

## State Education Resource Center (SERC)

### Request for Proposals (RFP) for Connecticut's African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Course of Studies Implementation (Round 4)

SERC RFP Number: BLC 082024

Agency: State Education Resource Center (SERC)

Contact Person: Michelle Weaver

#### Proposal Schedule:

Release of RFP by electronic means at <a href="#">CTsource</a> and <a href="http://www.ctserc.org/pa19-12">www.ctserc.org/pa19-12</a>	<b>12:00 pm ET on Wednesday, August 14, 2024</b>
Receipt of questions	<b>9:00 am ET on Wednesday, August 21, 2024</b>
Answers to questions to be posted as an addendum on at <a href="#">CTsource</a> , and <a href="http://www.ctserc.org/pa19-12">www.ctserc.org/pa19-12</a>	<b>4:00 pm ET on Friday, August 23, 2024</b>
Proposal due date	<b>9:00 am ET on Friday, September 6, 2024</b>
Award announcement	<b>4:00 pm ET by Friday, September 20, 2024</b>

The State Education Resource Center (SERC) is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. SERC does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, intellectual disability, past or present history of mental disorder, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. SERC does not unlawfully discriminate in employment against qualified persons with a prior criminal conviction. Inquiries regarding SERC's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to:

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## About SERC

The State Education Resource Center (SERC) was established over 50 years ago as a “focal point of action and communication for special education personnel from throughout the state” of Connecticut (CT State Department of Education newsletter, October 1969). We have served local school districts, state-level policymakers, families, community agencies, and other stakeholders by facilitating professional learning, including technical assistance and training; providing resources, in part through a centralized library, and leading a range of other activities and supports over our five decades in operation.

As we evolved, SERC was statutorily tasked to serve the CT State Board of Education and led the ongoing effort to integrate special and general education, historically divided systems, into a unified approach to education that promotes equitable policies, culturally relevant practices, and accessible structures that develop successful learning communities within schools. We became a state quasi-public agency in 2014, recognizing our unique position to work closely with communities across Connecticut.

All the agency’s efforts are designed to address educational equity and opportunity gaps. SERC’s consultants and staff, in collaboration with our partners, build the capacity of educators, service providers, and families to meet the diverse needs of our student population.

SERC recognizes that to be effective in facilitating change that is systemic, results-based, and enduring, all stakeholders must be included in the change process. Through partnerships with us, education systems shape their own transformation while SERC facilitates the process and customizes application of research and new thinking. SERC maintains many ongoing, years-long relationships with local education agencies and organizations and offers continued support to foster and sustain systemic change.

Through this work, SERC is committed to its vision of equity, excellence, and education.

## Overview and Purpose

On June 23, 2021, CT PA 21-2 identified SERC as the lead organization for coordination and provision of professional learning and implementation support for CT’s African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Course of Studies.

SERC is seeking competitive proposals from qualified and interested organizations or individuals with proven expertise and experience in external evaluation.

## Components and Deliverables

The project will span from execution of contract until June 30, 2025, with potential for continuation through June 30, 2026, and will include the following components:

<b>Component</b>	<b>Description of Expectations/Deliverables</b>	<b>Proposer Qualifications</b>
External Evaluation	<p>An External Evaluation is being sought for the 2024-2025 school year with schools/programs implementing Connecticut’s African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Course of Studies with a minimum of one year of implementation prior to this school year to inform the next phase of curriculum development and professional learning. Deliverables should include, but are not limited to: development, gathering, aggregation, disaggregation, and analysis of pre-, mid-, and post-student knowledge and skills assessments; and development, gathering, aggregation, disaggregation and analysis of end-of-unit and semester feedback from students, teachers, families, administrators, and coaches. It is expected all proposed research questions, evaluation methods, and timelines will be finalized in collaboration with the CSDE/SERC Project Team.</p> <p>Key areas of interest include but are not limited to: improved 21<sup>st</sup> century skills reflective of school/program portraits of a graduate, content knowledge, and identity development; improved teacher content knowledge, culturally relevant pedagogy, and implementation of model curriculum.</p>	Expertise and experience with external evaluation and mixed methods.

**Required Minimum Qualifications for Consideration**

1. Expertise with African American/Black and/or Puerto Rican/Latino studies.
2. Experience with K-12 curriculum design and development.
3. Experience with high school curriculum implementation and working with a diverse population of schools, educators, and learners, including students with disabilities and multilingual learners.
4. Capacity for independent coordination and interagency collaboration.
5. Flexible availability throughout contract period.

**Proposal Requirements**

- I. A separate proposal must be submitted for each organization applying. The cover page must include:
  - organization name and address
  - contact name, phone, and email

II. All proposals must include the following required information as outlined. Failure to include the required information will result in disqualification of the proposal from being read/scored:

A. Description of organization's evidence of (see minimum qualifications above):

1. Expertise;
2. Experience;
3. Capacity, and;
4. Availability.

B. Outline of the planned methodology and activities in relation to expectations (see description above), including a minimum sample size of 12 schools/programs and timeline for completion of scope of work and deliverables.

C. Itemized budget with separate costs for each deliverable.

III. All proposals must follow the required format below. Failure to follow the required format will result in disqualification of proposal from being read/scored:

- All pages must be numbered.
- Page Limit: 15, including cover page and appendices
- Page Size: 8 ½ x 11, portrait
- Font Type: Calibri or similar
- Font Size: 12
- Double-spaced (except tables)
- Margins: .75" minimum on the top, bottom, and sides of all pages
- Do not use material in proposals dependent on color distinctions, animation, hyperlinks, etc.
- Do not include attachments other than those requested or required by this RFP.
- Email a single PDF with the organization name included in the file name (e.g., "OrganizationName"\_BLC0824) to [rfp@ctserc.org](mailto:rfp@ctserc.org) with the subject "BLC 0824" by the deadline.

## Instructions for Proposers

### I. Contact Limitation

During the period from an organization’s receipt of this RFP until the Award Announcement is made and a contract is awarded, the organization **shall not contact** any employee of SERC or the CSDE for additional information **except in writing directed to [rfp@ctserc.org](mailto:rfp@ctserc.org)**.

### II. Questions

Questions for the purposes of clarifying the RFP must be submitted **in writing by email to [rfp@ctserc.org](mailto:rfp@ctserc.org)** and must be received no later than **9:00 am, Wednesday, August 21, 2024**.

Questions and responses will be posted as an **“Addendum to RFP for the African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Course of Studies Implementation”** by **4:00 pm Friday, August 23, 2024**. Please note that submission of questions for response does not in any way enhance or guarantee the chances of receiving a contract through this proposal.

### III. Proposal Submission

All responses to this solicitation must be submitted via email **in single PDF format to [rfp@ctserc.org](mailto:rfp@ctserc.org)** no later than **9:00 am on Friday, September 6, 2024**. Any proposals received after this time will result in disqualification of proposal from being read/scored.

## Selection Criteria

All proposals will be blinded, double-scored (i.e., not met, somewhat met, fully met), and averaged. If the average score is equal to or within one point of another proposal, both proposals will be triple-scored and the average of the highest two scores will be used. Selections for each component will be based on the highest-ranked proposals with scores above 50.

Criteria for Evaluation of Proposals	Percent of Score
1. Demonstrated capacity and expertise.	<b>35%</b>
a. Proposer has provided a detailed description of the organization’s capacity and leadership for this project.	0-10 points
b. Proposer has documented a clear explanation of staff expertise and experience for this project.	0-10 points
c. Proposer clearly demonstrates staff capacity and availability to manage the project.	0-15 points

2. Understanding of the project via specifications of bid.	<b>45%</b>
a. Proposer has submitted detailed description of the planned methodology, sample size, and activities, including a timeline for completing scope of work and deliverables.	0-15 points
b. Proposer demonstrates a thorough understanding of expectations and willingness to collaborate with SERC and the CSDE on design.	0-15 points
c. Proposer has articulated a purposeful and thoughtful plan for high school application.	0-15 points
3. Reasonability of cost related to expected products and services.	<b>20%</b>
a. Cost considered reasonable considering funding available (up to \$75,000).	0-10 points
b. Deliverables are itemized separately from total cost.	0-10 points
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

## General Information

### I. Contract Period

The contract period shall begin upon execution of contract through June 30, 2025. SERC reserves the right to offer an extension to this contract.

### II. Contract Award

SERC reserves the right to award the contract in a manner deemed to be in the best interests of SERC to meet its legislative requirement.

### III. Stability of Proposed Prices

Any price offerings from proposers must be valid for a period of 30 days from the due date of the proposals.

### IV. Amendment or Cancellation of the RFP

SERC reserves the right to cancel, amend, modify, or otherwise change this RFP at any time if it deems it to be in the best interests of SERC to meet its legislative requirement.

### V. Proposal Modifications

No additions or changes to any proposal will be allowed after the proposal due date, unless such modification is specifically requested by SERC. SERC, at its option, may seek proposer retraction and clarification of any discrepancy or contradiction found during its review of proposals.

## **VI. Proposer Presentation of Supporting Evidence**

Proposers must be prepared to provide any evidence of expertise, experience, performance, ability, and/or financial surety that SERC deems to be necessary or appropriate to fully establish the qualifications represented in the proposal.

## **VII. Proposer Demonstration of Proposed Services and/or Products**

Proposers must be able to confirm their ability to provide all proposed services.

## **VIII. Erroneous Awards**

SERC reserves the right to correct inaccurate awards. This includes revoking the awarding of a contract to a proposer and subsequently awarding the contract to a different proposer. Such action shall not constitute a breach of contract on the part of SERC because the contract with the initial proposer will be deemed voided as if no contract were ever in place.

## **IX. Proposal Expenses**

Proposers are responsible for all costs and expenses incurred in the preparation of proposals and for any subsequent work on the proposal that is required.

## **X. Ownership of Proposals**

All proposals shall become the property of SERC.

## **XI. Ownership of Subsequent Products**

Any product, whether acceptable or unacceptable, developed under a contract awarded as a result of this RFP shall be the sole property of SERC and the CSDE unless otherwise stated in the contract.

## **XII. Oral Agreement or Arrangements**

Any alleged oral agreements or arrangements made by proposers with SERC will be disregarded in any proposal evaluation or associated award.

## **XIII. Not a Contract**

This RFP is not a contract and, alone, shall not be interpreted as such. Rather, this RFP serves only as the instrument through which proposals are solicited. SERC will pursue negotiations with the highest-scoring proposal. If, for some reason, SERC and the initial proposer fail to reach consensus on the issues relative to a contract, then SERC may commence contract negotiations with other proposers. SERC may decide at any time to start the RFP process again.

The selected proposer will be required to sign a formal contract. The contract may include a liquidated damages clause at the discretion of SERC, in addition to other relevant clauses.



**XIV. Subcontractors**

SERC prohibits the use of any subcontractors by the successful proposer. Proposers acknowledge by the act of submitting a proposal that any work provided under the contract is work conducted by the proposer on behalf of SERC and the CSDE.

**XV. Accounting Procedures**

Generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) or another acceptable accounting method must be utilized.