or State employee of any other State agency, who has supervisory or appointing authority over such State agency or quasi-public agency;

(2) That no such principals and key personnel of the Contractor, or agent of the Contractor or of such principals and key personnel, knows of any action by the Contractor to circumvent such prohibition on

gifts by providing for any other principals and key personnel, official, employee or agent of the Contractor to provide a gift to any such public official or State employee; and

(3) That the Contractor is submitting bids or proposals without fraud or collusion with any person. Any bidder or proposer that does not agree to the representations required under this section shall be rejected and the State agency or quasi-public agency shall award the contract to the next highest ranked proposer or the next lowest responsible qualified bidder or seek new bids or proposals.

- 6. Iran Energy Investment Certification C.G.S. § 4-252(a).** Pursuant to C.G.S. § 4-252(a), the successful contracting party shall certify the following: (a) that it has not made a direct investment of twenty million dollars or more in the energy sector of Iran on or after October 1, 2013, as described in Section 202 of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability and Divestment Act of 2010, and has not increased or renewed such investment on or after said date. (b) If the Contractor makes a good faith effort to determine whether it has made an investment described in subsection (a) of this section it shall not be subject to the penalties of false statement pursuant to section 4-252a of the Connecticut General Statutes. A "good faith effort" for purposes of this subsection includes a determination that the Contractor is not on the list of persons who engage in certain investment activities in Iran created by the Department of General Services of the State of California pursuant to Division 2, Chapter 2.7 of the California Public Contract Code. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to impair the ability of the State agency or quasi-public agency to pursue a breach of contract action for any violation of the provisions of the resulting contract.
- 7. Nondiscrimination Certification, C.G.S. § 4a-60 and 4a-60a.** If a bidder is awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract, the proposer must provide the State agency with *written representation* in the resulting contract that certifies the bidder complies with the State's nondiscrimination agreements and warranties. This nondiscrimination certification is required for all State contracts – regardless of type, term, cost, or value. Municipalities and CT State agencies are exempt from this requirement. The authorized signatory of the contract shall demonstrate his or her understanding of this obligation by either (A) initialing the nondiscrimination affirmation provision in the body of the resulting contract, or (B) providing an affirmative response in the required online bid or response to a proposal question, if applicable, which asks if the contractor understands its obligations. If a bidder or vendor refuses to agree to this representation, such bidder or vendor shall be rejected and the State agency or quasi-public agency shall award the contract to the next highest ranked vendor or the next lowest responsible qualified bidder or seek new bids or proposals.
- 8. Access to Data for State Auditors.** The Contractor shall provide to OPM access to any data, as defined in C.G.S. § 4e-1, concerning the resulting contract that are in the possession or control of the Contractor upon demand and shall provide the data to OPM in a format prescribed by OPM [or the Client Agency] and the State Auditors of Public Accounts at no additional cost.

VI. APPENDIX

A. ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS / DEFINITIONS

BFO	Best and Final Offer
C.G.S.	Connecticut General Statutes
CHRO	Commission on Human Rights and Opportunity (CT)
CT	Connecticut
DAS	Department of Administrative Services (CT)
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act (CT)
IRS	Internal Revenue Service (US)
LOI	Letter of Intent
OAG	Office of the Attorney General
OPM	Office of Policy and Management (CT)
OSC	Office of the State Comptroller (CT)
POS	Purchase of Service
P.A.	Public Act (CT)
RFP	Request for Proposal
SEEC	State Elections Enforcement Commission (CT)
U.S.	United States

- *contractor*: a private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality that enters into a POS contract with the Agency as a result of this RFP
- *proposer*: a private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality that has submitted a proposal to the Agency in response to this RFP. This term may be used interchangeably with respondent throughout the RFP.
- *prospective proposer*: a private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality that may submit a proposal to the Agency in response to this RFP, but has not yet done so
- *subcontractor*: an individual (other than an employee of the contractor) or business entity hired by a contractor to provide a specific health or human service as part of a POS contract with the Agency as a result of this RFP

B. Appendix #1: Proposal Checklist

To assist respondents in managing proposal planning and document collation processes, this document summarizes key dates and proposal requirements for this RFP. This document does not supersede what is stated in the RFP. It is the responsibility of each respondent to ensure that all required documents, forms, and attachments, are submitted in a timely manner.

C. Appendix #2: Letter of Intent

To be completed and submitted to the Official Agency Contact for this procurement by the due date delineated in this RFP.

D. Appendix #3: Proposal Cover Sheet

To be utilized as Page 1 of all proposals (as indicated in this RFP).

PROPOSAL CHECKLIST**Key Dates**

Procurement Timetable		
The Agency reserves the right to modify these dates at its sole discretion.		
Item	Action	Date
1	Bidders Conference	9:00 am / April 22, 2024
2	Question Submission Deadline	3:00 PM / April 23, 2024
3	Release of Answers	April 25, 2024
4	Letter of Intent Submission Deadline	3:00 PM / May 9, 2024
5	Proposal Submission Deadline	3:00 PM June 6, 2024
6	Program Implementation Target Date	July 1, 2024

Registration with State Contracting Portal (if not already registered):

- Register at: <https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/Registration>
- Submit Campaign Contribution Certification (OPM Ethics Form 1): <https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/Fin-PSA/Forms/Ethics-Forms>
- Submit Proof of Entity Status (if applicable)
- Submit Notification to Bidders package
- Submit Proof of Secretary of the State recognition (CT Business License)

Letter of Intent

- Submit by May 9, 2024 (3:00PM)

Proposal Content Checklist

- Cover Sheet** (using RFP Appendix #3)
- Table of Contents** (using RFP Section IV (Table of Contents))
- Declaration of Confidential Information**
- Conflict of Interest Disclosure**
- Main Proposal**
- Budget**
- Attachments**

Formatting Checklist

- Is the proposal formatted to fit 8 ½ x 11 (letter-sized) paper?
- Is the main body of the proposal within the page limit?
- Is the proposal in 12-point, Times New Roman font?
- Does the proposal format follow normal (1 inch) margins and 1 ½ line spacing?
- Does the proposer's name appear in the header of each page?
- Does the proposal include page numbers in the footer?
- Are confidential labels applied to sensitive information (if applicable)?

LETTER OF INTENT
(MANDATORY NON-BINDING)

Date: _____

Our agency is planning to apply for funding in response to the RFP entitled ***The Launch Program***

- Site 1 - Bridgeport, Norwalk
- Site 2 - New Haven, Milford, Meriden
- Site 3 - Norwich, Middletown
- Site 4 - Manchester, Willimantic
- Site 5 - Hartford, New Britain
- Site 6 - Danbury, Torrington, Waterbury

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 **May 9, 2024**
Catherine Santiago (DCF.FISCALCONTRACTS@ct.gov).

PROPOSAL COVER SHEET

The Launch Program
Request for Proposals

- Site 1 - Bridgeport, Norwalk
- Site 2 - New Haven, Milford, Meriden
- Site 3 - Norwich, Middletown
- Site 4 - Manchester, Willimantic
- Site 5 - Hartford, New Britain
- Site 6 - Danbury, Torrington, Waterbury

Name of 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: _____