

PUBLIC INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION SERVICES (PICS)
NIH - TASK ORDER

RFTOP# 67 TITLE: NCI Advocacy Program Nominations

PART I – REQUEST FOR TASK ORDER (TO) PROPOSALS

A. Point of Contact Name: Anthony Revenis

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Proposal Address:

Billing Address:

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B. PROPOSED PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: One year from date of award (target award date is 7/15/02). The award will be renewable for up to 4 option years. This contract may be modified later to include additional work in 2003 for nominations to the CARRA Program. More information is listed below under additional tasks.

C. PRICING METHOD: Time and Materials. Currently available funding for year one is limited to \$58,000. A firm that is available to complete this project for less than that amount is invited to propose a lower price for the successful execution of this task. Price will be a consideration in the determination of the firm that is selected for award.

D. PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS: Proposals should be submitted by e-mail to the above POC. Proposals should not exceed 20 pages. A signed task order form may be scanned and submitted electronically or submitted later by FAX.

E. RESPONSE DUE DATE: Wednesday, July 17, 2002 by 11:00 PM EDT

F. TASK DESCRIPTION:

Director's Consumer Liaison Group (DCLG)

Background:

NCI divisions and offices frequently work with consumer advocacy organizations, scientific and professional societies, and federal agencies. Liaison Activities (LA) Branch

was established in 1996 to serve as the central point of contact at NCI for these key constituents of NCI. The office is responsible for communicating, cooperating, and collaborating with these groups to promote common goals. LA serves as a central point of contact for these organizations, and tailors information dissemination to these organizations. LA also supports two programs that involve consumer advocates in NCI programs and planning. The NCI Director's Consumer Liaison Group (DCLG) advises the Director, NCI about issues of interest to cancer consumer advocates. Through the Consumer Advocates in Research and Related Activities (CARRA) program, NCI includes consumers in its scientific and communication activities such as peer review or publication development. LA facilitates this process and matches advocates' skills and interests to NCI activity needs.

The core functions include, but are not limited to:

- Provide exceptional customer service to the consumer advocacy community, scientific and professional societies, and federal agencies
- Coordinate and manage the NCI Director's Consumer Liaison Group (DCLG) selection process
- Support Consumer Advocates in Research and Related Activities (CARRA) to facilitate involvement of cancer consumer advocates in NCI activities

The Director's Consumer Liaison Group (DCLG) is NCI's first all-consumer advisory body. It makes recommendations to the Director of NCI from the consumer advocate perspective on a wide variety of issues, programs, and research priorities. The DCLG consists of consumer advocates who are involved in cancer advocacy. They reflect the diversity among those whose lives are affected by cancer. NCI brings together these advocates from many communities and creates a two-way street that enables them to interact directly with the scientific community at NCI.

DCLG Selection Process: Tasks will include screening, scoring, telephone interview, and ranking process, the promotion plan, training of contractor staff in interviewing and scoring methodologies; assuring that processes are reliable through spot checks; document all steps leading to selection of DCLG members. Forms mentioned below already exist. The basic structure for a database for tracking nominees thru selection process exists and will be provided to the contractor for minor enhancement to add a few new fields and enter data.

- Prepare task order management plan with requirements and timeline for LA approval.
- Prepare final nomination package according to LA instructions.
- Prepare promotional materials for nomination process.
- Using promotion plans prepared in conjunction with LA, prepare detailed list for distribution of promotion materials including brochure, information about LA

- website, and other activities as needed. Send nomination package to those who request them (400 estimated).
- Collect applications/nomination letters (400 candidates estimated).
 - Document process for tracking each nomination package received in DCLG database.
 - Send acknowledgments of receipt to candidates for complete packages.
 - Send notification to candidates with incomplete packages.
 - Document security and quality assurance measures according to the Standard Operating Procedure provided by LA.
 - Enter all available data into DCLG database; sources of information include essential information, personal statement, and letters of recommendation.
 - Prepare Nominee Review Form and Scoring Summary for each candidate.
 - Screen nominations for eligibility; provide status report to LA. The Executive Secretary of the DCLG has final authority for eligibility status.
 - Score all eligible candidates according to approved scoring instrument. Instrument will be provided by LA.
 - Personnel must be trained to ensure adherence to scoring guidelines established by NCI.
 - Assess nominee pool for diversity; provide status report to LA.
 - Enter all data in database for tracking and evaluation of candidates.
 - Prepare _ page summary/rating for each nominee who meets the criteria (150).
 - Prepare roster of highly ranked candidates for LA, reviewing diversity (ethnic diversity, mix of ages, men and women, representation from the medically underserved, mix of cancer types, mix of advocacy organizations). Executive Secretary of the DCLG will provide names of candidates to be interviewed to project manager.
 - Schedule interviews with candidates selected by Executive Secretary.
 - Conduct telephone interviews using approved instrument (10-20 individuals) with LA staff. Instrument will be provided by LA. Contractor will interview candidates. LA staff will be note takers.
 - Review all nomination packages to determine if any information is missing, and collect it from candidates during interview.
 - Train all staff doing interviews (including NCI staff).
 - Record all interview results on approved forms. Immediately following interviews (on the same day), contractor will prepare summary of candidate's skills with special emphasis on knowledge learned from interview.
 - Calculate final scores for candidate.
 - Present results of interview, and recommendations to LA staff (by interviewer) both orally and on paper.
 - Prepare letters notifying candidates of their selection or non-selection to the DCLG and submit to LA for approval.
 - Send letters notifying candidates of their selection or non-selection to the DCLG.

- Prepare and send other letters to candidates as requested (i.e. Letters notifying them of delay in selection, estimate 2 per nomination cycle).

Personnel

- Evaluation expert who can determine process and tools for screening scoring and evaluation of DCLG candidates.

Deliverables:

DCLG Selection Process:

- Approved Task order management plan with requirements and timeline for selection process
- Nomination Package, subject to approval by DCLG Executive Secretary
- Letters of acknowledgment to candidates upon receipt of applications
- Letters notifying candidates of missing pieces in their applications
- Scorer training: LA staff and contractors
- Approved scoring instrument
- Scored nomination applications with summary sheets
- Approved telephone Interview instrument and questions
- Telephone Interviews (Summary of findings from interview will be presented to LA staff)

Additional Tasks

This contract may be modified in later option years to include additional work for a second consumer advocate program supported by LA. Most likely, this modification would be for similar work to recruit and select members during the Summer 2003. The program and the potential work are described below. Proposals will not be evaluated based on this possible additional work.

Consumer Advocates in Research and Research Activities (CARRA)

The Consumer Advocates in Research and Related Activities (CARRA) program encourages people affected by cancer to provide their viewpoint and ideas directly to NCI staff so that the NCI can incorporate this perspective into the program and its activities. The CARRA goal is to recruit consumer advocates to form a “ready and waiting” group of people who are available to participate in a wide range of NCI activities. CARRA

members represent many different cancer types, age groups, and ethnic groups from across the Nation. In addition to participating in NCI activities, CARRA members represent the opinions of their groups and play critical roles as two-way information links between their own communities and constituencies and the NCI. There are approximately 200 CARRA members.

The program was launched in September 2001 and is still growing and developing. A recruit and selection process to add new members may be required in Summer 2003 or later. However, the specific needs, such as number of new members needed, will not be known until a later date based on program evaluation results. A general framework for the work anticipated includes:

Possible CARRA Recruitment and Selection Task Description

Tasks will include promotion (such as information dissemination); applicant screening, scoring, ranking and selection processes; database development; set-up and maintenance for an information call-center; training of contractor staff; 100% quality control; and periodic reports.

- Modify existing database for tracking entire promotion, application, and scoring processes and correspondence with potential CARRA pool members, must be compatible with existing LA database (CMS) using Microsoft Access.
- Modify existing plan for carrying out all steps of the process from requests for applications to sending letters to successful and unsuccessful applicants; including security and quality assurance (QA) measures for all steps of the process. This plan must be approved by LA no later than 21 days prior to the beginning of the recruitment process.
- Implement approved QA procedures, train all staff that will be involved including LA staff and reviewers.
- Assemble and mail application packets according to instructions from LA.
- Accept and respond to all requests for application packages and provide updates to LA every 14 days (reports will include name, organization, state, number requested).
- Collect applications/nomination letters provide updates to LA every 14 days (reports will include name, organization, state, cancer site, age, ethnicity, etc. of each candidate).
- Track each application package received.
- Send acknowledgments of receipt to candidates for complete packages.
- Send notification to candidates with incomplete packages including a list of missing pieces; receive additional materials and place with remainder of candidate's application.
- Screen nominations for eligibility according to approved plan for "Eligibility Evaluation;" notify LA of ineligible applicants; LA has final authority for eligibility status; reports due to LA every 14 days of eligible and every 7 days for ineligible applicants including reason for not being eligible.

- Assemble and train scoring teams composed of 1 advocate and 2 NCI staff; train personnel, contractor, NCI staff, others to ensure adherence to scoring guidelines, and confidentiality of information as established by NCI.
- Score all eligible nominations according to approved plan for “Evaluation of Ability to Serve”; evaluate an applicant’s scores for consistency, LA will make final decisions if scoring discrepancies occur.
- Calculate composite score for each applicant per LA instructions.
- Provide matrix of all candidates to LA to determine minimum acceptable score; include score gender, age, cancer site, ethnic group, and other characteristics as defined by LA within two weeks of completion of scoring of all applicants; sort by score -- highest to lowest.
- LA will select the new members to ensure diversity among CARRA membership
- Prepare, submit for LA approval, and send letters to successful and unsuccessful applicants.
- Prepare successful applicant information for 100% QA information transfer to LA database.
- Prepare post-selection report to LA on strengths/weaknesses of entire selection process.
- Prepare other reports.
- Transfer database to existing LA database.
- Develop orientation materials.
- Provide electronic communication. Potential Deliverables for CARRA Recruitment Process:
- Reports:
 - Requests for applications: every 14 days
 - Applications received: every 14 days.
 - Eligible applicants/ineligible applicants: every 14 days and 7 days respectively
 - Rank ordered list of evaluated applicants 30 days after application deadline.
 - Proposal to set minimum acceptable score
 - Matrix of candidates that include variables such as name, state, cancer site, gender, age, ethnicity, role preference, track preference and other characteristics as determined by LA.
 - Final Pool membership list
- Letters of acknowledgment to candidates upon receipt of applications
- Letters notifying candidates of missing pieces in their applications
- Information Call Center
- Quality Assurance/Security procedures
- Plan for tracking, scoring, evaluating applications
- Scorer training: LA staff and contractors and others
- Scored applications
- Letters for successful/unsuccessful applicants
- Database plan for tracking and transfer of appropriate information to LA database
- Transfer of database information to LA.

G. EVALUATION FACTORS

Technical Factors: (40 points) The vendor must demonstrate a clear understanding of the requirements for selecting the DCLG members, according to Federal Advisory Committee Regulations. This will be the fourth year for this selection process and a Standard Operating Procedure is available. However, the vendor must demonstrate ability to evaluate a group of candidates for eligibility criteria and ability to serve on the DCLG as an effective member. This includes knowledge of interview and scoring methodologies. Additionally, the labor hour table must reflect an accurate understanding of the scope and requirements handling applications from a large number of candidates, evaluating them based on the eligibility and evaluation criteria, preparing a matrix based on the requirements for the group, telephone interviews to determine final slate for the Director of NCI.

Staff: (30 points) The vendor must provide a management plan and qualified staff to implement all aspects of the required work. Technical expertise and the ability to design and implement practical solutions are critical. Credentials, experience, and availability for all staff must be presented.

Past Performance: (20 points) The vendor must provide information about past performance on similar projects. It is important that the vendor have a demonstrated record of quality products, completion of tasks with budget and established deadlines, and achieving project goals and objectives.

Cost: (10 points) While price is not the most important evaluation factor, proposed prices will be considered in determining the firm that represents the best value to the government.

TO # NICS-67

CONTRACT #263-01-D-0_____

PART II - CONTRACTOR'S REPLY: TITLE: NCI Advocacy Program Nominations

Contractor:

Points of Contact:

Phone-

Fax-

Address:

TOTAL ESTIMATED COST:

Pricing Method: T&M

TOTAL ESTIMATED NUMBER OF HOURS:

PROPOSED COMPLETION DATE:

FOR THE CONTRACTOR: _____
Signature Date

SOURCE SELECTION:

WE HAVE REVIEWED ALL SUBMITTED PROPOSALS HAVE DETERMINED THIS FIRM SUBMITTED THE BEST OVERALL PROPOSAL AND THE PRICE/COST IS REASONABLE.

Billing Reference # _____

Appropriations Data: _____

(ATTACH OBLIGATING DOCUMENT IF AN ROC WILL NOT BE USED.)

RECOMMENDED: _____
FAX # Signature - Project Officer Date

APPROVED: _____
FAX # Signature - Contracting Officer Date

NLM APPROVAL -

CONTRACTOR SHALL NOT EXCEED THE TASK ORDER AMOUNT WITHOUT THE WRITTEN APPROVAL OF THE CONTRACTING OFFICER & ICS COORDINATOR

APPROVED: _____
Signature -Anthony M. Revenis, J.D., NIH-PICS Coordinator Date

