

Puget Sound Educational Service District

Request for Qualifications & Quotations No. 5800-04

Road Map Region- Race to the Top-District (RTTT-D)

Third-Party Evaluation

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1. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Qualifications and Quotations (RFQQ) is to solicit competitive evaluation design from qualified organizations to conduct the third-party or external evaluation of the Road Map Region Race to the Top-District (RTTT-D) project.

The goal of the external evaluation is to document the impact of RTTT-D investment and system strategies on changes in what school staff, students, and families know and can do; changes in performance indicators for individual school districts; and changes in performance indicators for the region.

Through this RFQQ process, the Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD) will appoint an organization to conduct the external evaluation of the RTTT-D project.

B. Correspondence/Submission Deadline

1. All responses shall be submitted via email to: Nola Oldenburg, RFQQ Coordinator, Puget Sound ESD at noldenburg@psed.org no later than **1:00 p.m. (PST), Friday, January 3, 2014** to be deemed responsive. Late or incomplete Responses will not be considered.
2. All questions regarding this RFQQ must be directed in writing by email to: Nola Oldenburg, RFQQ Coordinator, Puget Sound ESD at noldenburg@psed.org **no later than 5:00 p.m. (PST), Friday, December 27, 2013**. Questions must include in the email subject line "RTTT-D RFQQ 5800-04 Questions".
3. Organizations may register in advance through an electronic "Letter of Intent to Respond" to the RFQQ Coordinator, Nola Oldenburg at noldenburg@psed.org by the date specified on the Calendar of Events. The Letter of Intent shall include name, mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone contact information. Organizations submitting a Letter of Intent will be added to the list of potential respondents and will receive any addenda and Q&A by e-mail as soon as they become available.

2. CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The dates listed below represent the projected RFQQ events schedule. PSESD reserves the right to change the schedule. Notification of Q&A and amendments to this schedule, prior to the RFQQ deadline, will be sent via e-mail to Respondents with a Letter of Intent on file and will also be made available on the government WEBS page at <https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/webs/> up until the RFQQ submission deadline.

Optional Letter of Intent.....	December 20, 2013, 5pm (PST)
Last day to submit questions	December 27, 2013, 5pm (PST)
Deadline for receipt of responses	January 3, 2014, 1pm (PST)
Tentative award date.....	January 30, 2014
Tentative start date	February 3, 2014

3. **BACKGROUND**

In 2012, seven King County, Washington, school districts joined forces and won \$40 million in federal Race to the Top funds. This effort was a tremendous collaboration that brought together all seven superintendents, education associations and school boards, in addition to mayors, educators, housing authorities, health service providers, community-based organizations, and parents.

The participating school districts are Auburn, Federal Way, Highline, Kent, Renton, Seattle, and Tukwila. The districts dubbed themselves The Road Map District Consortium, a reference to their participation in the Road Map Project, a community-wide effort in South Seattle and South King County to drive major educational improvement with a focus on personalized learning.

The consortium serves the state's most disadvantaged students, including 70 percent of the county's low-income children, 69 percent of the county's English Language Learner (ELL) students and 58 percent of the county's students of color. The district consortium Race-to-the-Top plan covers 261 schools, 147,085 students (56 percent of King County) and 10,876 educators. Of the 261 schools, 71 meet the high-need definition. A high-need school was defined as an elementary, K-8 or middle school with 77% or more of students qualifying for FRPL and high schools with 55% of students or more qualifying for FRPL.

The districts' plan is designed to make big improvements along the entire education continuum, from cradle to college. This ambitious plan involves the implementation of various projects and the implementation and/or scale-up of several region-wide commitments (e.g., implementation of New Generation Science Standards). The projects and commitments will ensure that regional students *Start Strong* in their early years; become *STEM Strong* during their elementary, middle, and high-school years; and *Stay Strong* during their secondary schooling and postsecondary education. In order to put its theory of change into action, the District Consortium Race to the Top-District Project (RTTT-D) adopted a three-tiered regional system-building strategy:

- Tier 1: System-wide impact
- Tier 2: Impacting high-need schools
- Tier 3: High-intensity school-community partnerships for high-poverty schools

For more information on the Race to the Top-District Consortium project, go to <http://roadmapracetothetop.org/>.

To review Section IX (E)(4)—Evaluating Effectiveness of Investments—in the Road Map District Consortium Race to the Top-District application, go to http://roadmapracetothetop.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/RTT_D_RoadMapDistrictConsortiumApplication.pdf.pdf

To review the approved Program Evaluation Scope of Work, go to <http://roadmapracetothetop.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/PE-Approved-092013.pdf>

4. FUNDING SOURCE

The source of funding for this procurement is 100% Race to the Top-District federal funds pursuant to CFDA #84.416. Funds must be used in accordance with the requirements of section 14005 and 14006 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), as authorized under P.L. 111-5, as amended by section 1832(b) of the Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011, and the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-74, Division F, Title III); and applicable regulations including 34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 80 (except section 80.30(c), 81, 82, 84, 97, 98, and 99, and the Education Department debarment and suspension regulations in 2 CFR part 3485.

5. SCOPE OF SERVICES

A. Puget Sound ESD is seeking an organization to submit the best possible external evaluation design to describe and analyze the multisite, multi-tiered, multifaceted efforts of the District Consortium partners as a coherent whole while also reflecting the inherent complexities of the RTTT-D initiative. As a collective impact endeavor, the RTTT-D project has several components that require attention. It would be important to reflect the District Consortium's emphasis on collective engagement in planning, development, implementation, common measurement, and data-informed decision-making. In planning the external evaluation approach to use, it is important to ensure that the RTTT-D project evaluation complements the Road Map Project evaluation.

The evaluation design approaches would consider the following questions:

1. *RTTT-D efforts towards reaching regional and district performance targets*
 - a) How well have RTTT-D efforts helped meet Goal Areas and Performance Measures targets for all students? For students in high-need schools?
 - b) What district and school-community strategies have contributed to gains in student achievement or to decreases in achievement gaps, especially for high-poverty and ELL students? At what cost?

2. *Nature and Quality of the RTTT-D Partnerships that facilitated achievement of performance targets*
 - a) How have RTTT-D consortium partners engaged in collective efforts to help close achievement gaps and to help students in the region gain ground? How did RTTT-D investment funds impact the efforts?
 - b) What events (e.g., standards roll-out; new assessment systems) impacted RTTT-D efforts and how well did partners tackle challenges they presented?
 - c) How have RTTT-D partnerships helped build capacity in the individual districts?
 - d) How well are/were partnerships appreciated in the districts? In the region?
 - e) How have the RTTT-D partners prepared for sustainability of RTTT-D efforts and gains achieved?
 - f) Have the RTTT-D partnership efforts helped stimulate district-, regional-, or state policy-development conversations? How?

- B. The evaluation design response must be provided electronically.
- a. The expected completion date of the external evaluation services is December 31, 2016. Continuation of the contract is reviewed at the beginning of each project year and the annual renewals are contingent on external evaluation services performed to the reasonable satisfaction of PSESD.
 - b. Tentative deliverables schedule

Project Year	Deliverables	Due Date
Y2: Feb-Aug 2014	Evaluation Plan	February 15, 2014
	Annual Evaluation Report	December 31, 2014
Y3: Sept 2014-Aug 2015	Annual Evaluation Report	December 31, 2015
Y4: Sept 2015-Dec. 2016	Final Evaluation Report	December 31, 2016

- C. Proposed total cost for the external evaluation services shall not exceed \$322,000.00.

6. GENERAL RESPONSE INSTRUCTIONS AND CONDITIONS

- A. Organizations may register in advance through an electronic “Letter of Intent to Respond” to the RFQQ Coordinator, Nola Oldenburg, at noldenburg@psed.org by the date specified on Calendar of Events. The Letter of Intent shall include contact name, mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone contact information. Organizations responding with a Letter of Intent will be added to the list of potential respondents and will receive any addenda and Q&A by e-mail as soon as they become available.
- B. Respondents that submit responses to this RFQQ shall answer each of the requests for information in Section 6 in a concise and clear manner. Respondents shall provide full and succinct responses to the questions posed in this RFQQ.
- C. All questions shall be answered in the order presented in this RFQQ. Initiate each response by restating the question. Submission requirements include a page limit not to exceed 30 pages, including the cover letter and appendices, in font no smaller than Times Roman 12-point.
- D. All responses to this RFQQ shall become the property of the PSESD, and information submitted to the PSESD may be subject to disclosure. The PSESD reserves the right to use any and all ideas and concepts presented in any response submitted as a result of this RFQQ, whether such response is accepted or not.
- E. The PSESD may request additional information from the Respondents during the course of the selection process. By submitting a response to this RFQQ, the Respondent agrees to perform the work described in the submitted response. The PSESD may require additional technical and background information during the evaluation period, and/or may negotiate all elements, including fees, which are contained in or which relate to any offer. The PSESD may accept or reject any or all responses, or waive any informality or

otherwise effect any agreement as the PSESD, in its sole judgment, may deem to be necessary and appropriate. By submitting an offer, the Respondent agrees to these terms.

- F. All unsuccessful Respondents will be notified after the award. Non-acceptance of any response will be devoid of criticism and of any implication that the response was deficient. Non-acceptance of any response will mean only that another was deemed to be more advantageous. Copies of all responses and support material will be retained by the PSESD.
- G. The PSESD shall not be liable for any expenses incurred by the Respondents in the preparation and presentation of the offers and may terminate the selection process at any time without prior notice.

7. REQUIRED INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED

- A. Response to this Request for Qualifications (RFQQ) must be in the form of a response package and initiate each response by restating the each of the following requirement:

Begin your response with a **cover letter** that includes the name, address, e-mail address, and telephone number of a single individual within your organization who will be the PSESD's primary contact concerning the response must be included. The cover letter shall state two reasons your organization should be selected to conduct the RTTT-D external evaluation, keeping in mind the specific qualifications required and described in this RFQQ.

- 1. Demonstrate your organization's qualifications and capacity to conduct the RTTT-D evaluation.
 - a) Describe your organization's knowledge and experience in conducting complex evaluations of initiatives in large educational settings.
 - i. Include your organization's policy and procedures for assuring human subjects protection.
 - b) Describe your organization's knowledge, experience, and capability for conducting education evaluation using systems level evaluations (e.g., developmental evaluation; systems initiatives or systems change evaluation).
 - i. Include your organization's experiences in documenting and assessing how the implementation process of an educational initiative accommodates, adapts, and improves through fiscal, key stakeholder, practice, policy, and other related 'educational climate' changes.
 - c) Describe your organization's knowledge and experiences in determining efficacy of education program strategies and estimating their value using fiscal analytical methods such as cost-benefit analysis, cost effectiveness, or return on investment.

- d) Describe your organization’s experiences in helping assess and address academic needs of students from low-income, culturally- and linguistically-diverse communities.
 - e) Describe your organization’s knowledge and understanding of cradle-to-career educational programs and policies (i.e., federal; state), and initiatives (e.g., roll-out of Common Core State Standards, or of the New Generation Science Standards; implementation of new assessment systems (developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)) and their impact on regional or local efforts such as RTTT-D.
 - f) Describe your organization’s experiences in working with a variety of partners and stakeholders in the districts and communities. Include brief illustrations of collaborative successes and how they were achieved.
 - g) Describe how your organization has worked with district and community stakeholders especially in the use of evaluation data to guide program implementation and course correction.
 - h) List the principal personnel—name and title of each person—to be involved in the external evaluation project, from design to development to implementation.
 - i. In an appendix (to be labeled Appendix A), submit brief biographical profiles of those individuals who will be assigned to the external evaluation project. Respondents are advised that the inclusion of specific personnel shall be considered by the PSESD to be a commitment by the organization that those designated persons will be available to perform the roles represented.
2. Provide your proposed evaluation design for the RTTT-D project evaluation. Begin this section with an Executive Summary of your proposed design.
- a) Demonstrate how your design is optimal.
 - i. Describe the *formative evaluation approach* (e.g., developmental evaluation) that your organization will use to reflect the nature and quality of the ongoing collective impact effort by the RTTT-D consortium of districts. In particular, describe how your approach will yield quantitative and qualitative data that allows the consortium to adjust strategies in real time.
 - ii. Describe the *fiscal or cost analytical approach* (e.g., cost-benefit analysis) your organization will use to examine how RTTT-D funds contributed to outcomes.
 - iii. Describe your approach to *outcomes evaluation* that will examine the achievement of regional and district targets (e.g., systems initiatives evaluation).
 - b) Describe the qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods that you propose to use and briefly explain why.

- c) Include a plan for facilitating learning among RTTT-D stakeholders and for reporting to them (e.g., communications plan).
 - d) Propose a Timeline of Evaluation Activities and a Budget (Refer to RFQQ Sections 5B and 5C above.)
4. Provide, in an appendix (to be labeled Appendix B), a listing of similarly-typed grant projects and their values that your organization evaluated within the past five years. Then, identify two comparable organizations for which your institution *currently* provides external evaluation services (containing information on grant type and value), including the name and phone numbers of a contact person in each organization.
 5. Discuss any other factors not mentioned above that you believe should be considered by the PSESD.

8. RESPONSE EVALUATION AND SELECTION

A. Evaluation Process

All responses will be subject to a thorough and comprehensive evaluation by the PSESD. A primary consideration shall be the effectiveness of the organization in the delivery of comparable or related services based on demonstrated performance. The evaluation will be based on the written response as submitted.

B. Evaluation Criteria

All responses must be complete, in the required format, and be in compliance with all of the requirements of this RFQQ. Responses meeting this requirement will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

Criteria	Points
1. Qualifications and Experience: Respondent has the necessary knowledge, skills, and experiences to conduct the RTTT-D evaluation.	
a) Respondent's qualifications and experience conducting complex evaluations of initiatives in large educational systems (i.e., district-wide; state-wide).	5
b) Respondent's knowledge, experience, and capacity for conducting education evaluation using systems level evaluations (e.g., systems initiatives evaluation; developmental evaluation; systems change evaluation).	5
c) Respondent's knowledge, experience, and capacity for conducting education evaluation using fiscal analysis (e.g., cost-benefit analysis or return on-investment).	5
d) Respondent's knowledge and competencies in educational equity and multicultural issues in school districts and communities.	5
e) Respondent's knowledge of cradle-to-career educational initiatives and policies including new standards and new assessments that could potentially impact RTTT-D efforts.	5
f) Respondent's capacity/experience and willingness to collaborate with multiple stakeholders (e.g., the RTTT-D Project Director, RTTT-D Project Leads, various	5

Criteria	Points
RTTT-D partners in the districts, schools, and communities, RTTT-D evaluation manager, and the Road Map Project Formative Evaluator).	
g) Respondent's experience in engaging education stakeholders in data-informed decision-making.	5
h) Principal personnel assigned to RTTT-D external evaluation project have necessary knowledge, skills, and experiences.	5
<i>Qualifications and Experience Subtotal</i>	40
2. Design: Respondent's evaluation design meets the requirements that it demonstrates the coherence and complexity of the RTTT-D initiative and addresses topic areas such as how RTTT-D-funded projects helped achieve regional goals.	
a) Evaluation design approaches that examine RTTT-D project evaluation questions—	
i) Formative Evaluation (RTTT-D as an ongoing collective impact effort)	10
ii) Fiscal Study (e.g., how RTTT-D funds made a difference)	10
iii) Outcomes Appraisal (e.g., achievement of RTTT-D regional and district student performance targets; comparison studies)	10
b) Qualitative and Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis Methods	10
c) Respondent's plans for facilitation of learning among and for reporting to stakeholders.	10
d) Proposed Timeframe (for tasks, deliverables) and Budget	10
<i>Design Subtotal</i>	60
<i>Grand Total</i>	100

Selection will be based on determination of which response will best meet the needs of the PSESD and the requirements of this RFQQ.

C. Selection of Winning Response

The selection of a winning response will be based in a competitive selection of responses received. The PSESD will conduct follow-up interviews with finalists as part of the process of selection. The PSESD may accept or reject any or all responses, or waive any informality or otherwise effect any agreement as the PSESD, in its sole judgment, may deem to be necessary and appropriate.

9. CONTRACT GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The submission of a response is an offer to enter into a contract that, upon acceptance by PSESD, obligates the Awarded Contractor to comply with the contract's General Terms and Conditions outlined on Attachment A.

Attachment A GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. **Alterations and Amendments.** This agreement may be amended only by mutual agreement of all parties. Such amendments shall not be binding unless they are in writing and signed by personnel authorized to bind each of the parties.
2. **Assignment.** Neither the PSESD nor the Contractor shall assign this Contract, either in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of the other party, which shall not be unreasonably withheld. Any assignment permitted under this clause does not relieve either party from its duties or obligations under this contract.
3. **Background Checks.** In accordance with Washington State laws, any Puget Sound ESD Contractors who will have contact with or near children are required to be fingerprinted and pass a Washington State Patrol background check before they begin work.
4. **Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Ineligibility.** Federal funds are the basis for this contract. The Contractor certifies that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in transactions by any federal department or agency.
5. **Change in Status.** In the event of substantive change in the legal status, organizational structure, or fiscal reporting responsibility of the Contractor, Contractor agrees to notify the PSESD of the change. Contractor shall provide notice as soon as practicable, but no later than thirty (30) days after such a change takes effect.
6. **Confidentiality.** The Contractor acknowledges that student data, material and information which originates from this contract, and the student assessment data, material and information which will come into its possession in connection with performance under this contract, may contain confidential personally identifiable data subject to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act or other privacy laws, and is confidential data that shall not be disclosed to or used by third parties without written permission from the parent of the student whom the information pertains to or the school district that maintains the educational records the data originated from. The Contractor agrees to hold all material and information it receives related to students in strictest confidence, not to make use thereof other than for the performance of this contract, to release it only to authorized employees and agents requiring such information to perform the obligations under this contract and not release or disclose it to any other party. The Contractor agrees to release such information or material only to employees and agents who have signed a written agreement expressly prohibiting re-disclosure.
7. **Disputes.** In the event that a dispute arises under this contract, the parties agree the dispute shall be submitted to a mediator in advance of litigation.

8. **Entire Agreement.** This written contract constitutes the mutual agreement of the Contractor and the PSESD in whole. No alteration or variation of the terms of this contract and no oral understandings or agreements not incorporated herein shall be binding.
9. **Governing Law.** This contract shall be construed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Washington and the venue of any action brought hereunder shall be in Superior Court for King County.
10. **Indemnification / Hold Harmless.** The Contractor shall defend, indemnify and hold the PSESD, its officers, officials, employees and volunteers harmless from any and all claims, injuries, damages, losses or suits including attorney fees, arising out of or in connection with the Contractor's and/or subcontractor's performance of this agreement, except for injuries and damages caused by the sole negligence of PSESD.

The Contractor shall procure and maintain for the duration of the Agreement, insurance against claims for injuries to persons or damage to property which may arise from or in connection with the performance of this agreement by the Contractor, their agents, representatives, employees or subcontractors.

11. **Independent Capacity.** The parties intend that an independent contractor relationship will be created by this contract. The Contractor and his/her employees or agents performing under this contract are not employees or agents of the PSESD. The Contractor will not hold himself/herself out as nor claim to be an officer or employee of the PSESD by reason hereof, nor will the Contractor make any claim or right, privilege, or benefit which would accrue to such employee under law. Conduct and control of the work will be solely with the Contractor.

12. **Insurance.**

- a. **Commercial General Liability.** The contractor shall provide Commercial General liability insurance written on an occurrence basis with limits no less than \$2,000,000 combined single limit per occurrence for personal injury, bodily injury and property damage. Coverage shall include, but not be limited to: blanket contractual; products/completed operations; broad form property damage; and employer's liability.
- b. **Proof of Insurance.** Certificates and or evidence satisfactory to the PSESD confirming the existence, terms and conditions of all insurance required above shall be delivered to the PSESD within five (5) days of the Contractor's receipt of a request for proof. The policy(ies) of insurance required to be maintained in accordance with this contract shall not be cancelled or given notice of non-renewal nor shall the terms and conditions thereof be altered or amended without thirty (30) days written notice being given to the PSESD.

PSESD shall be named as an additional insured on the Contractor's policies as set forth above, and **a copy of the endorsement naming PSESD as additional insured shall be attached to the Certificate of Insurance.** PSESD reserves the right to receive a certified copy of all required insurance policies.

13. **Payments.** No payments in advance or in anticipation of services to be provided under this contract shall be made by the PSESD. All payments to the Contractor are conditioned upon (1) Contractor's submission of a properly executed and supported invoice for

payment, including such supporting documentation of performance and supporting documentation of costs incurred or paid, or both as is otherwise provided for in the body of the contract under Duties of the PSESD, and (2) Acceptance and certification by the PSESD or designee of satisfactory performance by the Contractor.

Except as otherwise provided in this contract, (1) All approvable invoices for payment due to the Contractor shall be paid within thirty (30) calendar days of their submission by the Contractor, and (2) All expenses necessary to the Contractor's performance of this contract shall be borne in full by the Contractor.

Contractor must submit invoices within 30 days of providing services. Invoices submitted after this date may be subject to non-payment.

14. **Registration with Department of Revenue.** The Contractor shall be registered with the Department of Revenue and be responsible for payment of all taxes due on payments made under this contract.
15. **Records, Documentation and Reports.** The Contractor shall maintain complete financial records relating to this contract and complete records documenting the services rendered under the contract, including all books, records, documents, magnetic media, receipts, invoices, and all other evidence of accounting procedures and practices which sufficiently and properly reflect all direct and indirect costs of any nature expended in the performance of this contract.
16. **Rights in Data.** Data that originates under this contract shall be "works for hire" as defined by the U.S. Copyright Act of 1976 and shall be owned by the PSESD. In the event any data which originates under this contract is not considered a "work for hire" under the U.S. Copyright laws, Contractor hereby, irrevocably assigns all rights, title, and interest in such data, including all intellectual rights, to the PSESD effective from the moment of creation of such data. Data shall include, but not be limited to, notes, minutes, reports, documents, pamphlets, articles, books, magazines, surveys, studies, computer programs, films, tapes, and/or sound reproductions, photographs, and other items in any format, form, or medium. Ownership includes ownership of all intellectual concepts and properties embodied in data, the right to copyright, patent or register data, and the right to transfer these rights.

Data which is delivered under this contract, but which does not originate thereunder, shall be transferred to the PSESD with a nonexclusive, royalty-free, irrevocable license to publish, translate, reproduce, deliver, perform, dispose of, and to authorize others to do so: PROVIDED, that such a license shall be limited to the extent which the Contractor has a right to grant such a license. The Contractor shall exert all reasonable effort to advise the PSESD, at the time of delivery of data furnished under this contract, of all known or potential invasions of privacy contained therein and of any portion of such document that was not produced in the performance of this contract. The PSESD shall receive prompt written notice of each notice or claim of copyright infringement received by the Contractor with respect to any data delivered under this contract. The PSESD shall have the right to modify or remove any restrictive markings placed upon the data by the Contractor.

17. **Severability.** If any provision of this contract or any provision of any document incorporated by reference shall be held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions of this contract which can be given effect without the invalid provision, and to this end the provisions of this contract are declared to be severable.

18. **Subcontracting.** The Contractor shall not enter into subcontracts for any of the work contemplated under this contract without obtaining prior written approval of the PSESD.
19. **Termination for Convenience.** Except as otherwise provided in this contract, the PSESD Superintendent or Designee may, by ten (10) days written notice, beginning on the second day after the mailing, terminate this contract in whole or in part. The notice shall specify the date of termination and shall be conclusively deemed to have been delivered to and received by the Contractor as of midnight the second day of mailing in the absence of proof of actual delivery to and receipt by the Contractor. If this contract is so terminated, the PSESD shall be liable only for payment required under the terms of the contract for services rendered or goods delivered prior to the effective date of termination.