Consultant to develop a Friends Learning Academy Enhancement Training focused on working with Native Youth, families, and communities.

Request for Proposals

Introduction
Friends of the Children is seeking a consultant to develop staff training for professional mentors about how to engage with Native youth, families and community by utilizing a culturally informed approaches and practices. The purpose of the project is to strengthen the professional development of Friends of the Children staff so that they are positioned with the skills for best practices in meeting the unique needs of Native youth and families. This project is funded by a 2022 Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) grant award.

About Friends of the Children
Friends of the Children is a 30-year-old non-profit organization currently serving thousands of children in over 540 schools. We work with youth who face significant barriers and live in some of the most under-resourced neighborhoods in the country, beginning at age 4-6 and continuing through high school graduation. Friends of the Children employs professional mentors (called “Friends”) who work with youth 1:1 and in group settings for 12+ years, from kindergarten to graduation. Youth participants are selected through one of three processes: partnerships with elementary schools; partnerships with the foster care system; and partnerships with community-based organizations.

Each Friend is a specially trained, skilled, paid employee who engages his or her paired children in long-term relationships. Friends are typically paired with eight to twelve children at a time. Friend activities focus on social emotional skill development, empowering children’s navigation through five developmental milestones: social/emotional development, school success, health, making good choices and planning skills for the future. From that foundation, Friends work with children on developmentally appropriate skills such as goal-setting, positive interactions with peers, healthy conflict management, and appropriate school behavior.

In the early elementary years, Friends spend 2 hours per week in the classroom, helping the children develop academic skills and lifelong learning habits. In middle and high school, Friends continue to monitor academic performance, advocate for needed services, and provide opportunities to explore career and continuing education options. Throughout the 12+ year program, Friends offer intensive holistic wraparound support, continuing their navigator role as a consistent adult presence in children’s lives. Friends also provide emotional and concrete
supports to families; often partnering with caregivers to advocate in schools, and connecting families with basic-need resources and other supports to promote family stability. Every child, parent/caregiver, and family benefits from the long-term 1:1 Friend relationship, as well as belonging to the greater Friends of the Children community of staff and youth which cultivates social connection, peer-to-peer experiences and new opportunities for all. [See Appendix ]

Purpose of the Project
During the last five years, Friends of the Children has been investing time and resources towards the development of a Quality Improvement (QI) system grounded in empowerment evaluation. Through our QI process we developed platforms for network staff feedback, such as a network Friend Advisory Board and Program Leadership QI committee. Leveraging this process, we identified a need to strengthen Friend and program staff cultural competency through enhanced training and support for working with Native youth, families, and communities. Our Friends will benefit from additional training enhancements on how to best serve and/or strengthen allyship with Native youth and families. The objective of the training enhancement will be Friend knowledge and skill building to support youth to foster a sense of belonging to their culture, a strong tribal/spiritual bond, feelings of connection to family, and positive emotional health that build important protective factors for Native youth served network-wide against suicide, risky behavior, and justice involvement. It is our goal that, once piloted, many enhancements will be designed so as to be adaptable for any FOTC site, those serving Native youth (i.e. both Native-led and non-Native-led sites) and others. Effective partnership with parents, elders, and caregivers will be essential to the success of our proposed training enhancements and we aim through this training that Friends will improve their knowledge and skills for building culturally responsive partnerships with Native elders, caregivers, and communities. Equipped with new tools to promote culture as a protective factor, Friends are uniquely positioned with time (12-16 hours/month) over 12 years to make a difference for the Native youth and families we serve.

The disproportionate impact of COVID-19 in Native and Tribal communities, combined with the manifestation of historical and present trauma in a host of negative life outcomes for Native children and families, including overrepresentation in child welfare and justice systems, mental health challenges, chronic disease, violence against women and girls, suicide, and high rates of substance use has increased our urgency to strengthen this area of Friend training. We recognize that generational trauma, forced assimilation, and cultural erosion have also contributed to the high prevalence of mental health challenges among Native youth. Rates of unmet mental health needs are most concentrated among children who are from cultural and ethnic minority backgrounds and among those who live in under-resourced communities. Internal Friends of the Children National Annual Scorecard data shows our adolescent youth who identify as Native American/Alaskan Native or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander are meeting Friends of the Children benchmarks for successful school performance and engagement with supportive adults, but are more likely to be bullied, engage in physical fighting, and be involved in the justice system putting them at greater risk for long-term mental/physical health problems (e.g., sadness, loneliness, depression, risk of suicide) and anti-social behavioral outcomes. Adapting our program implementation materials and trainings to
ensure our work incorporates a holistic approach that thoughtfully engages spiritual, physical, emotional (social), mental healing and wellness, is a critical, time-sensitive need for work within Native communities.

**Goals of the Request for Consultant**

1. The development of a Friends learning Academy Enhancement Training focused on working with Native Youth, families, and communities that include:
   A. Training addressing historical trauma in Native communities with the focus on genocide, assimilation and Boarding Schools.
   B. Foundational training on Native family systems and extended kinship.
   C. Training on sovereignty, equity, and inclusion
      - Tribal Sovereignty and Jurisdiction
      - Stereotypes and Misconceptions
      - Pan-Indianism
   D. Training for Friends to engage in school, at home and in the community in partnership with caregivers and teachers to support youths’ healthy cultural identity development.

The Consultant will begin the project by developing an understanding of the organization’s mission, values, program model, and existing staff training, support and accountability processes.

The Consultant will work in collaboration with the rest of the Friends of the Children Tribal Program team and other network stakeholders to develop training, support and resources. National Director of Tribal Programs, Tasha Fridia subject matter expert in Native community engagement, will be the Consultant’s main partner in curriculum development.

To be effective, the Consultant must have experience and knowledge of:

- Best practices that improve outcomes for the Native population of children and families served by Friends of the Children.
- Developing staff training and on-going support content, that incorporates culturally grounded Native American approaches to mentorship, engagement, and identity development.
- Developing content, in partnership with instructional designers, that is adaptable to diverse adult learning styles across a learning management system platform.

**Amount of contract:** The proposed budget for required deliverables over the project period may not exceed $100,000.
**Contract Terms and Conditions:**
Friends of the Children will engage in a fixed-price contract with selected consultant.

This project is funded by Friends of the Children and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The selected consultant must abide by all requirements for a federal contractor. See all relevant federal circulars for guidance (which may change or be updated by the federal government during the project period).

By accepting funds under this award, the consultant agrees to comply with grant terms and conditions, all applicable federal statutes, regulations and guidelines, and any amendments thereto. (See Appendix).

**Timeline and Award Information**
The project period is October 1, 2023 - June 30, 2025

**July 15th 2023:** RFP released.

**August 15th 2023:** Proposals DUE.

**September 1st 2023:** Contractor Selected

**October 1st:** Contract Executed- Project Launched.

**October 1, 2023 – June 30, 2025:** Consultant engages with Friends of the Children’s Tribal Program Team and network to provide training that 1) addresses historical trauma in Native communities with the focus on genocide, assimilation and Boarding Schools 2) Provide foundational training on Native family systems and extended kinship. 3) Training on sovereignty, equity, and inclusion 4) Training for Friends to engage in school, at home and in the community in partnership with caregivers and teachers to support youths’ healthy cultural identity development.

**Reporting Requirements:** Consultant agrees to prepare and submit:
- Quarterly invoices with details of monthly activities
- June 30, 2025: Final curriculum, curriculum resources, and references, along with reflections on future directions for further professional development advancement.

**Application Requirements**
Proposals should be submitted in a narrative format and provide a detailed description of the applicant’s plan for meeting the consultant requirements. The narrative should address each of the items listed in this section.
Factors on which proposal will be judged (scoring):
   a. **Experience** (46%): See list of specific types of experience listed in the Narrative section on experience.
   b. **Credentials** (20%): Project Director’s and team members’ work and educational experience related to youth development program system quality improvement field for the Project Director. Strong curriculum vitae and references. If multiple team members will be involved, explain their roles and how they complement each other.
   c. **Workplan** (34%): Strong plans for working with National and local teams and adapting content to adult learning styles and best practices for youth development. Timeline provides appropriate time for content development, piloting of training, and revisions based on stakeholder feedback.
   d. **Note**: Although a budget is requested, it will not be scored. Budgets are subject to negotiation and change as the consultant learns more about the scope of the project.

1. **COVER LETTER**
   - A signed cover letter on letterhead (PDF format) including:
     - Statement of Interest
     - Name and Web site of firm (if any)
     - EIN (Tax ID) of your firm (if any)
     - Name of individual contact
     - Contact information (address, e-mail, phone number)
     - Your credentials: (1) Lived and work experience and (2) Highest or most relevant academic degree(s); for each degree listed, institution where earned and field of study

2. **NARRATIVE**
   A narrative (up to 3 pages, fewer preferred) including the narrative elements listed below (Word or PDF format). Additional full-page tables, diagrams, etc., to further illustrate the narrative, are optional and do not count toward the page limit. There is no page limit on attachments. The narrative should be no longer than 3 pages single spaced using 12 point font, at least single line spacing (without kerning), with one inch margins.

**Experience:**
Describe your relevant experience for successfully completing this project, noting as appropriate your history/approach with the following:
   a. Development of best practices that improve outcomes for the Native population of children and families served by Friends of the Children.
   b. Development of such trainings that account for: (1) peer dynamics that take place in person and on-line; (2) school, home and neighborhood-based strategies, in partnership with caregivers, teachers, and other adults.
   c. Integrating training practices into a learning management system that meets the needs of diverse adult learning styles.
   d. Working with national intermediary and local project sites of diverse size and culture.
e. Knowledge of professional development best practices relevant to the Friends of the Children model.
f. Your overall capacity to achieve the goals of the project in relation to other clients and professional responsibilities.

Work Plan:
a. Please submit a work plan with an October 1, 2023 start date and concluding no later than June 30, 2025.
b. Describe your plan to work with the Friends of the Children national team and local sites to solidify their commitment to shared goals and objectives accomplished by this project.
c. Describe your plan to ensure the content of program staff trainings are aligned with adult learning styles and youth development best practices.
d. *Please provide a timeline for your work*, outlining month-by-month phases or activities from the proposed start to end dates. This may be included as an attachment. Timeline should not exceed the federal grant dates (October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2025)

3. Curriculum Vitae (CV)
Please include your CV and any other key partners to be funded by the contract.

4. LETTERS OF REFERENCE
Please include phone and email contact information for 2 references from clients or collaborators, preferably from non-profits with a national intermediary supporting local programs.

5. BUDGET
Please submit a detailed line-item budget in an Excel format. The total project budget limit of $100,000 and should demonstrate how you plan to conduct the work plan you have proposed.

Please break out personnel, including hourly rate, travel, supplies, and other standard budget categories, rather than listing cost per activity. Please note that Friends of the Children does not reimburse for first class airfare, alcohol, and other disallowed items.

Be sure to budget for background checks for all personnel paid by the contract, in keeping with federal contractor guidelines. Any staff paid by the contract must receive all required background checks.

APPENDIX
- Friends of the Children National Overview
- Friends of the Children Values Statement
- U.S. Dept. of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Terms and Conditions
SUBMISSION
Applications, including cover letter, proposal narrative, curriculum vitae, letters of reference, workplan, budget, and supporting documentation must be submitted by email to Tasha Fridia, tfridia@friendsofthechildren.org

Adhere to narrative page limits (3 page max)
Include page numbers on all pages

An electronic version of the completed application in PDF format must be received by August 15th 2023. Late submissions will not be accepted.

All questions and inquiries may be directed to Tasha Fridia by email at tfridia@friendsofthechildren.org or by phone at 405-812-1631
**APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA:** Proposals will be evaluated based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Minimally Meets All Criteria (0 points)</th>
<th>Satisfactorily Meets Some Criteria (1)</th>
<th>Clearly Meets All Criteria (2)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Experience (7 Points)</strong></td>
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<td>• Development of best practices that improve outcomes for the Native population of children and families served by Friends of the Children.</td>
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<td>• Your overall capacity to achieve the goals of the project in relation to other clients and professional responsibilities.</td>
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<td><strong>Points Awarded for Experience (7 points)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Credentials (3 Points)</strong></td>
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<td>• Education and experience in a related field for the Project Director.</td>
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<td>• Strong CV’s and references.</td>
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<td>• If multiple team members will be involved, their roles and how they complement each other are clearly explained.</td>
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<td><strong>Points Awarded for Credentials (3 possible)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Workplan (5 Points)</strong></td>
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<td>• Plan for working with National team and local sites</td>
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<td>• Plan to ensure the content of program staff trainings are aligned with adult learning styles and youth development best practices.</td>
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<td>• Timeline outlining month-by-month phases or activities from the proposed start to end dates</td>
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<td><strong>Points Awarded for Work Plan (5 possible)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL POINTS AWARDED (15 Possible)</strong></td>
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APPLICATION ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

Members of the evaluator selection committee will use the following to make the scoring determinations.

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<tr>
<td><strong>Clearly Meets All Criteria</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Application thoroughly addresses the criteria.</td>
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<td>• Application has several exceptional strengths that will significantly benefit the training.</td>
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<td>• Application has no major weaknesses; normal Friends of the Children assistance will be sufficient to minimize risk.</td>
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<td>• Application is extensive and detailed, and has a high probability of resulting in a thorough and detailed training.</td>
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<td><strong>Satisfactorily Meets Some Criteria</strong></td>
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<td>• Application addresses the criteria, with some omissions.</td>
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<td>• Application has some strengths that are likely to benefit the training design.</td>
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<td>• Application contains some significant weaknesses; special contractor emphasis and close Friends of the Children technical assistance will likely minimize risk.</td>
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<td>• Application has an acceptable probability of resulting in a thorough and detailed training.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minimally Meets All Criteria</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Application does not adequately address the criteria, and may contain significant omissions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Application includes few if any strengths and is not likely to result in a thorough training.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Application includes several significant weaknesses; assistance may not be sufficient to minimize risk.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Application is unlikely to result in a thorough and detailed training.</td>
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APPENDIX

Friends of the Children National Overview

Values Statement

Grant Terms and Conditions
Terms and Conditions

Terms and conditions include, but are not limited to, the following (as applicable):

2. 28 CFR Parts 38, 42, and 54: Civil rights and Nondiscrimination
3. 41 USC 4712: Prohibitions on Reprisal; Notice to Employees
4. Determination of Suitability to Interact with Participating Minors: determinations of suitability before certain individuals may interact with participating minors. The details of this requirement are posted on the OJP web site at https://ojp.gov/funding/Explore/Interact-Minors.htm
5. Compliance with General Appropriations-Law Restrictions on the use of Federal Funds (FY 2022): Pertinent restrictions that may be set out in applicable appropriations acts are indicated at: https://ojp.gov/funding/Explore/FY22AppropriationsRestrictions.htm
6. 8 USC 1324a(a)(1): Employment Eligibility Verification for Hiring Under the Award
7. Restrictions and Certifications Regarding Non-Disclosure Agreements and Related Matters: no entity will receive award funds if it either requires or has required internal confidentiality agreements or statements from employees or contractors that currently prohibit or otherwise currently restrict (or purport to prohibit or restrict) employees or contractors from reporting waste, fraud, or abuse.
8. OJP Training Guiding Principles: Any training developed or delivered with OJP award funds must adhere to the OJP Training Guiding Principles for Grantees and Subgrantees, available at https://ojp.gov/funding/implement/trainingprinciplesforgrantees-subgrantees.htm
9. 18 USC 1913 and 31 USC 1352: Restrictions on Lobbying
10. Requirements Pertaining to Prohibited Conduct Related to Trafficking in Persons: Details related to prohibited conduct related to trafficking in persons are posted at https://ojp.gov/funding/Explore/ProhibitedConduct-Trafficking.htm
11. Requirement to Report Potential Fraud, Waste, and Abuse, and Similar Misconduct: any credible evidence that a principal, employee, agent, subrecipient, contractor, subcontractor, or other person has, in connection with funds under this award-- (1) submitted a claim that violates the False Claims Act; or (2) committed a criminal or civil violation of laws pertaining to fraud, conflict of interest, bribery, gratuity, or similar misconduct must be promptly referred to the DOJ Office of Inspector General (OIG). Additional information is available at https://oig.justice.gov/hotline
12. In addition, upon award of contract, consultant agrees:
   a) To comply with Friends of the Children’s criminal background check policies and procedures.
   b) To fully comply with all Federal, State and local laws, ordinances and regulations.
   c) To comply with the financial and administrative requirements set forth in the current edition of the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) Financial Guide.
   d) To follow OJJDP’s special condition encouraging that all contractors and subcontractors “adopt and enforce policies banning employees from text messaging while driving any vehicle during the course of performing work funded by the grant, and to establish workplace safety policies and conduct education, awareness, and other outreach to decrease crashes caused by distracted drivers.”
   e) To comply with all applicable Federal civil rights laws, including the requirements pertaining to developing and submitting an Equal Employment Opportunity Programs (EEOP), reporting
Findings of Discrimination, and providing language services to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons.

f) To provide FOTC all rights and data necessary to fulfill the Office of Justice Program’s request to the right to (1) obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data first produced under this grant; and (2) authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data for Federal purposes.


