



MEMORANDUM

Date: September 30, 2022

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: Jan Leshner 
County Administrator

Re: **Request for Proposals for Future PEEPs Program Design, Evaluation and Metrics**

The first year of the Pima Early Education Program (PEEP) is behind us and contracts are in place to expend most of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds that the Board allocated for PEEPs through Years 2 and 3. Year 4 and beyond will require a change in funding source, which began this year with the Board's initial increase in the Library District property tax rate to start building a sustainability fund. Year 4 will also mean the end of ARPA funding allocated to State programs that support free and reduced cost childcare and preschool, which could impact the state-wide system as a whole in ways we can't predict. While the current program design is working now, we recognize that these funding changes and other market conditions could affect the success of the program. In addition, one of the PEEPs guiding principles is reviewing, reevaluating and revising regularly with input from stakeholders.

With this in mind, the Community and Workforce Development Department (CWD) is issuing a request for proposals (RFP) for recommendations for PEEPs program design, evaluation and metrics for Year 4 and beyond (attached). The PEEPs Multi-Departmental Oversight Team, or a subset of it, will serve as the evaluation committee for proposals. A final report from the contractor is due next summer, which is well timed to inform development of the Year 4 (Fiscal Year 2025) budget.

JKL/anc

Attachment

c: The Honorable Dustin Williams, Pima County School Superintendent
Francisco Garcia, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer
Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator
Steve Holmes, Deputy County Administrator
Dan Sullivan, Director, Community and Workforce Development
Amber Mathewson, Director, Pima County Library District
Terry Cullen, MD, MS, Public Health Director, Pima County Health Department
Heath Vescovi-Chiordi, Director, Pima County Office of Economic Development
Jen Darland, Deputy Director, Community and Workforce Development
Nicole Fyffe, Senior Advisor, County Administrator's Office
Nicole Scott, Pima Early Education Program Manager



**Pima Early Education
Program Scholarships**



PIMA COUNTY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**Pima County, Community & Workforce Development
Pima Early Education Program Scholarships (PEEPs)**

Request for Proposal: September 30, 2022
Proposal number: RFP-CWD-PEEP-2023-01.

TITLE: Recommendations for Pima Early Education Program Design for
Years 4 - 7

Issue Date: Friday, September 30, 2022

Proposals Due: Friday, November 11, 2022, at 4:00 P.M., Arizona (MST)

Submit Two (2) Signed copies of the Proposal and One Complete Digital Copy of the proposal in a sealed envelope clearly marked on the outside with the Proposal number, title, due date, time and Applicant's name to:

**Nicole Scott, PEEPs Program Manager
Community & Workforce Development
2797 E. Ajo Way, 1st Floor
Tucson, AZ 85713**

SOLICITATION:

Pima County intends to retain an expert consultant to review the current Pima Early Education Program design and metrics for years 1-3 and make recommendations for program design, evaluation and metrics for years four through seven. Recommendations should consider the change in funding source from primarily the American Rescue Plan Act – Coronavirus State Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (CSLFRF) (years 1-3) to primarily Pima County Library District funds (years 4-7). Pima County is most interested in recommendations that consider scenarios for changed levels of State and Federal-level funding support for childcare subsidies and scholarships beginning in year 4 when CSLFRF funding has sunsetted. An electronic version of this RFP is located at:

<http://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=756311>

Applicants are required to check this website prior to the due date for addenda and/or additional information to assure that the proposal incorporates all addenda. Applicants are required to sign a confirmation document verifying they have reviewed and understand the information on the Website. Prospective Applicants may also pick up a copy of this RFP, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. MST, at the above address.

Eligible applicants: ***Applicants must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) in the federal System for Award Management (SAM) and certify that they have not been debarred or suspended from Federal contracting. For more information see <https://sam.gov/content/home>.***

PROPOSAL DUE DATE

Proposals are due Friday, November 11, 2022 at 4:00 P.M., Arizona (MST).

Submit two (2) signed proposals and one complete digital copy in a sealed envelope clearly marked on the outside with the Proposal number, title, due date, time and Applicant's name to:

**Nicole Scott, Program Manager
Community & Workforce Development
2797 E. Ajo Way, 1st Floor
Tucson, AZ 85713**

County will not accept verbal requests for clarifications or interpretations. Offeror(s) must submit any questions or deviation requests in writing via email to CWD, Nicole.Scott@pima.gov. All submittals must reference the Proposal Number and Title. County may not answer any Questions that Offeror(s) submit within 8 days of the solicitation Due Date/Time.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION: Pima County Community & Workforce Development ("CWD") is interested in proposals from expert consultants to review the current Pima Early Education Program design and metrics for years 1-3 and make recommendations for program design, evaluation and metrics for years four through seven. Recommendations should consider scenarios for changes in levels of State and Federal-level funding support for childcare subsidies and scholarships beginning in year four (4) when the current funding source, American Rescue Plan Act – Coronavirus State & Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (CSLFRF), has sunset. Proposal should consider the change in funding source from primarily CSLFRF (years 1-3) to primarily Pima County Library District funds (years 4-7), per specifications called for herein. Amendments to this RFP may be issued at any time after publishing. Contract funding will not exceed \$100,000.00 over the life of the contract.

BACKGROUND: On February 16, 2021, the Pima County Board of Supervisors directed the County Administrator to include \$10 million in the Pima County budget for Fiscal Year 2021-22 to fund scholarships to wholly or partly cover the cost incurred by parents who wish to enroll their 3-5 year old child (not yet eligible for Kindergarten) in a high-quality early childhood education program. Eligible children were to come from families whose income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty level.

These scholarships were to be payable to high-quality early childhood education (ECE) programs such as those run by public school districts, childcare centers and family home care providers. On May 4, 2021, the Board approved the Year 1 plan for the Pima Early Education Program (PEEP), and directed staff to plan for a multi-year program. In August 2021, the Board of Supervisors approved use of \$30 million from CSLFRF to fund the program over three years in lieu of General Funds.

The purpose of this program is to (1) increase the number of eligible 3-5 year old children attending high quality preschools via local funding partnerships and statewide coordination; and (2) to increase the number of preschools recognized as high quality. The Year 1 plan included three main components:

- PEEPs funded Quality First/First Things First scholarships allocated to over 150 preschools,
- PEEPs funded preschool expansion classes operated by seven school districts, and
- PEEPs funded extended day Head Start preschool programming at 10 locations.

In Year 1, 850 children were served at over 100 locations. 78% of children in free school district expansion classes and extended day Head Start were children of color, and 19% were dual language learners. A lack of teachers and enrollment staff, as well as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, resulted in the closure of preschool classes, the inability for schools to open new expansion classes, and underutilization of available scholarships.

Towards the end of Year 1, the Board approved additional contracts and contract amendments for Years 2 and 3 of the program. Reimbursement rates were increased to address the need to pay the cost of quality as opposed to market rate, which includes the need to increase teacher compensation. The income eligibility for First Things First scholarships was increased to 300% FPL for Years 2 and 3. Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) has begun piloting partial funding assistance for children from families with incomes between 201% and 300% of the Federal Poverty Level.

As originally directed by the Board, preschool providers include high quality early childhood education programs operated by public school districts, private childcare centers and family home care providers. High quality is defined as those participating in the State's Quality First program at a 3-5 star rating, nationally accredited providers, and Head Start providers. For Years 1-3, a small number of 2-star providers were allocated scholarships.

The first three years of the program are funded primarily with CSLFRF. Financial contributions were also received from the City of Tucson, Town of Marana, Town of Oro Valley, and school districts. Donations to the United Way of Tucson & Southern Arizona from individuals, businesses, and non-profits support a new program called Accelerate Quality, which complements PEEPs. The Board of Supervisors has begun raising the Library District property tax rate to fund all or part of the program beginning in Year 4.

PEEPs Guiding Principles

1. Increase high-quality preschool capacity while addressing existing need for financial aid.
2. Distribute scholarships efficiently and effectively through existing programs and partners.
3. Do not supplant existing public assistance for preschool and utilize local funding as a “last dollar in” approach.
4. Coordinate with existing agencies that provide public assistance for high-quality preschool to establish baseline need and simple system-level benchmarks, monitor progress and refine collaborative efforts to improve the system as a whole.
5. Establish scholarship rates that cover the full cost of providing high-quality preschool per child, based on accepted cost of quality and local market rate studies, considering wages necessary to attract quality teachers, and accounting for current DES subsidy rates and school district in-kind contributions, and pandemic-related increased costs.
6. Ensure participating preschool providers are geographically dispersed, with priority given to preschools serving lower income/higher need neighborhoods, tribal and rural areas.
7. Connect eligible families to high-quality preschools and financial assistance, including parents in local workforce development programs.
8. Collaborate with partners to connect participating families with other community resources to accelerate family and community wide benefits.
9. Maximize multi-year partner contributions to make the program more sustainable.
10. Advocate with partners for a long-term state-wide solution.
11. Remain flexible as providers and families recover and rebuild from the pandemic.
12. Review, reevaluate, revise, and report regularly with input from stakeholders.

SCOPE OF WORK

- A. Selected contractor will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the PEEPS program implementation and synthesize design recommendations for ongoing program sustainability.
- B. Contractor will consider potential State and Federal funding support for childcare subsidies and scholarships beginning in year four (4) when the current funding source, American Rescue Plan Act – Coronavirus State & Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (CSLFRF), has sunset. Proposal should consider the change in funding source from primarily CSLFRF (years 1-3) to primarily Pima County Library District funds (years 4-7), per specifications called for herein.
- C. Deliverables will include, at a minimum:
 1. Preliminary study plan
 2. Interim report
 3. Draft Final report shall be provided to County in Word, at least thirty (30) days prior to final report.
 4. All deliverables and Final Report will incorporate:
 - Information from community surveys and assessments;
 - Qualitative and quantitative program data; and
 - Feedback and review by County staff.
 5. Final report shall be provided to County in PDF format.
 6. Contractor will allow ten (10) days for County to review draft report.

- D. Final report shall provide a clear assessment of the current program design and metrics that are in place for program years 1-3, and recommendations for program design, evaluation and metrics for years 4-7. Recommendations will consider changes in funding sources from primarily Federal American Rescue Plan Act funds (years 1-3) to primarily Pima County Library District funds (years 4-7), as well as various scenarios for changes in State/Federal-levels of support for childcare subsidies and scholarships beginning in year 4 due to the sunseting of Federal American Rescue Plan Act Funds. As part of the assessment and recommendations, the final report shall address the following specifically:
1. Implementation of the program through the current mix of contracts with school districts, First Things First (FTF) and Child-Parent Centers (CPC);
 2. Effectiveness of directing families to Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) to connect with preschool providers that offer PEEPs scholarships, free preschool classes, and extended day Head Start, and/or the need for a new/improved portal;
 3. Awareness of the program among families, businesses and preschool providers;
 4. Extent to which the program design facilitates parents'/caregivers' ability to work or attend training/further education;
 5. Program age limits;
 6. Income eligibility limits; and
 7. Extent to which the existing program is integrated into other related County departments and service areas, including; Health Department; Community and Workforce Development, including Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA)-funded programs, Pima County Workforce Investment Board, housing and rental assistance, and Community Assistance Division; Pima County Public Library, Department of Justice Services; Economic Development Department; and the Pima County School Superintendent.
- E. Meetings include, but are not limited to:
1. Initial kickoff meeting with selected contractor;
 2. Meetings every month with County staff; and
 3. Contractor meetings as needed with stakeholders, etc.
- F. All data, reports, summaries and work products collected or created under this contract will be owned by Pima County, subject to any licensed third-party rights retained within these materials.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND FORMATTING

- A. Submission Requirements:
1. **Two (2), three-hole punched hardcopy proposals with attachments attached with a paper clip. Please do not staple or bind the hardcopies.**
 2. **One (1) searchable, PDF file of cover letter, entire proposal, on USB Drive or other usable media.** The PDF version will be distributed for review, not the hard copy, please keep this in mind if the proposal includes color.
 3. **Cover letter and entire proposal shall not exceed 10 pages.** No attachments will be considered beyond these 10 pages.

- B. Formatting Requirements:
1. Proposal shall be typed in minimum 12-point font, Times New Roman only, with 1 inch margins;
 2. Include footer with company/contractor name and page numbers for the entire proposal; and
 3. Copy and paste the four Selection Criteria headings, e.g. “**Scope of Work**”, in organizing the proposal response.
- C. Required Content of Submission:
1. **Cover Letter**, including the following information:
 - a. Legal name of firm and mailing address;
 - b. Federal Tax ID# and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI);
 - c. Signed by an authorized agent (person who has the authority to contract, e.g. President, Chief Executive Officer);
 2. Response to the Selection Criteria (with the following headings)
 - a. Scope of Work
 - b. Qualifications and Experience
 - c. Public Outreach
 - d. Budget

TIMELINE

The timeline for this RFP and resulting contract is shown below and is subject to change. The final deliverable (report) is due July 31, 2023. This will allow time for Pima County to consider the recommendations and inform the Year 4 (FY 24/25) budget and planning, which will begin before November 2023.

September 30, 2022	Issue RFP
October 12, 2022	Technical Assistance Session
November 11, 2022	Responses due
November 30, 2022	Notice of recommended award
December 30, 2022	Procurement Director approved award/contract pending successful negotiation of contract
June 30, 2023	Draft report due from contractor
July 10, 2023	County comments on draft report due to contractor
July 31, 2023	Final report due from contractor

SELECTION CRITERIA:

A. The PEEPs multi-departmental oversight team will review and evaluate proposals based on the following criteria:

1. **Scope of Work.** Respondents shall:
 - Describe the approaches they propose to use to assess the current program design and metrics that are in place for program years one through three;
 - Describe their proposed process for developing recommendations for program

- design, evaluation and metrics for years four through seven;
 - Demonstrate awareness of the content required in the Final Report and interim deliverables (see SCOPE OF WORK section of this RFP) in their response;
 - Demonstrate application of PEEPs guiding principles in their response;
 - Include a timeline for completing key milestones in the project. **(30 points);**
2. **Qualifications and Experience.** Respondents shall:
- Demonstrate familiarity with the early childhood education landscape in Arizona, including familiarity with major funding mechanisms for preschool/childcare financial assistance and requirements for providing high-quality early childhood education;
 - Provide evidence, via links, to demonstrate experience providing similar assessments/evaluation of programs leading to program evaluation and design recommendations. **(30 points);**
3. **Public & Stakeholder Outreach.** Respondents shall:
- Demonstrate knowledge and experience with conducting effective community outreach, public involvement and information gathering and evaluation;
 - Describe approach to conducting effective community outreach and public involvement in conducting planning processes to include collecting, analyzing and presenting data, developing and conducting surveys, and drawing accurate conclusions;
 - Provide evidence, via links, of past community outreach, involvement and assessments. **(20 points);**
4. **Rates.** Respondents shall:
- State the cost for one hour of delivered service, all inclusive (i.e. Hourly rate);
 - Provide a schedule of deliverables to be provided over the life of the contract with projected total number of hours and price for each deliverable **(20 points).**

OTHER INFORMATION

- A. Existing Pima County PEEPs documents, quarterly reports and memorandums to the Board of Supervisors can be found at:

<https://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?pagelId=756311>

<https://webcms.pima.gov/cms/one.aspx?portalId=169&pagelId=39962>

For above link click on early childhood tab.

Copies of existing contracts and intergovernmental agreements can be provided upon request.

- B. Unfair Competition and other Laws: Proposals must comply with Arizona trade and commerce laws (Title 44 A.R.S.) and all other applicable County, State, and Federal laws and regulations.
- C. Responses included in Proposal must meet the specifications and requirements set forth by the solicitation. The specifications included in this solicitation intend to identify the kind and quality of goods and/or services to be provided without being unnecessarily restrictive, and to allow Proposer to provide the information needed for the development of consistent and

comprehensive proposals.

- D. Failure to perform appropriate research, discovery, examine any drawings, specifications, and instructions will be at the Proposer's sole risk.
- E. Each Proposer, by submission of a proposal or bid waives any and all claims for damages against County or its officers or employees when County exercises any of its reserved rights.
- F. Each Proposer, by submission of a proposal, certifies that no officer or employee of County or of any subdivision thereof: 1) has aided or assisted Proposer in securing or attempting to secure a contract to furnish labor, materials or supplies at a higher price than that proposed by any other Proposer ; 2) has favored one Proposer over another by giving or withholding information or by willfully misleading the bidder in regard to the character of the material or supplies called for or the conditions under which the proposed work is to be done; 3) will knowingly accept materials or supplies of a quality inferior to those called for by any contract; 4) has any direct or indirect financial interest in the proposal or resulting contract. Additionally, during the conduct of business with County, Proposer will not knowingly certify, or induce others to certify, to a greater amount of labor performed than has been actually performed, or to the receipt of a greater amount or different kind of material or supplies that has been actually received. If County finds at any time that Proposer has in presenting any proposal(s) colluded with any other party or parties for the purpose of preventing any other proposal being made, then County will terminate any contract so awarded and that person or entity will be liable for all damages that County sustains.
- G. If Proposer reasonably believes that some of those records contain proprietary, trade-secret or otherwise-confidential information, Proposer must prominently mark those records "CONFIDENTIAL." In the event a public-records request is submitted to County for records marked CONFIDENTIAL, County will notify Proposer of the request as soon as reasonably possible. County will release the records 10 business days after the date of that notice, unless Proposer has, within that period, secured an appropriate order from a court of competent jurisdiction enjoining the release of the records. County will not, under any circumstances, be responsible for securing such an order, nor will County be in any way financially responsible for any costs associated with securing such an order. Proposer agrees to waive confidentiality of any price terms in the event of an awarded contract.

CONTRACT AWARD PROCESS AND PROVISIONS

- A. Selection of Consultant will be through the PEEPs multi-departmental oversight team.
- B. Proposal responses will be evaluated in accordance with Pima County Board of Supervisors Policy D-29.3 according to the criteria listed above.
- C. County will post a Notice of Recommendation for Award (NORFA) for RFP on the Pima County CWD website available for review by interested parties. The Community & Workforce Development Department will maintain a tabulation of the bids or ranking of proposals. County will not provide results of this procurement in response to telephone inquiries. Proposers will have five working days to file a protest of the recommendations with CWD.

- D. Recommendations will be used to award a “not-to-exceed” contract for consideration by the Procurement Director. Pima County may require the Consultant selected to participate in negotiations, and to submit such price, technical, or other revisions of their applications as may result from negotiations. Pima County will hold all applications submitted in confidence pending completion of awards and negotiations, subject to any applicable public records request. Following award, contracts and submitted proposals will be available to the public.
- E. INSURANCE CERTIFICATE documents will be required from the winning Proposer(s) within two (2) business days after the Notice of Recommendation for Award is posted on the Community & Workforce Development website.
- F. By signing and submitting Proposal documents, the undersigned certifies that they are legally authorized to represent and bind Contractor to legal agreements, that all information submitted is accurate and complete, that Contractor has reviewed the Pima County CWD website for RFP amendments and has incorporated all such amendments to its offer, that Contractor is qualified and willing to provide the items requested, and that Contractor will comply with all requirements of the RFP.
- G. Conditional offers that modify the RFP requirements may be deemed non-responsive and County may not evaluate them. Proposer’s submission constitutes a firm offer and upon the execution of the Professional Services Contract issued by the Pima County Procurement Director or authorized designee will form a binding contract that will require Contractor to provide the goods or services described in this RFP. The undersigned hereby offers to furnish the goods or services in compliance with all terms, conditions, specifications that the RFP defines or references.
- H. Receipt of a Proposal by the PEEPs multi-departmental oversight team does not constitute acceptance of an offer to provide services. Pima County, as lead contracting entity, reserves the right to:
1. Amend scope of work and budget.
 2. Award monies from the Federal government to contractors receiving funding under this Solicitation. Contractor will ensure full compliance associated with the clauses in **Exhibit B, Grant Conditions**.
 3. Accept or reject any or all of the proposals received and to cancel in part or in its entirety this request if it is in the best interest of the County to do so.
 4. Make no contract award.
 5. Obtain like services from other contractors.
- I. This Solicitation incorporates Pima County Standard Terms and Conditions. Any Contracts awarded pursuant to this Solicitation will contain the Community & Workforce Development Department’s Standard Provisions. Both documents along with a sample contract form are available upon request.

Exhibit A (1 page)
Billing and Rates

1. County will pay the selected Contractor based on hourly rates for billable hours completing each deliverable, up to a not-to-exceed amount for each deliverable. County reserves the right to negotiate the hourly rate to be paid and/or the budgeted number of hours for each deliverable.
2. Timing of Invoices:
Contractor will invoice County on a monthly basis on the template provided by County no later than the 15th day of each following month.
3. Content of Invoices:
Invoices shall include progress reports and activities that occurred during that billing cycle.
4. Sales Taxes:
Contractor's services generally are not subject to sales taxes. To the extent that the Contractor incurs any liability for sales taxes while performing services under this contract. Contractor will be solely responsible for their timely payment.

Exhibit B (3 pages)
Grant Conditions

SPECIAL CONTRACT PROVISIONS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
CORONAVIRUS STATE & LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUND
PROCUREMENT CONTRACTS

1. Publications. Any publications produced with funds from this award must display the following language: “This project [is being] [was] supported, in whole or in part, by federal award number SLFRP0180 awarded to Pima County by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

2. Federal regulations applicable to this award include, without limitation, the following:
 - a. Universal Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM), 2 C.F.R. Part 25, pursuant to which the award term set forth in Appendix A to 2 C.F.R. Part 25 is hereby incorporated by reference.

 - b. OMG Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement), 2 C.F.R. Part 180 and Treasury’s implementing regulation at 31 C.F.R. Part 19. Contractor certifies that it has not been debarred or suspended and that none of its principals, affiliates or subcontractors are excluded or disqualified.

 - c. New Restrictions on Lobbying, 31 C.F.R. Part 21. Contractor certifies that it will not and has not used federally appropriated funds to pay any person or organization for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with obtaining any federal contract, grant, or any other award covered by 31 U.S.C. § 1352. Contractor shall disclose any lobbying with non-federal funds that takes place in connection with obtaining any federal award.

 - d. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d et seq.) and Treasury’s implementing regulations at 31 C.F.R. Part 22, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin under programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. Contractor shall comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits recipients of federal financial assistance from excluding from a program or activity, denying benefits of, or otherwise discriminating against a person on the basis of race, color, or national Title VI also includes protection to persons with “Limited English Proficiency” in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

 - e. Generally applicable federal environmental laws and regulations. For contracts exceeding \$150,000 financed in whole or in part with federal assistance.
 - i. The contractor agrees to comply with all applicable standards, orders or regulations issued pursuant to the Clean Air Act, as amended, 42 U.S.C. § 7401 et seq.

- v. An authorized official of the Department of Justice or other law enforcement agency;
 - vi. A court or grand jury; or
 - vii. A management official or other employee of Contractor or subcontractor who has the responsibility to investigate, discover, or address misconduct.
- c. Contractor shall inform its employees in writing of the rights and remedies provided under this section, in the predominant native language of the workforce.

END OF EXHIBIT B