

**Department for Children and Families**  
**Child Development Division**  
**Supporting Vermont's Early Education Workforce through the**  
**Vermont Child Care Apprenticeship Program**  
**Applications Due: March 15, 2020**

**1. Introduction and Background**

In 1998, the US Department of Labor released Requests for Proposals to address the crisis of improving the quality of child care. Vermont applied for and received funding to create the Vermont Child Care Apprenticeship Program with the goal to support the attainment of job skills through college level courses and on-the-job training and to provide higher wages for participants.

The current VT Child Care Apprenticeship Program through the Vermont Child Development Division (“CDD”) utilizes Vermont T.E.A.C.H Early Childhood® scholarships administered through Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children (“VTAEYC”) to cover the cost of college coursework for registered apprentices. The Vermont T.E.A.C.H. Apprenticeship Scholarship provides support for tuition, books, travel, paid release time and a compensation enhancement at the end of each scholarship contract. The Vermont T.E.A.C.H. program will work in partnership with the grantee and the Vermont Department of Labor (“DOL”) to support the enrolled students. The DOL oversees all apprenticeship programs in Vermont and sets the requirements that apprenticeship programs must follow.

**2. Purpose**

The CDD is requesting applications from qualified organizations to work in partnership with the DOL and VTAEYC to provide student support services to administer and implement the Vermont Child Care Apprenticeship Program.

This Request for Application (“RFA”) is for competitive applications to be funded through the Child Care and Development Block Grant, administered by the Child Development Division of the Department for Children and Families in the Agency of Human Services. A CDD-designated review panel will evaluate, score and rate applications that meet all eligibility and application requirements.

Through this grant, the selected organization (“Grantee”) will:

- Recruit, orient and support candidates and apprentices for the Vermont Child Care Apprenticeship Program
- Recruit and support sponsor early childhood programs to host apprentices
- Recruit and support qualified mentors to work with apprentices
- Ensure compliance with all Department of Labor requirements including participant compliance

Successful implementation will contribute to the strength of Vermont’s early childhood education workforce.

**3. Scope of work**

The selected Grantee will be required to perform the following services in collaboration and partnership with the Vermont Department of Labor (DOL) and the Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children (VTAEYC):

- **Recruit, orient and support candidates for the Vermont Child Care Apprenticeship Program**
  - recruit apprentices who are not currently part of the early childhood workforce:
    - develop marketing materials; and
    - participate at job fairs and conduct other outreach;
  - work collaboratively with Resource Advisors at NL@CCV to conduct recruitment of potential apprentices currently employed at Vermont early childhood programs who do not meet requirements to lead a group of children on their own;
  - orient new apprentices to apprenticeship and program expectations;
  - provide on-going counseling and support to ensure student success in the program including working collaboratively with VTAEYC and Community College of Vermont (“CCV”) to ensure each apprentice has the support and scaffolding needed for successful enrollment and completion of Vermont Child Care Apprenticeship coursework and other requirements; and
  - ensure student recognition at various points of the program, including the completion of the Apprenticeship Program;
- **Recruit and support sponsor programs to host apprentices**
  - recruit regulated early childhood programs to host apprentices;
  - support the participation of early childhood programs who host apprentices;
  - work to find solutions to any challenges encountered in relation to hosting an apprentice;
- **Identify and recruit qualified support mentors to work with apprentices**
  - identify mentors for apprentices that are familiar with the coursework to help apprentices integrate and apply the information learned through coursework into their work with young children;
  - provide training and on-going support to mentors;
- **Ensure compliance with Vermont DOL’s Registered Apprenticeship Program requirements in relation to apprentices and employer sponsors and work in partnership with DOL program managers for successful implementation**
  - submit required paperwork to the Vermont DOL’s Registered Apprenticeship Program within a timely manner;
  - follow a pre-approved work process and related instruction for the occupation of Child Care Development Specialist; and
  - ensure work with employers meets expected program standards;
- **Establish effective partnerships and work collaboratively with stakeholders such as:**
  - Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children
  - Vermont Child Development Division
  - Community College of Vermont
  - Northern Lights at CCV
  - Vermont Department of Labor

- Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council
- Vermont Agency of Education
- Building Bright Futures Early Learning and Development Committee
- Building Bright Futures Professional Preparation and Development Committee
- Building Bright Futures Regional Councils

#### **4. Reporting and recordkeeping requirements**

The grantee will submit quarterly program performance and financial reports to the grant manager in an electronic format prescribed by the Child Development Division in the contract agreement. Both detailed and aggregate reporting of accomplishments may be required; narrative reporting may be included. Reports will outline progress toward achieving grant-related goals and objectives. Reports will be required to facilitate prompt review of the grantee's accomplishments in support of payment.

#### **5. Applicant Eligibility and Requirements**

Respondents must demonstrate knowledge of the early childhood education, existence of a structure that will support development of this project, existence of partnerships with Vermont's early childhood stakeholders, and ability to manage a statewide project. The CDD review team will prioritize applications that demonstrate experience with early childhood professional development, an existing connection to Vermont's early childhood education workforce, expertise in (or access to) marketing, branding and communications, experience working with child care programs as businesses, experience with mentoring programs, and experience with higher education. The following information should be included in the application:

1. the overall mission of your organization and vision for this program including how it fits in with your organization's existing scope of work/structure;
2. strengths your organization brings to the implementation of this program;
3. information on your organization's experience in implementing a program that operates statewide;
4. description and qualifications of the leadership team and staffing for implementing the program to include number of FTEs in the organization and specifically FTEs dedicated to the project;
5. description of existing partnerships with organizations identified in Section #3, including examples of those partnerships;
6. proposed number of apprentices, mentors and sponsors to be served during the contract period;
7. detailed budget that identifies the full agency budget, the portion of the agency budget represented by this program, and how the funds will be used;
8. fiscal reporting mechanism;
9. references from at least 2 other entities with whom you work/have worked (can be narrative or name/contact information/description of work); and
10. timeline for implementation.

Applications should be no more than 15 pages and submitted using the Vendor Proposal Submission Form located at <https://form.jotform.com/82564589528170>. The application should include a Cover Letter, a narrative on how objectives listed on scope of work will be achieved, and a separate Pricing Response. This RFA does not commit the State of Vermont to pay any costs incurred by any applicant in

the submission of an application. The applicant is responsible for all costs associated with the response to this RFA. The State reserves the right to reject any or all applications at any time with no penalty, to negotiate with any qualified source, or cancel the RFA in part or in its entirety if it is in the best interest of the State of Vermont. This solicitation of applications in no way obligates the State of Vermont to award a contract. All materials submitted in response to the RFA will become the property of the State of Vermont upon delivery.

#### **6. Funding timeline/availability and submission:**

Funds are available beginning July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2021, contingent upon availability of funds.

- Release RFA by January 27, 2020
- Questions submitted by February 15, 2020
- Complete response to RFA submitted by March 15, 2020
- Grant award announced April 1, 2020
- Project start July 1, 2020

All notifications, addendums and responses to questions associated with this RFA will be posted on the CDD website at <https://dcf.vermont.gov>.

Once an agreement is in place, Payments shall be made upon receipt of a written request for payment from the Grantee on a reimbursable basis at the completion of the performance measures. These requests shall be accompanied by reports or other documentation supporting the payment request as outlined in the payment provisions of the grant. Reimbursement payments for Federal subawards shall be made within 30 calendar days after receipt of the billing, unless the request is believed to be improper.

Be advised, the Vermont State Fiscal Year Close Out starts the last week of May/first week of June and runs through early July. During this period of time, no financial reports or invoices are processed for payment in the State of Vermont Vision System.

## 7. Evaluation and Selection

CRITERIA FOR SCORING	Total possible points	Applicant Score
<b>1. INFORMATION FROM THE BIDDER</b>		
<b>A. Quality of Bidder's Experience</b>	<b>25</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bidder demonstrates ability to provide services state-wide.</li> <li>• Bidder demonstrates experience with apprenticeship programs.</li> <li>• Bidder demonstrates knowledge of the early childhood education.</li> <li>• Bidder's experience with the provision of professional development.</li> <li>• Bidder's expertise in or access to marketing, branding and communications.</li> <li>• Experience working with early childhood programs as businesses.</li> <li>• Experience working with higher education.</li> </ul>	8 8 5 1 1 1 1	
<b>B. Bidder's Capacity to Perform</b>	<b>25</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bidder demonstrates an existence of an organizational structure that will support the project.</li> <li>• The bidder demonstrates existence of strong partnerships with Vermont's early childhood stakeholders.</li> <li>• Bidder has an existing connection to Vermont's ECE workforce.</li> <li>• The bidder has experience working with Vermont government agencies and partners.</li> <li>• Bidder demonstrates their commitment and ability to provide a timely and appropriate product.</li> <li>• Bidder demonstrates Organizational Quality.</li> <li>• The bidder has experience managing projects of comparable scale, scope, and complexity.</li> </ul>	10 10 1 1 1 1 1	
<b>2. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL/PROGRAM SPECIFICATIONS</b>		
<b>A. Responsiveness to Specifications</b>	<b>25</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bidder's description of how they will respond to the scope of work contained in section 3 of the Bid.</li> <li>• Bidder's description of resources, materials, etc. that will be developed to support the goals of the project.</li> <li>• Bidder's description of how they will collaborate with CDD and other identified partners.</li> </ul>	10 10 5	
<b>B. Program Cost</b>	<b>25</b>	
<b>Schedule A: Summary Program Costs</b>	<b>15</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completeness and reasonableness of the Bidder's budget which will include project costs, list of positions, % FTE, wages, and fringe, travel/mileage expenses, stipends/incentives and administrative fees.</li> </ul>		
<b>Schedule B: Detail of Expenses</b>	<b>10</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget narratives are clear; provides complete explanations for ALL cost items.</li> </ul>		
<b>OVERALL TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>100</b>	
CRITERIA FOR SCORING	Total possible points	Applicant Score

**8. Contact Person**

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