Request for Proposals:

Drug Checking & Emerging Drug Trends Consultant

Date Issued:
December 7, 2023 | 5:00 p.m. ET

Due Date:
January 19, 2024 | 5:00 p.m. ET

CDC FOUNDATION CONTACT
Meghan Durr
Emergency Response Officer
mdurr@cdcfoundation.org
Summary of Request:

The CDC Foundation seeks a consultant to propose and develop an interactive training and/or guide for the Overdose Response Strategy (ORS) program in effort to better understand the implication of drug checking programs across different states.

1. ABOUT THE CDC FOUNDATION

The CDC Foundation helps CDC save and improve lives by unleashing the power of collaboration between CDC, philanthropies, corporations, organizations and individuals to protect the health, safety and security of America and the world. The CDC Foundation is the go-to nonprofit authorized by Congress to mobilize philanthropic partners and private-sector resources to support CDC’s critical health protection mission. The CDC Foundation manages hundreds of programs each year impacting a variety of health threats from chronic disease conditions including cardiovascular disease and cancer, to infectious diseases like rotavirus and HIV, to emergency responses, including COVID-19 and Ebola. Visit www.cdcfoundation.org for more information.

2. BACKGROUND AND NEED

The ORS is a program designed to enhance public health-public safety collaboration and strengthen efforts to reduce drug overdose deaths. The ORS is funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to help communities reduce fatal and non-fatal drug overdose rates by improved information sharing across public health and public safety agencies, and by supporting evidence-based interventions.

The program is implemented by teams made up of Public Health Analysts (PHA) and Drug Intelligence Officers (DIO) who work together on drug overdose issues within and across sectors, states, and territories. PHA positions are funded by the CDC through the CDC Foundation, and DIO positions are funded by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) through the HIDTA program. These teams serve as the foundation of the ORS, creating opportunities across public health and public safety sectors to share data, insights and trends related to drug overdose in communities across the nation. They simultaneously promote public health and public safety efforts, which allows for a wide range of drug overdose issues to be addressed more effectively and efficiently. By doing so, the ORS is growing the body of evidence related to early warning signs and prevention strategies. With the information shared, and programs inspired by the ORS, the program is helping communities develop solutions to reduce overdoses and encouraging individuals to make healthier, safer choices.

As the ORS continues to expand and the drug landscape continues to evolve, ORS teams have been adapting the activities and projects they are completing within their
state. With the changing drug environment, more subject matter expertise is needed, including understanding the value and range of approaches for drug checking initiatives. Many ORS teams have been adapting their work as a result of modifications in state laws which increases access to drug checking equipment, and have identified a need to understand the purpose of a drug checking program, best practices surrounding drug checking, and how this is a meaningful tool to save lives while simultaneously gaining a better understanding of the local drug supply.

### 3. Scope of Work

The CDC Foundation is seeking a Drug Checking and Emerging Drug Trends consultant to deliver technical assistance to ORS teams, and offer a comprehensive skill-building education pertaining to drug checking programs and emerging drug trends. The consultant activities will include conducting a needs assessment for the ORS program, which will inform the creation of tools designed to enhance teams understanding and practical implementation of drug checking programs. The consultant will provide education to ORS teams on the development of protocols and frameworks for the integration of drug checking initiatives into public health and safety monitoring systems.

#### 3.1 Activities Involved

The activities involved include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Assessing ORS teams current knowledge of drug checking programs and their relationship to understanding emerging drug trends. Identify and propose solutions that would best meet the needs of ORS teams based on assessment.
- Develop a guide/interactive training to explain the importance of a drug checking program, and what the implementation of a drug checking program would require. This may include topics such as:
  - Establishment of partnerships and stakeholders
  - Selecting and establishing appropriate testing sites and facilities, developing protocols for sample collection, testing, and disseminating results
  - Overview of common and advanced analytical technologies/methods for drug testing
  - Success stories and lessons learned
- Presentations to educate ORS teams on crafting guidance and messaging related to emerging drug trends, and integrating drug checking into public health and safety monitoring systems.
3.2 Deliverables/Expectations

- Conduct a needs assessment to understand teams and partners knowledge of drug checking programs to inform interventions; provide summary report on results
- Support the design, implementation, and evaluation of skill building technical assistance for ORS teams (i.e., training/webinar series, in-person presentation or workshop, guidance documents, toolkit, office hours, etc.)
- Conduct post-assessment and provide summary report on results with future recommendations for sustainability
- In-person presentation in Dallas, Texas for the Annual ORS National Conference May 14-16, 2024 (travel funds will be included in MPA).
- Bi-weekly meetings with selected members of the ORS National Team
- Monthly program narrative reports
- Monthly detailed financial reports on expenditures

4. **KEY REQUIREMENTS**

4.1 Eligibility

Applicants must meet all of the following eligibility criteria:

- Be in good financial standing and have sustainable operations.
- Be an equal opportunity employer with all-inclusive membership that does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race/ethnicity, color, sex, sexual orientation, country of national origin or nationality, age, religion, intellectual or physical disabilities and military or veteran status in its activities or operations.
- Vendor status verification: U.S. System Award Management (SAM), or equivalent, search results for overall organization and individuals designated to this proposal.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Hold a degree specializing in public health, toxicology, pharmacy, epidemiology, forensic science, or related field with demonstrated experience in related areas.
- Experience in working with drug checking programs and community level organizations as it pertains to the operation of drug checking programs, and are able to speak to the operational dynamics of how these programs operate.
- Experience or interest working with public health and public safety sectors.
- Ability to travel to Dallas, Texas for the Annual ORS National Conference May 14-16, 2024 (travel funds will be included in MPA).

4.2 Funds Available

CDC Foundation intends to award one contract for a five-month term (beginning in February 2024 through the end of June 2024). However, the CDC Foundation may be flexible on these dates should the desired solution require more time. Bidders are requested to propose the best and most cost-effective solution to meet the RFP’s requirements, while ensuring a high level of service.

The anticipated Maximum Payable Amount (MPA) for this contract is $55,000. Bidders may propose a fee that exceeds the anticipated MPA if it is required to deliver its proposed solution for the scope of work. CDC Foundation will consider proposals meeting the proposal requirements from eligible bidders with a budget that exceeds the anticipated MPA.

The final award amount is contingent on submission of a detailed and reasonable budget to be approved by the CDC Foundation. CDC Foundation reserves the option to negotiate a best and final offer from bidders.

4.3 Funding Source

The agreement resulting from this RFP will be supported by Federal funding under the Capacity Building for Public Health Analysts in the Overdose Response Strategy project via Cooperative Agreement number 6 NU38OT000288-03-01 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The CDC foundation anticipates that award(s) resulting from this solicitation will meet the criteria of “Consultant” as defined by 2 CFR 200.331; a final determination will be made at the time of award.

4.4. Place of Performance

The consultant will carry out tasks at their office and work with the CDC Foundation virtually during normal business hours, Monday-Friday from 9:00am - 5:00pm ET.

4.5. Performance Monitoring

The performance will be monitored in line with the agreed project plan, monthly progress reports, detailed financial reports on expenditures and through scheduled bi-weekly check-ins. The consultant will be expected to work in close collaboration and consultation with the CDC Foundation and the ORS Public Health and Public Safety Team working on this project. The plan for each deliverable will be an important part of the overall project plan.
4.6 Payment

CDC Foundation will pay the consultant a fee not to exceed a Maximum Payable Amount (MPA) or ceiling price. The MPA will be based on the fee proposed and awarded and will be negotiated as part of the resulting contract.

CDC Foundation requests bidders include the proposed fee structure (e.g., hourly rates, firm fixed price) in their proposal. CDC Foundation reserves the right to negotiate the fee structure.

5. INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICANTS

Applicants should follow the instructions set forth below in the submission of their proposal to the CDC Foundation.

CDC Foundation will not be responsible for any proposal which does not follow the instructions in this RFP, and may, at its discretion, reject any such non-compliant proposal.

Communications during the RFP Period

Applicants may submit questions related to this RFP until 5:00pm ET on January 12, 2024 via the Question Submission form in the RFP Dashboard. All questions will be responded to in an RFP supplement to be posted on the RFP Dashboard within one business day after the closing of the question period. Once the RFP supplement is posted the CDC Foundation will no longer be able to respond to questions regarding the RFP.

Submission of Proposals

Please submit your proposal in the RFP Submission Link by 5:00pm ET on January 19, 2024 Submissions after this date and time may not be considered.

- Documents requested for the proposal should be attached to the RFP Submission Smartsheet form (multiple documents may be attached).

The CDC Foundation is committed to providing accessibility for people with disabilities and is working towards making our materials more accessible. If this document presents accessibility challenges, please email mdurr@cdcfoundation.org with the subject line “Accessibility assistance.” We will gladly work with you on providing the information in a different format.
Proposal Requirements:

The following information should be combined into one PDF document and submitted in the file upload section of the proposal submission form:

1. Organization Information & Cover Letter:
   - **Organization Information**
     - Legal Organization Name
     - Point of Contact Name, Title, Email, Phone Number
     - Street Address
     - City, State, Zip Code
     - Website
     - Mission
     - Year Established
     - Federal Tax Identification (ID) Number/ Employer Identification Number (EIN)
     - Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number
     - SAM Unique Entity ID (UEI)
     - Business Classifications
   - **Cover Letter (max 1 page)**
     - Includes expression of interest in the opportunity

2. Capacity Statement
   a. Capacity Statement
      i. This section should include examples of how you meet the following criteria:
         1. Demonstrated experience working with drug checking program implementation.
         2. Demonstrated expertise in assessing emerging drug trends.
         3. Recent experience working with public health and public safety agencies.
   b. CVs/Resumes of Key Project Personnel
      i. Please attach CVs/Resumes of all key personnel that will be work on this contract.

3. Proposal Narrative (no page limit)
   a. Proposed Approach
      i. This section should include your descriptive approach to completing the contract activities listed in Section 3.1, demonstrating a clear understanding of the ORS program in effort to highlight proficiency in task execution.
      ii. This section should also include a timeline for project implementation, inclusive of preparation, review time and delivery.
      iii. This section should also include examples of previous work completed on this topic (i.e., presentation slides, toolkits, materials, etc.)
4. Required Attachments (no page limit):
   a. Detailed Budget
      i. A detailed budget should be submitted using the Excel template located in the RFP dashboard.
   b. Budget Narrative
      i. Budget narrative should include itemized budget aligning with the proposed approach of the submitted proposal. All activities, associated costs and justification should be identified separately.

5.1 Selection Process and Review Criteria

Each response will be evaluated on the qualifications, expertise, proposed solution and reasonableness of cost. The following outlines the criteria that reviewers will use to guide their evaluation of each application.

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<tr>
<th>Proposal Section</th>
<th>Selection Criteria</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization Information and Cover Letter</td>
<td>● Organization information</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>● Cover letter includes contact information and shows interest in opportunity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capacity Statement</td>
<td>● Demonstrated relevant work experience and capacity to complete the work outlined in the RFP.</td>
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<td>● CVs/Resumes show professional experience and education that reflects knowledge and ability in subject matter expertise.</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<td>Proposed Narrative</td>
<td>● The appropriateness and quality of the proposed approach.</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>● The appropriateness of the timeline for implementation.</td>
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<td>● Demonstrated subject matter expertise provided through work examples</td>
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<td>Budget &amp; Budget Narrative</td>
<td>● Reasonableness of proposed rate and total amount.</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>● Budget should be detailed and justifiable.</td>
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The CDC Foundation will conduct a pre-award risk assessment and may request additional financial and/or organizational information from applicants for the purpose of conducting the assessment. Pre-award risk assessment findings may impact eligibility and/or award structure and payment schedule.
All applicants will receive notification of whether their proposal was selected for funding. The CDC Foundation will not provide scores or specific review feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

### 5.2 Evaluation Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 7, 2023</td>
<td>RFP Release</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 12, 2024</td>
<td>RFP Question Submission Deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 15, 2024</td>
<td>RFP Question and Answer Supplement Posted</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 19, 2024, 5:00pm ET</td>
<td>Proposal Submission Deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 29 – February 2, 2024</td>
<td>Interviews (subject to change)</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 5, 2024</td>
<td>Anticipated Selection Notification</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 15, 2024</td>
<td>Contract kickoff</td>
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