

National Human Genome Research Institute/NIH
Request for Proposals
Community Genetics Forum: A Model Community Engagement Program

Title

NHGRI Community Genetics Forum: Continued Development, Implementation, and Evaluation of a Model Collaborative Community Engagement Program

1.0 Mission

The National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI) led the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) contribution to the International Human Genome Project, which had as its primary goal the sequencing of the human genome. This project was successfully completed in April 2003. Now, the NHGRI's mission has expanded to encompass a broad range of studies aimed at understanding the structure and function of the human genome and its role in health and disease.

To that end, the NHGRI supports the development of resources and technology that will accelerate genome research and its application to human health. A critical part of the NHGRI mission continues to be the study of the ethical, legal and social implications (ELSI) of genome research. The NHGRI also supports the training of investigators and the dissemination of genome information to the public and to health professionals.

The Education and Community Involvement Branch (ECIB) leads the Institute's public education efforts. ECIB also advises the NHGRI director and senior staff on a broad range of issues regarding public education and community involvement. The branch initiates, develops, implements and evaluates education and community involvement programs to engage a broad range of the public in understanding genomics and its translation to health and society. The branch also acts as the liaison between the NHGRI and communities to further its mission, and it oversees programs and initiatives for minorities and special populations.

2.0 Background of the Project

In the spring of 2005, ECIB, in conjunction with the University of Washington, held the first annual Community Genetics Forum (<http://www.genome.gov/14514654>). The goals of this Forum were: to engage Northwest communities in dialogue about genetics and ELSI; to create a forum and environment for future dialogue independent of federal sponsorship; and to create a model community engagement program and supportive materials that would be adapted by others wishing to plan, develop, implement, and evaluate a public genetics forum with community outreach in their respective communities. More than 300 members of the public participated in three days of activities.

In September of 2006, the second annual Community Genetics Forum was held in North Carolina, in collaboration with the University of North Carolina (<http://genomics.unc.edu/cgf/>). The goals of this Forum were to engage communities across North Carolina, including African American communities, Hispanic communities, and student and faculty audiences from North Carolina Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

The 2007 Forum was hosted by the University of Michigan (U of M). U of M successfully engaged National Community Committee (NCC) organizations across five states in the Midwest (Michigan, Missouri, Minnesota, Iowa, and Illinois). Five forums were held on October 12, 2007 in each of the locations, and they were connected by videoconferencing. For more information see www.genocommunity.org.

The outcomes and lessons learned from the previous Community Genetics Forums contribute to the establishment of a model community engagement program. ECIB plans to use this developing model to support future annual Community Genetics Forums.

3.0 Objectives for Project

The Community Genetics Forum is defined as a community engagement project, focused on developing partnerships between the NHGRI, a host organization, and community based organizations. It culminates in a single or multiple day public forum event, centered on topics related to genomics that are of interest to the communities involved in its planning. The Community Genetics Forum is to be a collaborative effort between the NHGRI and the contractor. It is expected that the NHGRI's Education and Community Involvement Branch will participate actively in the planning and development of the program, and that members of the NHGRI will participate in the Forum itself, as appropriate.

The NHGRI is seeking an organization to host, plan, develop, implement and evaluate a public genomics community outreach program using a community forum as the core component of the program. The materials developed and examples set by previous Forums should be used to shape this current Forum (<http://www.genome.gov/19518473>).

The NHGRI acknowledges the challenge of conducting a one year engagement project. However, its success has been demonstrated by previous Forums. It is thus vital for the offeror to show how this year-long period of performance can effectively be used. Proposals should outline how both the Forum will build on existing programs and relationships, but also how the Forum will create new opportunities and connections.

The objectives of the Community Genetics Forum include:

- To identify existing community groups, organizations, representatives, etc, with which to engage and consult throughout planning of the Forum
- To facilitate the establishment of ongoing community relationships that continue beyond the Forum itself
- To facilitate sustainable relationships between the community, the contractor, and the NHGRI
- To create a Forum that reflects the interests, concerns, and questions of the target community related to genomics and health
- To engage community groups to facilitate a dialogue to identify questions, concerns, and education needs related to genomics and health
- To establish methods and opportunities by which community members can participate and contribute to planning of the Forum
- To engage communities to provide input into initiatives of the NHGRI and the NIH in genomics research
- To involve a target audience inclusive of minorities and special populations
- To increase awareness, interest, and understanding of the field of genetics, genomics, and the ethical, legal, and social implications of genetics research
- To increase awareness of current research and scientific advances in genetics
- To increase awareness of current health education advances in genetics
- To increase students' awareness of career options in genomics, genetics, and ELSI research
- To increase awareness and understanding of the implications of genomic science for health care and society

- To have ongoing collaboration with the NHGRI in the Forum program development and implementation
- To complete a project report describing the details of the Forum planning, lessons learned, and an overall description.

Geographic Region:

In an effort to reach different geographic areas of the country, the NHGRI has selected DHHS regions VIII and IX as appropriate locations for the upcoming Forum. This upcoming Forum should seek to engage communities from one or more locations from this region. This region is defined to include: Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Marshall Islands, and Republic of Palau.

Please refer to www.hhs.gov/about/regions for more specific information about other regions.

4.0 Scope of Project

Independently, and not as an agent of the Government, the selected organization (referred to as “Contractor”) will furnish all the necessary services, qualified personnel, material, equipment, and facilities not otherwise provided by the Government, as needed to perform the specific tasks delineated below.

The selected organization will host, plan, develop, implement, and evaluate a genetics public forum with community outreach. In doing such, the contractor will develop a comprehensive Community Genetics Forum report for public dissemination that outlines the overall process and results of the Forum. This report may be reproduced and distributed to assist other individuals in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of other genetics public symposia with community outreach in their respective communities. The contractor will work with ECIB to develop the structure of this report. Generally, the report will add insight to previous lessons learned about how to engage communities around genetics.

Specific Tasks:

Planning:

The Contractor will provide and/or conduct a range of services and activities leading to the planning of the public forum with community outreach. These services and activities include:

- Creating opportunities for the target communit(ies) to provide input and/or feedback on the planning of the Forum
- Determining the format and agenda for the Forum, based on community input, no later than 6 months before the planned date
- Determining what materials will be collected/created for the Forum
- Implementing the marketing plan as described in the project proposal
- Confirming any speakers/leaders of Forum

Implementation:

The Contractor will provide and/or conduct a range of services and activities leading to the implementation of the public forum with community outreach. These services and activities include:

- Carrying out the community outreach activities to assist in identifying and defining community needs, Forum themes and appropriate formats, and advertising strategies
- Securing meeting space for the Forum
- Securing lodging space for Forum speakers and participants, as needed

- Making travel arrangements for Forum speakers and participants, as needed
- Determining and arranging for any special needs of speakers and participants
- Determining and arranging for AV needs of Forum speakers and facilitating on-site AV support
- Handling pre-forum registration
- Preparing forum aids, such as name badges and directional signs
- Preparing fact sheets and other appropriate public education materials to support the Forum, as needed
- Compiling and reproducing materials for the Forum packets, as needed
- Providing on-site support on the day(s) of the Forum to include participant registration and distribution of materials
- Securing and providing the appropriate personnel and resources needed to document the planning and conduct of the Forum to be able to create the final report
- Providing a final registration report and a final attendance report to the NHGRI no later than one month after the Forum. This report should include demographic information on attendees
- Providing Forum speakers with an honorarium, as appropriate
- Establishing and handling a scholarship fund and/or reimbursement fund for the community outreach activities and Forum participants, as appropriate
- Providing reimbursements to Forum speakers and participants within two weeks of receiving the voucher
- Providing the NHGRI with a final report of the community outreach activities and the Forum no later than three months after the last data collection activity

During the course of this task, a representative from the selected organization will communicate twice monthly with a representative from the NHGRI. This communication can take the form of a phone call or e-mail and will provide the NHGRI with regular updates on the progress of the activities identified above, as well as others that will be conducted as part of the development and implementation process of this project. The twice monthly communication will also serve as an opportunity for problem solving and strategizing throughout the collaboration, including the development and implementation phase. The organization's representative and an NHGRI representative will establish a schedule for the twice monthly communication.

Evaluation

The Contractor will secure the qualified personnel needed to conduct the evaluation activities as described in their proposal. The Contractor will obtain the appropriate approvals, if any, needed to conduct an evaluation including individuals participating in the community outreach activities and individuals attending the Forum. The Contractor will carry out evaluation activities to measure each objective of the community outreach and the Forum, including the development, testing and implementation of appropriate measurement tools, collection of data, compilation of data, analyses of data, and generation of an evaluation report.

The Contractor will provide the NHGRI with a final evaluation report no later than three months following the last data collection activity.

Creation of the Report

The Contractor will secure the qualified personnel and resources needed to create the final report, which will document the public forum and community outreach. This product could take the form of a book, DVD, or CD-ROM, be web-based or have another format as discussed and agreed upon with ECIB. The purpose of the report is to provide the government and others with a model for

planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating any future genetics public forums with community outreach in their respective communities. Additionally, the purpose of this product is to enhance the lessons learned from previous Forums about engaging communities around genetics. This report should improve on models created from previous Community Genetics Forums. Readers of the report should be able to easily follow the information provided and adapt the relevant information to their project at a level of effort appropriate to their project's scope. Examples of the previous Forum reports can be viewed at <http://www.genome.gov/19518473>.

The Contractor will provide the NHGRI with the final report no later than three months following the completion of the project's evaluation activities.

5.0 Deliverables

- Fact sheets and other appropriate public education materials to support the Forum
- A Forum event, open to the public, to discuss aspects of genetics that are of importance and relevance to attendees
- A final report of the community outreach activities and the Forum
- A final registration report and a final attendance report to the NHGRI

6.0 Government Furnished Equipment

None

7.0 Period of Performance

- June 8, 2009-June 4, 2010
- Letter of intent to submit a proposal by April 27, 2009
- Proposals due by May 25, 2009
- Selection of Contractor June 5, 2009

8.0 Payment Schedule

Invoices must be submitted to the NHGRI. The schedule can be agreed upon at time of selection. Upon approval of the technical progress, the project officer will approve partial payments.

NHGRI will consider a scope of services of less than \$100,000

9.0 Proposal Submission:

1) Please submit letters of intent and project proposals electronically to the Education and Community Involvement Branch (nhgriecib@mail.nih.gov).

2) Please submit 6 printed copies of proposals to:

Sarah Harding, MPH
Education and Community Involvement Branch
National Human Genome Research Institute
National Institutes of Health
31 Center Drive
Building 31, Rm B1B55
Bethesda, MD 20892

10.0 Instructions to Offerors

1. SELECTION OF OFFERORS

- a. The acceptability of the technical portion of each offer will be evaluated by a technical review committee. The committee will evaluate each proposal in strict conformity with the evaluation criteria of the solicitation, utilizing point scores and written critique. The committee may suggest that the Contracting Officer request clarifying information from an offeror.
- b. The business portion of each offer may be subjected to a cost and price analysis, management analysis, etc.
- c. All aspects of an offer are subject to discussion, including cost, technical approach and terms and conditions.
- d. If award will be made without conducting discussions, offerors may be given the opportunity to clarify certain aspects of their proposal (e.g., the relevance of an offeror's past performance information and adverse past performance information to which the offeror has not previously had opportunity to respond) or resolve minor or clerical errors.
- e. Best-Buy Analysis. A final best-buy analysis will be performed taking into consideration the results of the technical evaluation, cost analysis, and ability to complete the work within the Government's required schedule. The Government reserves the right to issue an order to the best advantage of the Government, technical merit, cost, and other factors considered.
- f. The National Heart Lung and Blood Institute's Consolidated Operation Acquisitions Centers reserves the right to make a single award, multiple awards, or no award at all as a result of the solicitation. In addition, the solicitation may be amended or canceled as necessary to meet NHLBI requirements.

2. TECHNICAL PLAN INSTRUCTIONS

A detailed work plan must be submitted indicating how each aspect of the statement of work is to be accomplished. Your technical approach should be in as much detail as you consider necessary to fully explain your proposed technical approach or method. The technical plan should reflect a clear understanding of the nature of the work being undertaken. The technical plan must include information on how the project is to be organized, staffed, and managed. Information should be provided which will demonstrate your understanding and management of important events or tasks.

Plans which merely offer to conduct a program in accordance with the requirements of the Government's scope of work will not be eligible for further consideration. The offeror must submit an explanation of the proposed technical approach in conduction with the tasks to be performed in achieving the project objectives.

2a. Project Proposal

The project proposal should include activity timelines, detailed methods of community engagement, and how identified partners will be involved. In addition, the proposal should include a description of an evaluation plan for the community outreach activities and the forum

including the goals and objectives to be measured, how they will be measured, and data collection, compilation, analyses, and reporting activities to be conducted. The proposal should include key personnel, a description of their roles, and detailed budget (as appendices).

Specifically, the project proposal should include:

- Description of the offeror's organization
 - Experience with similar projects (both specific staff and the organization)
 - Existing relationships with community groups
- Description of target audience (s)
 - Describe partner organizations (if any)-including an agreement to participate, and a description of their role
 - How many people will be reached?
 - Describe the role of the community in the Forum in both the planning and implementation stages
- Description of Forum:
 - Outline the engagement plan
 - Outline goals and objectives of Forum program
 - Outline methods of determining agenda, format of Forum
 - Describe unique aspects of Forum
 - Describe what would build off previous Forums
- Methods for creating sustainable relationship infrastructure and Forum activities (stronger proposals will outline methods that are not solely based on additional funding)
- Description of marketing/advertising plan
- Project timeline
- Description of project product that will reach the public
- Program evaluation

3. **BUSINESS PROPOSAL (COST BREAKDOWN)**

The Offeror shall submit a detailed breakdown by labor category of an estimate number of hours, the loaded hourly rate for the work to be completed as outlined in the Statement of Work.

The cost breakdown shall be in the format as shown below:

Cost / Business Proposal			
Direct Labor Category	Quantity Estimated Number of Hours	Hourly Rate	Total Amount
To Be Determined		\$	\$
Other Direct Costs <i>(List all other costs not otherwise included in the direct labor category (e.g., special tooling, travel, training, equipment, computer and consultant services) and provide bases for pricing.</i>			
			\$

4. **EVALUATION FACTORS FOR AWARD**

a. **General**

You are advised that, in the selection of the contractor(s) for this acquisition, paramount consideration shall be given to the evaluation of technical approach rather than cost or price. The evaluation will be based on the demonstrated capabilities of the prospective offerors in relation to the needs of the project as set forth in the Solicitation. The merits of each quotation will be evaluated carefully based on responsiveness to the Solicitation and the thoroughness and feasibility of the technical approach taken. Offerors must submit information sufficient to evaluate their quotations based on the detailed criteria listed below. Failure to provide the information required to evaluate the quotation may result in rejection of that quotation without further consideration.

Listed below are mandatory qualification criteria, if applicable, and technical evaluation criteria. The mandatory qualification criteria establishes conditions that must be met in order for your quote to be considered. The technical evaluation criteria below are listed in order of relative importance with weights assigned for evaluation purposes.

b. **Technical Evaluation Criteria**

CRITERIA	FACTOR	TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS
1	Project Objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The success of proposal to respond to the objectives of the Community Genetics Forum • The success of the proposal to effectively describe a plan to engage and develop long-term relationships with communities • An adequate description of the target community • The demonstration of existing partnerships and relationships with the targeted community, or a clear plan on how new relationships will be established • The success of the proposed contractor to demonstrate an ability to work effectively with this community 	40
2	Approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development, integration, reasoning, and appropriateness of the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses of the proposal • The appropriateness of the milestones and evaluation procedures 	25
3	Innovation (15): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The level of innovation and originality of the project 	15
4	Investigators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The training and capabilities of the Principal Contractor to coordinate and manage the proposed project 	10
5	Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The demonstration of sufficient access to resources (e.g., equipment, facilities, capabilities) 	10
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS --		100