

**State Cooperative System Special Task Order
Request for Proposal
Fiscal Year 2008**

Introduction

The general purpose of the State Cooperative System Task Orders for fiscal year 2008 (FY 2008) is to promote the development of statewide longitudinal data systems that will provide information needed to improve the quality of education and improve performance for all students. In particular these task orders are intended to assist states in assessing the condition of their current data systems and planning improvements or expansion. Examples of possible work under these task orders include, but are not limited to:

- Needs assessments that describe the current condition of the state data system and major activities needed to reach the desired state;
- Involvement of stakeholder groups in determining the uses and delivery methods for data provided by a statewide longitudinal data system;
- Plans to accomplish one or more major tasks in establishing a statewide longitudinal data system;
- Identification of data system improvements needed in order to report all ED Facts data, and timelines for implementing these improvements and reports.
- Plans of work, with accompanying timelines, budgets, and other resources needed to achieve an effective statewide longitudinal data system;
- Collaboration between elementary/secondary and postsecondary education to develop seamless PK-16/20 data systems.

General Requirements

These tasks are issued under the Cooperative System contracts between the Department of Education and state education agencies. In order to be considered for a task in FY2008, a written proposal following the outline described in this document must be submitted to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). All proposals will be reviewed by representatives from the National Forum on Education Statistics, who will recommend proposals to NCES for funding; NCES will decide which states will be issued FY2008 task orders.

Proposal Cut-Off Date. Proposals must be received by NCES no later than 5:00 p.m. on October 22, 2007. Proposals must be submitted electronically as a Word™ document to ghedam.bairu@ed.gov. If this is not possible, contact Ghedam Bairu at 202-502-7304.

Task order amounts. The amount of funding for any task order will reflect the resources needed to carry out the work. However, no task order will be funded in an amount exceeding \$50,000.

Deliverables.

A state will be reimbursed for making progress as described in the Statement of Work upon NCES approval of the specified deliverable items and receipt of a voucher from the state.

States agree to submit the following deliverables:

Deliverable 1: State Task Plan . This report shall be no more than 5 double-spaced typed pages in length, and shall include a statement of the need for the project; identification of the contractor's principal contact and role of additional personnel; and detailed plan of work including a schedule for major activities and products.

Deliverable 2: Interim Report. This report should be no more than 20 double-spaced typed pages in length, and shall include a statement of progress to date, problems encountered and proposed solutions, and a projected plan for completion of the project.

Deliverable 3: Final Report. This will be a report on the results of the State Data Improvement task, including problems encountered in carrying out the work; an assessment of the project's success; and a description of the steps that will be taken to continue or fully implement the work that has been accomplished.

Dates of initiation and completion. Work on any task order issued for FY2008 must begin within FY2008. All work must be completed by the end of the contract under which it is issued.

Other considerations. NCES will place priority on issuing FY2008 task orders to states that have not received a special task order in the past and have no work outstanding under prior Cooperative System task order awards.

Proposal Requirements

The proposal should be technically sound, seem feasible, and give the reviewer enough information to understand what work is being proposed and judge whether it addresses the objectives described above. A short proposal can address all of these points. The following outline should be used in writing a proposal.

- I. **Cover Sheet:** The cover sheet should contain the title of the proposed project; the name, mailing address, work phone number, fax number and email address of the person submitting the proposal; and the amount of award requested.
- II. **Background and Objectives:** This section should include: (a) a summary of the proposed project; (b) a description of how the project relates to the areas of interest, as described in the Introduction above; (c) an explanation of why the project is needed; (d) a description of relevant past activities, or acknowledgment that there are none; (e) the goals of the project, including a statement of the final desired outcome; (f) the objectives of the project, with expected specific products or changes that will lead to the accomplishment of the goal(s); and (g) the applicability of the project to other states.
- III. **Activities:** This section should include: (a) the major tasks to be carried out during the project; (b) a description of the relationship between proposed activities and project goals and objectives; (c) a timeline including anticipated beginning and ending dates, and dates (or number of weeks from project start-up) of major products or accomplishments within the project; (d) time(s) at which plans, progress reports, or accomplishments (i.e., deliverables) will be submitted with voucher; and (e) a description of anticipated final products or accomplishments.
- IV. **Staff:** This section should include: (a) the names, position titles, and relevant qualifications of persons who will carry out the project; (b) an indication of the amount of time each person will devote to the project (be sure to include in-kind staff resources provided by the agency); and (c) evidence of institutional commitment to the project.
- V. **Budget:** This section should include salaries, benefits, supplies, purchased services such as consultants, travel, and fee or overhead charges (if applicable) as well as any other substantial cost areas. Indicate what amounts are from the requested task order and what amounts are from other sources, including in-kind contributions. Note that task order funds may not be used for equipment purchase totaling \$1,000 or more.¹

¹ Task orders do not provide funds for purchasing proprietary software; if this expense is included in the budget please use the Activities Section to describe the role of the software in the project.

Review Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed based on the following criteria. The proposal section in which the criterion is expected to be addressed is shown in parentheses. All proposals should address the following questions:

1. Are all items in the Proposal Requirements section of the Request for Proposals included? Does the project relate directly to the “Areas of Interest” described in the Introduction section of the Request for Proposals? (Section II) 20 points.
2. Are the needs and anticipated outcomes important enough to justify the project? Does the proposal describe pre-existing conditions that make the proposed work necessary? Does the proposal describe anticipated negative consequences if the work is not done? Is the expected effect upon the state described clearly? How does the value of this anticipated change contribute to the goals of this task order and how does the value outweigh the costs and/or burden of doing the project? (Section II) 10 points.
3. Are the activities sufficient and plausible for meeting the objectives of the proposal? Are the activities clearly stated and linked to the objectives? Will the described activities lead logically toward achieving project objectives? (Section III) 20 points.
4. Is the timeline logically sequenced? Does the proposed time appear sufficient to accomplish the work? (Section III) 10 points.
5. Is there a clear statement of how the results of the project will be applicable to or usable by audiences within the state, or to other states, if appropriate? Is the project potentially useful enough to warrant funding the project? (Section III) 10 points.
6. Does the proposal list all proposed project personnel? Does it describe their responsibilities in the project and aspects of their current position and/or experience and education that qualify them for this role? Does the proposal state how much time each person will commit to the project? Do the identified personnel have the position, expertise, and sufficient time commitment to see that the work gets done? Are the personnel appropriate and of sufficient number to complete the work? (Section IV) 15 points.
7. Is there a sufficient institutional commitment to the project? Does the proposal include letters of support and commitment that demonstrate a willingness beyond that of the proposal writer to carry out the project? (Section IV) 5 points.
8. Is requested funding sufficient to accomplish the project? Will task order funds be used appropriately? Are project costs explicitly linked to proposed project activities? Are costs identified by type of expenditure (e.g., salaries, benefits, supplies, purchased services, travel)? Are task order funds used to purchase equipment? If so, is the amount less than \$1,000? Are supplemental funds, if any, identified? (Section V) 10 points.