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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR **EXTERNAL EVALUATION SERVICES**

For the 21st Century California School Leadership Academy
(21CSLA) Initiative

ISSUED BY:

The California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE)
and the Marin County Office of Education (MCOE),
Administrative Agent for the CCEE

ISSUED ON:

October 2, 2023

PROPOSALS DUE:

October 27, 2023

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The California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (“CCEE”) and the Marin County Office of Education (“MCOE”) invite qualified organizations (“Respondents”) to submit proposals (“Proposals”) in response to this Request for Proposals (“RFP”). Proposals shall comply with the requirements set forth herein. The CCEE/MCOE is not required by law to use an RFP process but has elected to do so for the particular services described herein in order to seek qualified parties who meet the unique service needs of the CCEE.

I. Timelines

Activity	Date
Release of Request for Proposals	October 2, 2023
Deadline for Submission of Questions	October 11, 2023 (4:00 p.m. PST)
CCEE Response to Questions Received	October 17, 2023
Due Date for Proposals	October 27, 2023 (4:00 p.m. PST)
Notification to the Public:	November 17, 2023
Work to Begin No Earlier Than:	November 17, 2023
Duration of Services	Through June 30, 2024; annual extensions possible through June 30, 2026.
<i>Note: All dates are preliminary and subject to change.</i>	

II. Purpose

The CCEE is seeking proposals to secure external evaluation services for the 21st Century California School Leadership Academy initiative led by the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence within the Statewide System of Support.

III. Background and Context

Established by the Legislature in 2013 with the enactment of the Local Control Funding Formula (“LCFF”), the CCEE became operational in 2015 to “advise and assist” local educational agencies (“LEAs”) with achieving the goals set forth in their Local Accountability Plans (“LCAPs”). (Ed. Code § 52074.) CCEE is an integral part of California’s State System of Support, which is designed to build the capacity of LEAs to support the continuous improvement of pupil performance, address the achievement gaps between pupil subgroups, and improve outreach and collaboration with stakeholders to ensure that LCAPs reflect the needs of pupils and the community, especially for historically underrepresented or low-achieving populations (Ed. Code § 52059). The CCEE’s responsibilities have been updated to support this work.

This RFP will provide an outline of the evaluation services requested to support the 21st Century California School Leadership Academy (21CSLA) initiative, which are activities associated with elements within the System of Support and CCEE’s related responsibilities.

The **Statewide System of Support** is a central component of the State of California’s accountability and continuous improvement system. The goal of the System of Support is to provide assistance to LEAs and their schools to meet the needs of each student they serve, with a focus on building local capacity to sustain improvement and to effectively address disparities in opportunities and outcomes.

CCEE works with the California Department of Education to facilitate regular communication among the CCEE, the Department, and all agencies involved within the System of Support to promote coordination and awareness of resources and expertise available. In addition, CCEE oversees the external evaluation of four key initiatives that are led by CCEE within the System of Support. These are the System of Support coordination activities, the Geographic Lead Agencies initiative, the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Leads initiative, and the Community Engagement Initiative.

Additional information about the Statewide System of Support can be found at CCEE’s System of Support web page: ([Click Here for Link](#)).

The 2019 Education Budget Trailer Bill, effective July 1, 2019, established the 21st Century California School Leadership Academy (Ed. Code § 44690), with the provision that it provide statewide professional learning opportunities “in a manner that is consistent with the statewide system of support” (see Section IV. for additional information about statutory provisions and expectations related to the 21CSLA initiative) Assembly Bill 181 (Chapter 52, Sec. 56, Statutes of 2022) amended EC 44690 to authorize CCEE to coordinate the external evaluation and that as a condition of receiving the funds, grantees shall provide program data and participate in the external evaluation.

IV. 21st Century California School Leadership Academy

CCEE is requesting proposals for external evaluation services to provide both formative and summative evaluations of the activities conducted as a part of the 21st Century California School Leadership Academy (21CSLA) initiative within the Statewide System of Support.

The 21CSLA initiative was established by Senate Bill 75, Section 26 Statutes of 2019, which added Article 5 (commencing with Section 44690) to Chapter 3.1 of part 25 of Division 3 of Title II of the California Education Code ([Click Here for Link](#)).

The law specifies that the professional learning provided through 21CSLA will be made free of charge to local educational agencies that receive federal Title II funds and include the following:

- Training and coaching for principals and other school leaders in critical areas identified by the CDE and CCEE, in consultation with the Executive Director of the State Board of Education (SBE).
- Training mentors for novice principals and teachers.
- Training coaches to support leaders in high-need settings.
- Training for central office leaders, principals, and other school leaders, including teacher leaders, involved in school improvement efforts.

The Budget Act of 2019 provided on-going federal funds from Title II, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) for the 21CSLA initiative to support competitive grants for professional learning, coaching, and mentoring opportunities for administrators and other school leaders across the state. The purpose of Title II, Part A, is to increase the academic achievement of all students by helping schools and districts improve teacher and principal quality to support effective instruction.

A separate request for applications (RFA) process for the selection of Cohort 2 grantees to develop and perform the activities outlined with the 21CSLA initiative was completed in December of 2022. Successful grantees were identified to develop and implement statewide professional learning for instructional leaders through the 21CSLA initiative, with work to begin in July, 2023 through June, 2026. (Click [here](#) to see the list of grantees.)

Per [Education Code Section 44690](#), CDE and CCEE, with SBE approval, shall identify criteria and measures to assess the performance of the grantees in performing the duties specified in the 21CSLA initiative. All successful grantees will track and monitor progress on the metrics identified on pages five and six of the 21CSLA Request for Application (please click [here](#) to review the 21CSLA RFA). CCEE and the CDE will evaluate each grantee's performance and success in fulfilling the purpose of this program using the metrics referenced in the 21CSLA RFA and through the formative and summative assessment of the initiative.

At the conclusion of each grant term, the CDE and CCEE may renew the selection of the grantees or reopen the selection process for some or all of the previously awarded grantees. Grant awards are contingent on continued annual federal funding by Congress and California State Budget authority. Please note, the funding amounts may be adjusted given annual budget approval.

V. Evaluation Scope of Services

CCEE is soliciting proposals for an agency, individual, or consortium to conduct formative and summative evaluations of the impact of 21st Century California School Leadership Academy initiative.

CCEE staff will consult with the selected Respondent about the final format for the formative data collection and presentation. The selected Respondent will act as a thought-partner with CCEE staff to understand and operationalize all recommendations.

The selected Respondent will be required to attend and participate in meetings with the Statewide System of Support all Leads, virtually and in person. The selected Respondent's staff may be invited to present formative data and support CCEE, CDE, and the selected 21CSLA grantees in understanding the results of the evaluation and its implications for ongoing development.

Areas of focus for the formative evaluation should include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Metrics referenced in Appendix A;
- Recommendations for improvement of systems and processes related to the 21CSLA initiative;

- Recommendations for professional learning topics, areas of focus, and delivery structures;
- Recommendations for the development and delivery of professional learning to support rural and geographically isolated LEAs;
- Recommendations for the development and delivery of professional learning to support school turnaround efforts;
- Recommendations for scaling elements of the initiative having the greatest impact; and
- Updating the evaluation plan as needed to reflect revisions and improvements to the 21CSLA initiative.

Areas of focus for the summative evaluation should include, but are not limited to, the following: Metrics referenced in Appendix A;

- Number of instructional staff/teams and LEAs served and the type of support provided (e.g., regular coaching and participation in a Community of Practice);
- Changes in the recruitment and retention of school instructional leaders (e.g., teacher leaders, site leaders, district leaders) as a result of professional learning received through the 21CSLA initiative;
- Changes in school-level data as a result of changes in instructional leader practices and outcomes attributed to and/or associated with the professional learning received through the 21CSLA initiative;
- Changes in student-level data, including performance outcomes as measured by the CA School Dashboard, as a result of changes in instructional leader practices and outcomes attributed to and/or associated with the professional learning received through the 21CSLA initiative; and
- Identifying exemplars of strategies, structures, and supports for effective professional learning to support instructional leadership.
- Coordinating with the 21CSLA State Center and Regional Academies to share and disseminate evaluation findings to inform continuous improvement processes and best practices.

Below is a proposed timeline for continuation and completion of the formative and summative evaluations for each of the initiatives described in this RFP. Areas of focus for the summative evaluations should include final data collection and reporting that addresses all activities identified in the timeline below, but is not limited to, the following:

Initiative: 21st Century California School Leadership		
YEAR 2023-2024	YEAR 2024-2025	YEAR 2025-2026
Reflective	Formative	Formative/Summative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Metrics referenced in Appendix A ● Create an evaluation plan consistent with data collection from years 1-3. ● Identify data elements to establish baseline for Cohort 2 Grantees. ● Identify practices to scale and strategies to assess impact on classroom practices. ● Evaluate effectiveness in building capacity, identifying and sharing effective resources, and facilitating improvement efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Metrics referenced in Appendix A ● Identify how grantees are impacting leader, student and school, outcomes. ● Advise agencies how to scale elements of the program having the greatest impact. ● Update evaluation plan as needed to reflect revisions and improvements. ● Gather and synthesize data on each grantee focusing on impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Metrics referenced in Appendix A ● Produce recommendations to improve the system. ● Identify exemplars within the system. ● Advise agencies how to scale elements of the program having the greatest impact. ● Identify how grantees are impacting leader, school, and student outcomes. ● Synthesize final data to make final policy recommendations with an emphasis on sustainability.

CCEE will evaluate each selected Respondents’ performance and success in fulfilling the evaluation services for the identified initiative(s). At the conclusion of each contract term, CCEE may renew the selected Respondent(s) for another term according to the specific initiative timeline identified in the tables above. Contract renewal is contingent on continued annual funding by Congress and California State Budget authority.

VI. General Proposal Information

A. Respondents’ Eligibility

Sole proprietorships, partnerships, and public or private agencies may submit proposals in response to this RFP. The Respondent must be legally constituted and qualified to do business within the State of California.

The Respondent responding to this RFP must serve as the Prime Contractor and will be the responsible entity in ensuring that all tasks and activities are successfully completed.

B. Minimum Qualifications for Respondents

Respondents must have a minimum of four years of recent (within the last 7 years) full-time experience in conducting large-scale evaluation studies within the educational setting.

Please see RFP Section VII.E. for additional information pertaining to personnel requirements.

C. Questions and Clarifications

Respondents may submit questions and requests for clarifications or additional information regarding this RFP, in writing only, to Jasmine Hennessy (jhennessy@ccee-ca.org). Questions and requests for clarifications may be submitted at any time up to October 11, 2023, and must provide contact information for Respondent, including an email address where the CCEE may send its response.

CCEE will make every effort to provide responses and clarifications via CCEE's website at <https://ccee-ca.org> by October 17, 2023. At its discretion, the CCEE may respond to questions that are submitted late or not in proper form. The CCEE reserves the right to rephrase or not answer any question or inquiry submitted. Respondents are solely responsible for monitoring any questions or answers posted on the CCEE's website and incorporating any answer provided by CCEE into their proposals.

VII. Proposal Specifications/Requirements for Submittal

Each Respondent must submit a Proposal that contains all of the required items listed in this section. Any Proposal that does not include all required items may be disqualified from consideration, but the CCEE reserves the right to consider Proposals which do not meet all the requirements, at its sole discretion. Proposals should not exceed 15 pages, excluding curriculum vitae of identified personnel. Proposals can utilize tables and/or bullets to more clearly communicate main ideas and flow of work.

A. Cover Letter

B. Scope of Project

The Proposal must include a section that addresses all parts of Section VII (Proposal Specifications) of the RFP. All tasks and subtasks must be addressed.

C. Description of Respondent Organization

Include the name and contact information for your organization (address, telephone number, fax number), as well as the name and contact information (telephone number and email address) of the principal contact for your application. Provide a brief history of the organization, including:

- Number of years in business/practice
- Senior member(s) and length of association
- Whether the organization may have been known by a different name while under substantially the same management
- Location of office where project team members will design and oversee the evaluation program
- List of basic services generally provided by the organization

D. Organizational Capacity and Previous Experience

The Proposal must describe and demonstrate the Respondent's capacity and ability to perform and administer all activities related to this project. This includes a demonstration

of the Respondent's experience in evaluation research, study design and implementation, use of quantitative and qualitative or mixed-method approaches required to address evaluation questions in high-stakes research projects, particularly those related to education. The Proposal should also reflect the Respondent's understanding of California education policies, especially those associated with the statute outlining the 21st Century California School Leadership Academy, the Local Control Funding Formula, the California School Dashboard, and the System of Support, as well as broader education policy and research as it relates to the work outlined in this RFP.

The selected Respondent's staff will be invited to present interim data and reports, at least twice a year, to the CCEE, CDE, representatives of the Statewide System of Support, designated COEs, and select partners to understand the evaluation's interim results and its implications for ongoing development.

If the Respondent will be subcontracting a portion of the work, the Proposal must describe and demonstrate the subcontractor's capacity and ability to perform the portion of the work in which the subcontractor will be involved.

E. Qualifications of Respondent Personnel

Please include the name of all individuals proposed by the organization to perform the duties described above in the Evaluation Scope of Services, including the qualifications of each and what each would be doing. Current résumés for each individual must be included as attachments to the submitted Proposal and will not be counted in the page limits.

E.1. Project Lead

The Proposal must identify a dedicated Project Lead by name and include descriptions of how the proposed Project Lead meets the qualifications required here. The Proposal must describe how the Project Lead will effectively coordinate, manage, and monitor the efforts of assigned staff, including subcontractors and/or consultants, to ensure that all tasks, activities, and functions are completed in an effective and timely manner.

The Project Lead must have, at a minimum, four years of recent experience (within the last 7 years) managing a project of comparable size and scope of the services described in this RFP. The Project Lead will serve as the primary contact for the CCEE.

E.2. Changes to Key Personnel

Once a Respondent is selected, the assigned project personnel, including the Project Lead, cannot be changed or substituted without the CCEE's prior written approval. Any substitute personnel shall meet or exceed the qualifications and experience level of the previously assigned project staff/personnel.

E.3. Subcontracts

A subcontract is defined as any and all agreements between a Respondent and another entity, individual or business, for the accomplishment of any task, or component of a task, in whole or part, described in this RFP. All work assigned to subcontractors remains the responsibility of the selected Respondent. For each proposed

subcontractor, the Respondent must include a:

- a. Description of the activities and functions that will be performed by the subcontractor/consultant
- b. Brief explanation as to why the subcontractor was selected
- c. Résumés for each consultant or personnel of a subcontractor who will be assigned to the project.

E.4. Organization Chart

An organization chart, including organizational titles, project roles, and names should be included with the Proposal.

F. Proposed Work Plan

Please include a description of Respondent’s proposed work plan to accomplish the duties described above in the Evaluation Scope of Services. The work plan shall include time estimates for each significant segment of the work, the number of staff to be assigned, including supervisors where appropriate, the level of each of the staff members to be assigned, and any specialists or subcontractors who will be assigned.

G. Conflict of Interest

Please disclose any past or current business or other relationship with the CCEE, CCEE Governing Board members, or MCOE.

H. Costs and Fees

Provide an annual breakdown of the proposed fees and costs (including for organization personnel) for the evaluation program. The total annual fees and costs must be stated as a “not to exceed” amount. Describe Respondent’s willingness to commit to the estimate provided, and what factors may influence the estimate in the event of programmatic changes.

Due to the year-to-year nature of the CCEE’s funding, the contract with the selected Respondent(s) will need to be written such that it is fiscal year-to-fiscal year with the ability to extend it at the exclusive option of the CCEE.

Respondents’ cost estimates may be a factor in awarding the contract. Since an RFP is not required, the CCEE/MCOE is not obligated to accept a bid based on cost estimates.

Please note, for the 2023-2024 year, CCEE is funded to support the external evaluation at \$175,000. It is anticipated the same amount of \$175,000/year will be provided for the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 fiscal years; however, this funding is contingent on continued annual federal funding by Congress and California State Budget authority. Funding for this evaluation shall not exceed \$525,000. Annual funding amounts may be adjusted at each budget act.

I. References

Provide a list of clients (including name, address email address, and telephone number of contact person, as well as a description of the work performed) for whom Respondent has performed similar services.

VIII. Rights of the CCEE/MCOE

This RFP does not commit the CCEE/MCOE to award a contract or pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this RFP. The CCEE/MCOE is not required by law to use an RFP process but has elected to do so for the particular services described herein in order to seek qualified parties who meet the CCEE unique service needs. The CCEE/MCOE reserves the right to enter into direct negotiations with a Respondent or any other party for the services set forth herein, accept all or part of any submittal or to cancel in part or in its entirety the RFP. The CCEE/MCOE further reserves the right to select the Respondent(s) that it considers to be in the best interests of the CCEE.

IX. Submission Details

- A. The CCEE/MCOE will begin accepting Proposals upon the date of issuance of this RFP, and will continue to accept Proposals until October 27, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time).
- B. Respondents must submit an electronic signed copy of the original Proposal (as a PDF) via email to Jasmine Hennessy (jhennessy@ccee-ca.org).
- C. Respondent shall be solely responsible for ensuring its Proposal arrives to the CCEE by the deadline set forth above. The CCEE/MCOE shall not be responsible for any technical issues with email delivery.
- D. All Proposals should be verified before submission. Adjustments may not be permitted after submission to the CCEE. The CCEE/MCOE will not be held responsible for any errors or omissions on the part of the Respondent in the preparation of their Proposal.
- E. Any costs incurred by the Respondents in the preparation of any information or material submitted in response to this RFP shall be the sole responsibility of the Respondent.
- F. The CCEE/MCOE reserves the right to reject any and/or all Proposals, or to refuse to negotiate or withhold the award of any contract, for any reason. The CCEE/MCOE may also waive or decline to waive irregularities in any Proposal. The CCEE/MCOE further reserves the right to select the Proposal(s) that it considers to be in the best interests of the CCEE.
- G. The CCEE/MCOE may begin negotiations with selected Respondents at the CCEE's discretion.
- H. Upon selection of a Respondent, the CCEE/MCOE shall provide an agreement, for negotiation by the Parties.
- I. All Proposals submitted in response to the RFP become the property of the CCEE and a public record and as such, are subject to public view.

X. Receipt of Proposals; Contact Information

Respondents are not to contact the Marin County Office of Education, including Board members, the Superintendent or any other employee or representative of the MCOE. Contacting such officials, employees and/or representatives, other than those persons listed below, may result in the disqualification of the Respondent.

All inquiries or questions for additional information should be directed in writing to Jasmine Hennessy (jhennessy@ccee-ca.org) by October 11, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time). CCEE will make every effort to respond, but any failure or delay in responding shall not excuse a Respondent's failure to comply with any requirements for submission set forth herein, including the submission deadline.

Respondents must submit an electronic signed copy of the original Proposal (as a PDF) via email to Jasmine Hennessy (jhennessy@ccee-ca.org) by October 27, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time) with the subject line "21CSLA Evaluation Proposal Submission."

XI. Appendix A

Below is an excerpt from the 21CSLA RFA, pages 5 and 6 that identifies specific metrics the grantees are responsible for tracking and monitoring during the grant period. These metrics will be included in, but not limited to, all phases of the evaluation as referenced in Section V.

Fiscal and Evaluation Modifications Implemented During Cohort 2

All grantees awarded a grant for another three-year cycle with the 21CSLA will receive funds for the 2022 and 2023 fiscal years (FYs) in Cohort 2 Year 1 (July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024) in order for the grant performance period to align with the federal fiscal funding of the program. Funding for the 2022 FY is anticipated to be released in June 2023. Funding for the 2023 FY is anticipated to be released July 2023. Grantees will be notified of each FY's funding allocation before the start of the performance period. At that time, grantees will generate a budget according to the funds they are anticipated to receive for that FY. The budget must be submitted to the CDE before the Grant Award Notification will be generated and released for each FY.

All RAs will continue to follow the specifications and criteria outlined in the original 21CSLA RFA and subsequent updates including the deliverables set annually by the Center. In addition, the CDE, CCEE, and SBE will be considering all of the following factors throughout the Cohort 2 performance period. The following metrics will be utilized to evaluate the performance of the Cohort 2 RAs. RAs will be asked to track and monitor their progress on meeting the following:

- Employ at least one full time project lead exclusively dedicated to the 21CSLA program and appropriate levels of staff, full-time equivalent, and/or contracted support to ensure full participation in all 21CSLA program activities offered by the 21CSLA Center.
- Ensure full implementation of Cohort 2 deliverables including Universal Transitional Kindergarten and others specified by the CDE, CCEE, and SBE.
- Ensure regular meeting contact through a combination of virtual and in-person

connections within the Geo Region to inform, improve, and expand program services across the Geo Region, county, district, and school levels and fulfill data input/reporting of those contacts as requested by the CDE, CCEE, SBE, and an external evaluator.

- Ensure that service is consistently responding and expanding in scope and depth beyond current offerings and practice in alignment with California’s evolving educational environment in response to CDE, CCEE, SBE, and Center guidance.
 - Demonstrate commitment to continuous improvement practices utilizing evidence including participant feedback to ensure high quality equity-centered coaching and professional learning through a combination of virtual and in-person connections as public health guidance allows for the reintegration of in-person activities as COVID becomes endemic.

The Center will continue to follow the specifications and criteria outlined in the original 21CSLA RFA and subsequent updates. In addition, the CDE, CCEE, and SBE will be considering all of the following factors throughout the Cohort 2 performance period. The following metrics will be utilized to evaluate the performance of the Center in Cohort 2. The Center will be asked to track and monitor their progress on meeting the following:

- Employ at least one full time project lead exclusively dedicated to the 21CSLA program and appropriate levels of staff, full-time equivalent, and/or contracted staff to support the RAs full participation in all 21CSLA program activities.
- Develop the Cohort 2 deliverables including Universal Transitional Kindergarten and others in conjunction with the CDE, CCEE, and SBE, and in consultation with the RAs.
- Coordinate regular meeting contact through a combination of virtual and in person connections with the RAs to inform, improve, and expand program services and create a 21CSLA database to provide data as requested by the CDE, CCEE, SBE, and an external evaluator.
- Build the capacity of 21CSLA partners to be responsive to the field in responding and expanding in scope and depth beyond current offerings and practice in alignment with California’s evolving educational environment in response to CDE, CCEE, and SBE guidance.
- Support the RAs to engage in continuous improvement practices to ensure high quality equity-centered coaching and professional learning through a combination of virtual and in-person connections as public health guidance allows for the reintegration of in-person activities as COVID becomes endemic.

The CDE, SBE, and CCEE will collect data on abovementioned metrics through the 21CSLA Center’s database, quarterly reports, mid-grant interviews, information provided by the 21CSLA Center, and any other qualitative and quantitative data. Rubrics based on these metrics are included in Appendix C and Appendix D of the 21CSLA RFA.

All current grantees must certify that they are aware of and are committed to meet the fiscal and evaluative measures that will be implemented during the Cohort 2 grant performance period.