



SEALED BID

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

MENTOR Vermont: OJJDP Mentoring Opportunities for Youth Initiative - COVID-19 Response Funding

ISSUE DATE: May 4, 2020
BIDDERS' CONFERENCE: May 8, 2020: 2-3pm
QUESTIONS DUE BY: May 12, 2020
RFP RESPONSES DUE BY: May 20, 2020 and 4:30 PM

Please be advised that all notifications, releases, and addendums associated with this RFP will be posted at:

www.mentorvt.org/funding/#2

MENTOR Vermont will make no attempt to contact interested parties with updated information. It is the responsibility of each bidder to periodically check the above webpage for any and all notifications, releases, and addendums associated with this RFP.

MENTOR VERMONT CONTACT: Chad Butt, Executive Director
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1. Introduction

In the fall of 2019, the Vermont Department of Children and Families (DCF) received a three-year, \$1.25 million OJJDP Mentoring Opportunities for Youth Initiative Category 5 grant (OJJDP grant). DCF made a sub-award to MENTOR Vermont to manage the delivery of mentoring programming to underserved rural communities inordinately impacted by the opioid epidemic in four regions of Vermont, the Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, and Southwest, which includes nine counties: Bennington, Caledonia, Essex, Orleans, Franklin, Grand Isle, Rutland, Windham, and Windsor. The original grant goal was to provide evidence-informed mentoring services to rural youth (ages 6 to 17) with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and other known risk factors for substance abuse, including poverty, and to increase the number of active mentoring matches in the regions mentioned above by 200 over three years.

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, MENTOR Vermont and DCF have requested approval from OJJDP to adjust the scope of the grant to support existing mentoring matches in underserved rural communities of Vermont inordinately impacted by the opioid epidemic (the same geographical locations as identified in the original project scope) that have ACES and other known risk factors for substance abuse, including poverty. This population is now at an increased risk during the pandemic, due to lack of access to basic needs like food and internet during school closures relative to their peers. By supporting existing matches, these youth (ages 6-17) will continue to be provided evidence-informed mentoring services and have supportive social environments while being physically separated from their peers and other adults that will reduce the risk of engaging in negative behaviors that can escalate to opioid abuse, juvenile delinquency and youth victimization.

2. Purpose

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is for competitive proposals to be funded through the DCF's OJJDP grant. This RFP is published and administered by MENTOR Vermont. This grant program will run from June 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020.

MENTOR Vermont is requesting proposals from existing mentoring programs in the following regions of Vermont, the Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, and Southwest, which includes nine counties: Bennington, Caledonia, Essex, Orleans, Franklin, Grand Isle, Rutland, Windham, and Windsor, to address the urgent needs of the youth and communities they serve as a result of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Below are criteria of organizations who may qualify for this RFP:

1. Operate an existing adult-to-youth one-to-one mentoring program
2. Meet best practices as outlined in the Quality Mentoring System
3. Provide mentoring services in one or more of the following counties: Bennington, Caledonia, Essex, Orleans, Franklin, Grand Isle, Rutland, Windham, and Windsor

This RFP is intended to fund match support to existing adult-to-youth mentor matches and build organizational capacity and develop organizational improvements to ensure the program can not only maintain the number of mentor matches during this time of physical distancing but help the organization to be poised to expand their program(s) once social distancing guidelines are lifted and in-person mentoring



can resume. Allowable costs for sub-grantees would include: staff time, property expenses, marketing expenses, professional development, and hardware and software needed to build organizational capacity and develop organizational improvements. Additionally, sub-grantees that receive SBA loans through the CARES Act would only be reimbursed for costs that are not covered by their loan.

3. Statement of Work

Sub-grantee organizations will throughout the grant period, at minimum,

- Maintain existing adult-to-youth mentor matches
- Work to best support their mentees and mentors
- Ensure matches continue to stay connected and are meeting remotely or staying connected through other means based on program model
- Ensure that their mentoring program continues to meet all required best practices. A full list of best practices for mentoring as written in the *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring (EEP)* can be found at: www.mentoring.org/images/uploads/Final_Elements_Publication_Fourth.pdf

With the current suspension of in-person mentoring, best practices around match monitoring and support are of particular importance. Proposals should include how mentoring program staff will meet match monitoring and support benchmarks, including but not limited to:

- Contact of mentor, mentee, and parents/guardians monthly (while mentoring program is in session)
- Documentation of date and content of contact with mentor, mentee, and parents/guardians monthly (while mentoring program is in session)
- Mentors documenting information about each mentor-mentee interaction, including, at minimum, date, length, and description of activity completed

4. Reporting and Recordkeeping Requirements

Sub-grantees shall submit accurate and timely programmatic reports to MENTOR Vermont. The reporting schedule is as follows:

Report #	Reporting Period	Due Date
1	06/01/2020-06/30/2020	07/06/2020
2	07/01/2020-07/31/2020	08/06/2020
3	08/01/2020-08/31/2020	09/06/2020
4	09/01/2020-09/30/2020	10/06/2020

Reports will shall include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Total number of active mentor matches served
- b. Match retention rate
- c. Needs of youth during the month
- d. Progress report on programmatic/organizational goals as outlined from sub-grantees' approved proposal
- e. Percent increase in youth enrolled since the beginning of the reporting period
- f. Percent of program youth matched with a mentor
- g. Percent of program youth in matches meeting mentoring program requirements
- h. Percent increase in the number of program mentors recruited



- i. Percent of program mentors successfully completing training
- j. Percent of trained program mentors with increased knowledge of the program area
- k. Mentor retention
- l. Percent of mentoring programs with active partners
- m. Percent of youth with whom an evidence-based program or practice was used
- n. Percent of program youth completing program requirements
- o. Percent of program youth who offend (short term)
- p. Percent of program youth who offend (long term)
- q. Percent of program youth exhibiting a desired change in the targeted behavior (short and long term)
- r. Number and percent of program youth who are victimized (short term)
- s. Number and percent of program youth who are victimized (long term)

Survey & Evaluation Requirements

All sub-grantees will conduct a standardized evaluation of mentees, mentors, and parents/guardians to learn about the impact of maintaining mentoring relationships remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. This standardized survey will be designed by MENTOR Vermont in collaboration with the National Mentoring Resource Center Research Board.

5. Eligibility and Requirements

Respondents should meet the following criteria:

- 1. Operate an existing adult-to-youth one-to-one mentoring program
- 2. Meet best practices as outlined in the Quality Mentoring System
- 3. Provide mentoring services in one or more of the following counties: Bennington, Caledonia, Essex, Orleans, Franklin, Grand Isle, Rutland, Windham, and Windsor

The RFP review committee will prioritize proposals that demonstrate a current need for financial assistance and a clear vision for how their organization is adjusting during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic to find ways to best support their mentees and mentors and ensure matches continue to stay connected and meeting in remotely. Additionally, the review committee will prioritize organizations that have previously partnered with MENTOR Vermont, have a proven track record of meeting grant goals and reporting requirements, and have demonstrated the ability to appropriately handle Federal funding.

6. Funding Timeline/Availability and Submission

The maximum award amount is \$50,000. The award period is June 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020. Funds are contingent on final approval from OJJDP for MENTOR Vermont and DCF's change of scope request.

Bidders Conference

A non-mandatory bidder's conference will be held via GoToMeeting on the date and time indicated on the first page of this RFP. All potential bidders wishing to attend must send an e-mail to the point of contact on the front page of this RFP and shall then be provided call-in details. This conference will be recorded and available at the link listed on the front page of this RFP within 48 hours of completion.



Questions and Answer Period

Any potential bidder requiring clarification of any section of this RFP or wishing to comment on any requirement of the RFP must submit specific questions in writing no later than the deadline for questions indicated on the first page of this RFP. Questions may be e-mailed to the point of contact on the front page of this RFP. Questions or comments not raised in writing on or before the last day of the question period are thereafter waived. At the close of the question period, a copy of all questions or comments and MENTOR Vermont's responses will be posted on the website listed on the front page of this RFP. Every effort will be made to post this information as soon as possible after the question period ends, contingent on the number and complexity of the questions.

Award Payment Terms

This is a reimbursement grant. All invoices with all applicable supporting documentation are to be rendered by the sub-grantees on the vendor's standard billhead and e-mailed to the point of contact on the front page of this RFP. MENTOR Vermont will review all invoices and materials before submitting to the State. The State's payment terms to MENTOR Vermont are net 30 days from receipt of an error-free invoice with all applicable supporting documentation. Once MENTOR Vermont receives payment from the State, payment will be sent to subrecipients within seven days. If requested due to sub-grantees' cash flow needs, MENTOR Vermont will consider expediting payment prior to receiving payment from the State. This will be considered on a case by case basis.

Sub-grantees shall request monthly payments per the scheduled as noted below by submitting a Financial Reporting & Request for Grant Funds form. Payment requests must report on the prior month's actual expenditures.

Report #	Reporting Period	Due Date
1	06/01/2020-06/30/2020	07/06/2020
2	07/01/2020-07/31/2020	08/06/2020
3	08/01/2020-08/31/2020	09/06/2020
4	09/01/2020-09/30/2020	10/06/2020

Allowable expenses

Allowable expenses for sub-grantees include: staff time, property expenses, marketing expenses, professional development, and hardware and software needed to build organizational capacity and develop organizational improvements. Sub-grantees that operate programming in counties both inside and outside of the defined geographic area of this grant (Bennington, Caledonia, Essex, Orleans, Franklin, Grand Isle, Rutland, Windham, and Windsor Counties) may only include the expenses noted above for the programming in the defined counties supported by this grant.

Allowable expenses will be reimbursed from the period of time once the sub-grantees returns and receives back a signed copy of award contract through September 30, 2020 in the manner outlined above.

Additionally, sub-grantees that receive other Federal funds must not assign expenses that are covered by other secured Federal funding to this project. These sources may include but are not limited to:

- SBA 7 loans through the CARES Act



- Other OJJDP grant funding
- AmeriCorps grant funding

7. Submission Instructions

The content and format requirements listed below are the minimum requirements for evaluation. These requirements are not intended to limit the content of a bidder's proposal. Bidders may include additional information or offer alternative solutions for the consideration. However, MENTOR Vermont discourages overly lengthy and costly proposals, and bidders are advised to include only such information in their response as may be relevant to the requirements of this RFP.

Bidders must demonstrate how they meet the eligibility criteria and any potential priority consideration. The following information must be included in the bidder's proposal:

- Technical Response: (no more than five pages)
 - Provide details concerning their organization, size, structure and resources.
 - Current need
 - Programmatic adjustments in process or planned to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic
 - Systems in place to ensure best practices are met with a specific focus on monitoring and support
- Financials
 - Current fiscal year budget vs. actuals
 - Detailed budget that demonstrates how funds will be spent between June 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020
 - Budget narrative

Proposals should be submitted via email by the time and date indicated on the front page of this RFP (late applications will not be accepted) to the attention of Chad Butt; contact information is provided on the first page of this RFP. This RFP does not commit MENTOR Vermont to pay any costs incurred by any bidder in the submission of a proposal. The bidder is responsible for all costs associated with the response to this RFP. MENTOR Vermont reserves the right to reject any or all applications at any time with no penalty, to negotiate with any qualified source, or cancel the RFP in part or in its entirety if it is in the best interest of MENTOR Vermont. This solicitation of proposals in no way obligates MENTOR Vermont to award a contract.

8. Evaluation and Selection

CRITERIA FOR SCORING	Total possible points	Applicant Score
1. INFORMATION FROM THE BIDDER		
A. Quality of Bidder’s Experience	30	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bidder demonstrates expertise in the formal adult-to-youth mentoring field. Bidder demonstrates history of meeting best practices of mentoring. Bidder demonstrates experience and ability to manage Federal funding and reporting requirements. The bidder has history of successfully working with MENTOR Vermont. 	10 10 5 5	
B. Bidder’s Capacity to Perform	20	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bidder demonstrates existence of a structure that will support objectives of the RFP. Bidder demonstrates experience of meeting grant goals and reporting requirements. Bidder demonstrates organizational quality. 	10 5 5	
2. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL/PROGRAM SPECIFICATIONS		
A. Responsiveness to Specifications	30	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bidder’s description of current organizational need. Bidder’s description of how they will respond to the scope of work contained in section 3 of the RFP. Bidder’s description of how they will ensure that they will continue to meet best practices. 	10 15 5	
B. Program Cost	20	
Summary Program Costs		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completeness and reasonableness of the Bidder’s budget, which will include project costs, list of positions, % FTE, wages, fringe, travel/mileage expenses, and administrative fees. 	15	
Detail of Expenses		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget narrative is clear and complete explanations for all cost items. 	5	
OVERALL TOTAL SCORE	100	



9. Contact Person

All communication concerning this RFP and submission of all electronic applications shall be directed to the attention of:

Chad Butt
Chad@mentorvt.org
802-999-6807