



The State Education Resource Center (SERC)

**Request for Proposals (RFP) for
Project Management, Professional Development Design and
Implementation and Program Evaluation related to the
Individualized Education Program (IEP) Form**

SERC RFP Number: IEP001032020
The State Education Resource Center (SERC)
Procurement Contact: *Stephen Proffitt*

Release of RFP by electronic means on the SERC website at ctserc.org	Tuesday, March 3, 2020
Receipt of questions	By 12 p.m. on Wednesday, March 11, 2020
Answers to questions will be posted as an Addendum on the SERC website	By 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 17, 2020
Proposal due date	By 4:00 p.m. on Friday, March 20, 2020
Award Announcement	Tuesday, March 31, 2020

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 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 of 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, effective, 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 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

The Connecticut State Department of Education plans to implement a new Individualized Education Program (IEP) Form and Special Education Data System (SEDS) in 2022-2023.

The State Education Resource Center (SERC) is seeking competitive proposals from qualified and interested organizations with proven experience in providing training and technical assistance in the area of special education to support educators in Connecticut during the SEDS piloting and implementation period of the new IEP Form from April 1, 2020 through June 30, 2025, by providing the following services:

1. Project management and leadership for the development and implementation of statewide training for all Connecticut educators who serve students identified as requiring special education services ages 3-21 (approximately 82,000 students);
2. Development and implementation of a technical assistance (TA) model for implementation at the school or district levels and training of in-state TA providers;
3. Program evaluation to measure the fidelity and quality of training and TA supporting the new IEP; and
4. Collaboration with identified SEDS vendor to align training on the use of data system.

Statewide training and professional development to support the IEP implementation must be initiated statewide during the 2021-2022 school year and continue through 2024-2025.

There are approximately 51,000 certified educators serving in all certification areas across Connecticut and approximately 82,000 students with disabilities requiring an IEP.

The training audience includes educators involved with developing, implementing, and monitoring progress for IEPs, including members of the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) (e.g., Special Educators, General Educators, Related Services Personnel, Administrators, etc.).

Target Audience		Approximate N
Special Education Teachers		≈ 6000
Administrators (General Education and Special Education) School and District Level		≈ 3500
Speech and Language Pathologists		≈ 1200
Counselors, School Social Workers, School Psychologists		≈ 3400
	TOTAL	≈ 14100

The overarching goal of SERC and the CSDE is to support the field in developing, implementing and monitoring quality IEPs for improved student outcomes, throughout the period of transitioning to a new IEP form and IEP data management system.

Scope of Proposed Work

The scope of work will span from execution of contract in the spring of 2020 through June 30, 2025. The graphic below shows a tentative five year timeline for the range of activities to which the vendor is asked to respond, with a proposal for execution of these major components and the cost associated with each.

Timeline and Tentative Overarching Deliverables



Proposed Training Deliverables:

Training Focus	Approx Delivery Time	Delivery Mode
Developing IEP Sections	1.5 days	in-person
Documenting Progress Monitoring for IEP G&O	.5 days	in-person
Writing Accommodations/Modifications	45 minute	interactive on-line module
Transition Planning in the IEP (postsecondary)	45 minute	interactive on-line module
Pre-K Considerations	45 minute	interactive on-line module
Prior Written Notice with New IEP	45 minute	interactive on-line module
Orientation to New IEP for Parents/Families and Overview of the PPT Process	45 minute	interactive on-line module

Deliverables and Associated Tasks

Deliverables	Tasks
1. Project Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Coordinate communications, meetings and timelines between SERC and CSDE for overall project management and check-in calls related to deliverables and budget b) Coordinate task level communications, meetings and timelines with SERC, CSDE and other stakeholders as involved in development, piloting and implementation of tasks c) Coordinate with subcontractors as necessary for the development, staging and production of deliverables
2. Develop in-person training session content for educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d) Coordinate and schedule design team meetings e) Track assignments for design team training review and due dates f) Collect and compile reviewed materials g) Present recommendations for redesign or new design of in-person sessions h) Draft and refine training materials for in-person trainings (slides, resources, website URLs, create exemplars and non-exemplars for use in training, etc.) i) Observe a sample of pilot in-person training sessions for purposes of informing further revision and refinement of training materials j) Assist in the development of materials for the training of trainers (TOT) sessions k) Evaluate training delivery and provide trainers feedback l) Assist in the training of two trainers from each of the (approx. 30) Priority and Alliance Districts (high-needs) m) Assist in statewide implementation and review and compile participant feedback on training quality n) Conduct focused on-line or phone interviews with district special education directors around satisfaction with training quality, availability and additional needs
3. Develop, pilot and implement on-line interactive training modules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Develop with design team the required content to be delivered via on-line modules b) Embed checks for understanding and report areas of confusion reported by users c) Develop webinars to be posted to SERC website including login manager to track user access history and ability to generate use reports broken down by school district, school

Deliverables	Tasks
	<p>and role of user (administrator, special education teacher, general education teacher, parent, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d) Develop accompanying materials, slides, resources and trainer guides for school districts choosing to use modules for guided group trainings e) Prepare and beta (pilot) test on-line modules with trainers, sample of educators and parents in selected pilot districts f) Revise webinars as determined by design team and based on user feedback g) Implement “go-live” with on-line webinars to accommodate projected numbers of users and prevent system crashing h) Provide technical support for glitches in on-line webinar implementation through end of contract i) Train staff at SERC to manage platform used to develop webinars for eventual handover of maintenance j) Collect and summarize evaluation feedback for on-line webinars
4. Develop technical assistance plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) In collaboration with SERC, CSDE, and other stakeholders, develop a technical assistance plan and materials to provide district-based educators with targeted assistance in developing, implementing and monitoring progress of quality IEPs b) Train in-state TA providers to facilitate support sessions for district-based educators either in-person or virtually
5. Design and implement program evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Propose evaluation design based on key questions to be answered about (1) training, (2) technical assistance and (3) implementation of the new IEP b) Identify additional resources needed to improve implementation of IEP c) Provide SERC and CSDE with report on perception and satisfaction of the support of the implementation of the new IEP in years 2022-2025 d) Prepare final evaluation report of initiative and recommendations for subsequent training needs and quality improvements for 2025 and beyond

Upon completion of the project, SERC and CSDE will retain ownership rights all training materials and licenses used to develop training content.

Proposal Requirements

I. The proposal must include the required information in the following sections:

- A. Description of your firm's expertise and institutional capacity
- B. Detailed description of the firm's organizational information.
- C. Detailed description of the methodology and procedures, including a timeline for completing the deliverables;
- D. Detailed budget for entire project implementation, with separate costs for each identified set of deliverables.

II. Required format for proposals:

All proposals must follow the required format. Failure to follow the required format may result in disqualification of a proposal:

- Page Limit: 12 including cover page
- Page Size: 8 ½ x 11: portrait
- Font Size: 12
- Font Type: Times New Roman
- Double-spaced
- Margins: 1" minimum on the top, bottom, and sides of all pages
- All pages must be numbered.
- Do not use material in proposals dependent on color distinctions, animated electronics, etc.
- Do not include attachments other than those requested or required by this RFP.

Submit a single pdf that includes the documentation referenced in Paragraph I of Proposal Requirements to <https://ctserc.net/ieprfp>.

Selection Criteria

A selection committee will review and score all proposals. Reviewers will consider the quality, thoroughness, and clarity of each bidder’s response in reference to:

- A. Demonstrated expertise and institutional capacity (30% of overall score);
- B. Understanding of project via specifications of bid (20% of overall score);
- C. Availability and competence of project personnel (30% of overall score); and
- D. Reasonability of Cost (20% of overall score).

Criteria for Evaluation of Proposal	Total Possible Score
1. The bidder's demonstrated expertise and institutional capacity to perform tasks related to project management, professional development design, piloting, technical assistance and program evaluation of training related to the new IEP Form.	30
2. The bidder's understanding of the project as demonstrated by the presence of clear specifications for procedures related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Project management of communications, meetings, documentation of deliverables, status checks and delivery of products; b. Developing in-person training session content and facilitating training of trainers for in-state trainers; c. Developing, piloting and implementing on-line interactive training modules; d. Developing technical assistance plan and training in-state TA providers; and e. Designing and implementing and reporting on the program evaluation of the training initiative. 	20
3. The availability and competence of personnel to be assigned to project and the appropriateness of human resource allocations to accomplish project goals. Specific consideration should be given to appropriateness of assignments of professional and clerical staff to specific functions, previous experience and capacity to manage a complex administrative project, including the capacity for management of subcontractors, as applicable.	30
4. Reasonability of cost related to expected products and services.	20
5. TOTAL	100

Proposal Schedule

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Instructions to Proposers

I. Proposal Timeline

During the period from your organization's receipt of this Request for Proposals and until a contract is awarded, your organization shall not contact any employee of SERC for additional information except in writing directed to *Stephen Proffitt*, Director for Special Education Programs and Instructional Design, at proffitt@ctserc.org.

II. Questions

Questions for the purpose of clarifying the RFP must be submitted **in writing by email** and must be received no later than **date noted above under proposal schedule**. Questions must be emailed to *Stephen Proffitt*, Director for Special Education Programs and Instructional Design, at proffitt@ctserc.org.

Questions and responses will be posted as an **"Addendum to the IEP Training, TA and Evaluation"** by **date noted above in proposal schedule**. Please note that submissions of questions for response do 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 received no later than 4 p.m. on March 20, 2020.

Submit a single pdf that includes the documentation referenced in Paragraph I of Proposal Requirements to <https://ctserc.net/ieprfp>.

General Information

I. Contract Period

The contract period shall begin on the day of approval through June 30, 2025, SERC reserves the right to extend 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.

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.

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 experience, performance, ability, and/or financial surety that SERC deems to be necessary or appropriate to fully establish the performance capabilities represented in their proposals.

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 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 only serves 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 must approve any and all subcontractors utilized by the successful proposer prior to any such subcontractor commencing any work. Proposers acknowledge by the act of submitting a proposal that any work provided under the contract is work conducted on behalf of SERC and that the SERC Executive Director or designee may communicate directly with any subcontractor as SERC deems to be necessary or appropriate.

It is also understood that the successful proposer shall be responsible for all payment of fees charged by the subcontractor(s). A performance evaluation of any subcontractor shall be provided promptly by the successful proposer to SERC upon request. The successful proposer must provide the majority of services described in the specifications.

XV. Accounting Procedures

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