

## **Education Finance Research Consortium (EFRC)**

### **Request for Proposal**

#### **DEFINITION**

“Contractor” – Shall mean the successful bidder and any or all subcontractors that the Foundation has approved to perform the work outlined herein.

“Foundation” – Shall mean the Research Foundation of SUNY

#### **I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

##### **A. Request for Proposal**

The Research Foundation of SUNY, on behalf of the Education Finance Research Consortium (EFRC) at the University at Albany, is seeking to contract with researchers or research organizations to prepare condition reports on New York State schools as outlined in sections II.B1 – B5. Contractors should submit a proposal for these reports along with the attached Debarment form, lobbying form, vendor responsibility questionnaire and Form A.

##### **B. About the Education Finance Research Consortium (EFRC)**

The EFRC is an ongoing collaborative research and policy analysis venture between the New York State Education Department and education scholars, researchers, policy makers and educational institutions in New York State and around the country. The EFRC is based in the Center for Policy Research, at the University at Albany in Albany, New York. The mission of the EFRC is to foster an exchange of information and ideas that inform education policy decisions; to assist education policy decision-makers in identifying issues that require initial or further study; and to produce quality and timely research that contributes to the development of sound education policy.

#### **II. PROJECT SCOPE**

##### **A. Condition Reports**

Condition reports are written using education data compiled by New York State agencies and from data independently collected by the researchers. Condition reports should describe various characteristics of New York State's public school systems and also identify potential areas for further study. Condition reports shall be 35 pages or less (excluding tables, references and charts or data). Examples of previous condition reports are available at [www.albany.edu/edfin](http://www.albany.edu/edfin).

## **B.1. Research Question:**

New York State has substantial experience with charter schools, having created its first charter school in 1999. There are now well over 100 charter schools in various school districts in New York. The Education Finance Research Consortium (EFRC) would like to develop a better understanding of various policy questions pertaining to charter schools. This request is primarily but not solely focused on the funding of charter schools and the implications such funding has both for charter schools and for the school districts in which the charters operate. The research questions for which we are requesting research are developed in more detail below. The successful proposal will provide strong substantive proposals for *all of the* research questions below and will have demonstrated ability in the substance and appropriate methods of the research. The total funding for the project is \$108,000 including all costs.

### **B.2.a. Review of existing studies and descriptive analysis of NY charter schools— Due date: August 31, 2010**

There is a growing body of research on the structure and effects of charter schools as compared to public schools. EFRC seeks a summary of two components of this literature.

First, we are interested in better understanding how New York's charter school regulations compare to those in other states across several aspects of charter school operation, including regulations governing such issues as the approval process for opening a school, teacher certification, funding, fiscal autonomy, and accountability). We believe that summaries of charter school regulations across states already exist and should be used in this analysis.

Second, EFRC requests a short summary of existing research on the relative effectiveness of charter schools compared to traditional public schools that takes advantage of existing summaries and highlights research that has been done in New York City and in states with charter school laws similar to those in New York.

### **B.2.b. Funding of NY charter schools—Due date: March 1, 2011**

The financing of charter schools is an important policy question for which there is very little good information. EFRC seeks research that examines revenues and expenditures for New York charter schools. The successful application will provide empirical analysis for the following questions.

- Where have charter schools developed? Who attends charter schools and how do student and family attributes differ among charter schools and between charter schools and other public schools?
- How does the allocation of expenditures across functional areas compare among charter schools and between charter schools and other public schools?
- Do charter schools rely solely on support from school districts for their revenues; if not what other sources of revenues do they have? How much variation is there

- in the extent to which charter schools are successful in securing other sources of revenues?
- How have charter schools handled capital expenditures, including building maintenance?
  - What evidence exists that differences in expenditures reflect differences in the composition of the student bodies among charter schools and between charter schools and other public schools?

Many of these are difficult questions to answer with confidence and the answers may well vary across charter schools. While there are some centralized sources of data for this report, we expect that the researchers will perform case studies in Albany and Buffalo, the locations with the heaviest concentrations of charter schools outside New York City, to address these questions.

**B.2.c. Effect of NY charter schools on school district finances—Due date: March 1, 2011**

EFRC is also interested in understanding the financial effect of charter schools on the public school district in which the charter school is located. In this regard, please describe how you would examine the following questions.

- What has been the change in school district revenue associated with the movement of students to charter schools? How have school districts coped with these changes?
- Do the losses in revenue accurately reflect the reduced district costs associated with the enrollment reduction?

These are very difficult questions to answer as they depend on the incidence and nature of charter schools as well as the specific conditions and responses of the home district. EFRC seeks research to explore these questions in Albany and Buffalo. This work will likely involve intensive work with these school districts as well as the charter schools in these areas.

**III. Mandatory Requirements**

- A. A report that addresses each of the three research questions must be submitted to EFRC on the dates indicated above.
- B. A final copy of the report must be submitted to the EFRC no later than two months following the receipt of the initial report, taking account of clarifying questions and comments.
- C. The cost of all reports must not exceed \$108,000.00. Contractors must submit their cost with their proposal, the contractor's cost will be scored as part of the evaluation process. Contractors that submit a proposal with a cost exceeding \$108,000.00 will not be considered for an award.

D. Intention to use empirical research tailored to New York State.

#### **IV. DESIREABLE ATTRIBUTES OF A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL**

- A. A strong record of applied research.
- B. Demonstrated experience using qualitative or quantitative research methods
- C. Experience performing research applied to educational policy issues, preferably in the area of school finance.
- D. Quality of the resulting work is established by past products. Examples can be found at [www.albany.edu/edfin](http://www.albany.edu/edfin)

#### **V. PAYMENT**

The Foundation shall pay the Contractor 1/3 of the proposed cost upon submission of a first draft of each report. The balance of the proposed cost for each report shall be paid upon the acceptance of the report by the Foundation. The Contractor shall submit detailed invoices outlining the services provided. Invoices must contain sufficient information including but not limited to the contract number or Foundation purchase order number and federal identification number or social security number of the Contractor.

#### **VI. SUBMISSION DEADLINE**

An original and four (4) copies of the proposal shall be delivered by 2:30 p.m.(EDT) on February 26, 2010 to the following location:

Mr. Scott Pleat  
Management Services Center, Room 302  
The University at Albany  
State University of New York  
1400 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12222

Proposals received after this time will not be considered.

## VII. PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE

RFP Release Date	December 21, 2009
Written Questions from Contractors Due	January 22, 2010
Responses to Contractors' Questions Due	February 12, 2010
Proposal Due Date	February 26, 2010
Selection	March 19, 2010*
*Dates are tentative and subject to change	

## VIII. COMMUNICATION

All requests for clarification and questions regarding the technical aspects and requirement of this RFP **must be made in writing** and received by January 22, 2010 to:

**Dr. Jim Wyckoff**  
**Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy**  
**Milne 300**  
**The University at Albany**  
**Albany, NY 12222**  
**Fax Number: 518.442.5298**  
**Email: [jschmid@uamail.albany.edu](mailto:jschmid@uamail.albany.edu)**

All questions regarding Foundation or New York State purchasing and contract guidelines should be directed to:

**Mr. Scott Pleat**  
**Management Services Center, Room 302**  
**The University at Albany**  
**1400 Washington Avenue**  
**Albany, NY 12222**  
**Telephone: 518.437.4579**  
**Fax Number: 518.437.4571**  
**Email: [spleat@uamail.albany.edu](mailto:spleat@uamail.albany.edu)**

## IX. FORMAT OF PROPOSALS

### A. Title Page

Include the RFP subject, the name of your organization, address, telephone number, fax number, name and address of contact person, and date.

### B. Project Design

In no more than five (5) pages, describe how the proposed condition report will address the aforementioned research question. Please include proposed research methods, the extent and quality of data/evidence, and a work plan.

### C. Curriculum Vitae

## X. EVALUATION CRITERIA

This RFP is designed to obtain complete data from each contractor so as to enable the FOUNDATION to determine which vendor is best able to provide the requested services. A determination will be made of the contractor's ability to provide service.

The Foundation will award the contract based upon evaluation of all aspects of the project according to the needs of the Foundation and the best interests of the State of New York. The award will go to the contractor whose proposal provides the best value as determined by the University.

Phase I will verify that all mandatory requirements are addressed and met. The vendor must address each mandatory requirement. Upon the contractor's request, the Foundation will provide an electronic copy of this RFP.

Phase II will evaluate and score all aspects of the technical proposal and select the highest for the RFP. A committee shall be responsible for the evaluation. This committee may, at its own discretion, share certain sections of the contractor's responses with experts in order to obtain their comments. Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria, taken together, as illustrated herein:

Demonstrated ability to produce high quality research	10 percent
Demonstrated ability to produce high quality research in the field of education policy and/or finance in general, and research that examines charter schools specifically.	10 percent
Demonstrated creativity and an appropriate approach to the problem, including the potential to make important contributions to policymakers and the field in terms of findings, research methodology or both.	20 percent
A cost-effective approach. Award may not exceed \$108,000, including indirect costs.	30 percent
An appropriate research design, including evidence that the proposal is based on an adequate number of New York State charter schools and their associated school districts. The research design should identify data sources and methods of primary data collection.	30 percent