



Request for Proposals for Child Welfare Traineeship Projects in BSW and MSW Programs

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Child Welfare Traineeship Projects is to develop educational experiences that will teach and reinforce core competencies in areas of child welfare practice and leadership to assist child welfare agencies, including tribal agencies, recruit and retain qualified staff members. The Traineeship Projects will be accomplished through: (1) a stipend program that provides financial assistance to select trainees; (2) an educational program that increases the knowledge and skills of individual stipend recipients to address the needs of children and families served by child welfare agencies; and, (3) the development and improvement of child welfare curricula and programs to promote timely graduation of trainees, to increase their skill level, professional practice and leadership ability, and to support retention in the child welfare workforce.

BACKGROUND

In the fall of 2008, the Children's Bureau created a National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI). The purpose of this Institute is to build the capacity of the nation's child welfare workforce and improve outcomes for children, youth, and families through a range of activities that support the development of competent and skilled child welfare leaders across the country. To achieve these goals, a broad range of activities are being undertaken by the Institute. These activities include identifying and delivering child welfare training curricula, facilitating national peer mentoring networks, promoting leadership training for mid-level managers and distance education for supervisors, supporting strategic dissemination of effective and promising workforce practices, and advancing collaboration and evaluation.

One of the primary responsibilities of the Institute is awarding, administering, and evaluating subgrants for professional education traineeships. Traineeships are awarded to institutions of higher education to administer stipends to individual students who commit to pursuing a BSW or MSW degree in social work and to serving in a child welfare agency upon graduation. The Children's Bureau has directly administered traineeships for a number of years. The NCWWI is now responsible for awarding nine traineeships.

The NCWWI is a service of the Children's Bureau and its partners include the University at Albany/SUNY, the University of Denver, Fordham University, University of Iowa, Michigan State University, University of Michigan, University of North Carolina, University of Southern Maine, and the National Indian Child Welfare Association.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:

CSWE accredited social work bachelor (BSW) and masters (MSW) programs located in:

- Public and State-controlled institutions of higher education
- Private institutions of higher education
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities
- Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities

BSW and MSW programs that are in candidacy are not eligible for these traineeships.

APPLICATION OUTLINE

Each application must contain the following items in the order listed:

1. Cover sheet
2. Project summary/abstract (one page maximum, double spaced)
3. Project description
 - a. Objectives and Need for Assistance
 - b. Approach
 - c. Organizational Profile
 - d. Assurances
 - e. Budget and Budget Justification

APPLICATION/PROPOSAL CONTENTS

1. **COVER SHEET** (one page)
2. **PROJECT SUMMARY:** Provide a summary of the project description and features (only one page following proposal formatting instructions).
3. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**
 - a. **Objectives and Need for Assistance (10 points)**

A literature review is not required for this application. Provide a description of the child welfare workforce needs and opportunities in your region. Provide any additional data that will provide useful information for understanding your child welfare system and local agency workforce needs. Clearly list Project objectives.
 - b. **Approach (55 points)**

Accounting for all activities and objectives, outline a plan of clear action steps that address the following points:

 - (1) Identify how student trainees will be selected, including specific eligibility requirements, the selection process, and from which program the trainees will be selected (BSW or MSW). Identify the number of students to be selected and provided awards each year. Current public child welfare staff members who apply to and/or attend BSW/MSW programs are eligible for these traineeships;
 - (2) State the amount of funding that will be provided to each trainee and the rationale for this amount. Total funds committed to the stipends must be equal to or higher than 65% of project funds;

- (3) Describe the plan for child welfare field placements, including specific agencies and the area of child welfare services provided by the placement. Field placements are to be assigned in public child welfare or tribal programs. If your School is located in a geographic area that uses private agencies (under contract with the public child welfare agency to provide services that traditionally are provided by the public agency) field placements may take place in such agencies;
- (4) Describe the academic program for trainees and how this program provides the knowledge and skills for competent child welfare practice and desired outcomes that you have identified;
- (5) Identify the child welfare competencies addressed by the field education and academic program for trainees;
- (6) Describe the plan and process for curricular innovation and improvement;
- (7) Describe supports for trainees that will promote timely graduation and future retention in the child welfare workforce;
- (8) Describe project attentiveness to diversity within the workforce;
- (9) Describe project attentiveness to System of Care (SOC) principles (see end notes);
- (10) Describe project attentiveness to the Child and Family Services Reviews' (CFSR) guiding principles (see end notes);
- (11) Identify any creative/unique features in the project;
- (12) Identify the activities of any partnering organizations;
- (13) Identify factors that may accelerate or decelerate your project;
- (14) Provide a project timeline.

c. Organizational profile (20 points)

- (1) Identify key project staff and their qualifications;
- (2) Identify roles and responsibilities;
- (3) Identify and describe any partnering organizations (provide letters of support in the appendix);
- (4) Describe the School's current child welfare curricular assets and capacity, including public child welfare organizational endorsement of the program, if available;
- (5) Demonstrate sufficient knowledge, experience, expertise and capacity to successfully administer a traineeship project.
- (6) Identify culturally relevant initiatives in the school that may relate to these traineeships.

In an Appendix, please include letters of support, job descriptions and curricula vitae/resumes for proposed project key staff.

d. Assurances (5 points)

- (1) Provide a statement assuring that you will fully participate in relevant peer networks. These networks include a peer network for student trainees (up to monthly electronic networking and/or teleconferences in Year One), a peer network for project staff and key faculty members (up to monthly electronic networking or teleconferences in Year One), and a peer network for Deans and Directors (electronic communication and potentially meetings at CSWE or NADD/BPD).
- (2) Provide a statement assuring that you will fully participate in the multi-site evaluation, including following up with your graduates to assure and ascertain relevant

employment. Agree to develop and administer a contract/agreement form for trainees to sign assuring agreement to work in child welfare upon graduation for a time period at least equivalent to the traineeship. There is a payback requirement if this employment requirement is not met. If trainees accept employment in states that use private agencies (under contract with the public child welfare agency) to provide child welfare services traditionally provided by state or tribal agencies, employment in a private agency is acceptable.

- (3) Provide a statement committing to provide a written report (based on a provided format/template not to exceed five pages) twice a year (at the beginning of the academic year and at the end of the academic year).

e. Budget and Budget Justification(10 points)

Provide a budget with line-item detail and detailed calculations for each budget category/class. Budget items should include personnel (identifying key persons, salary, percentage of salary dedicated to this project, project title), fringe benefits, local travel, stipends (at least 65% of the total budget), supplies and services, other budget items, indirect costs, and total budget amount. Provide a breakout for matching contributions.

Face-to-face meetings may be arranged at regularly scheduled social work conferences, such as the Council on Social Work Education annual meetings. Additional face-to-face meetings may be arranged but travel expenses will not be required for subgrantees in the first year.

The total award will be for a maximum of \$110,000 for each of five years (there will be a brief noncompeting continuation application each year).

Indirect Charges: An applicant may include up to 8% of project expenses (not including funds dedicated to stipends) for indirect costs. For example, if a Project proposes \$75,000 in stipend support and \$35,000 in other expenses, the indirect charge of 8% should be calculated based on only the other expenses (non-stipend support) to a total maximum Project budget of \$110,000 on an annual basis.

Cost Sharing or Matching: An applicant is required to provide 10% non-Federal share of the project costs (not including funds dedicated to stipends). For example, if a Project proposes \$75,000 in stipend support and \$35,000 in other expenses, the Project should account for at least \$3,500 in a match using non-Federal funds. Additional match is encouraged.

Applicants have the option of omitting from the application copies (not the original) specific salary rates. There should be no social security numbers included with the application.

Funding restrictions for federal grants will apply to this grant. These restrictions include reimbursement of pre-award costs, organized fund raising, and construction costs.

All traineeship awards must be made for the summer or fall of 2009, for the 2009-2010 academic year. In future years, sub-grant funds will be dispersed prior to the academic

year to which they will be applied for students. For example, funds awarded in spring 2009 will be applied to student stipends for 2009-2010. In spring/summer 2010, funds will be provided for 2010-2011. In spring/summer 2011, funds will be provided for 2011-2012. In the spring/summer 2012, funds will be provided for 2012-2013. And in the spring/summer 2013, funds will be provided for the 2013-2014 academic year. Although the federal funding for the NCWWI will end in September 2013, the sub-grants are expected to continue to provide their program through the 2013-2014 academic year and to cooperate with the project evaluation.

All funds are subject to continued funding to the NCWWI from the federal government. If for any reason funding is reduced or cut to the NCWWI, an adjustment to subgrantees can be implemented. In the event of any adjustment in funding, sub-grantees would be notified as soon as possible.

Detail with regard to the first budget year is particularly important. Please provide a projected budget for each of five years

Budget Justification: Provide a brief (one paragraph maximum) narrative description explaining each budget item.

4. APPENDIX

a. Job descriptions

b. Resumes (brief resumes, up to five pages)

c. Letters of Support

EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

The proposals will be evaluated based on the clarity of the project description, the quality of the project components and reasonableness of timelines, the soundness and details of the plan, meeting project expectations and requirements, and creativity and potential for contributing to social work education and the advancement of child welfare competencies and education. The proposals will be evaluated on a point system. Points are identified in the Project Description section.

As the NCWWI is a cooperative agreement between the Institute and the Children's Bureau, all funding decisions will be reviewed by the Children's Bureau for final approval. There may be special considerations given to applications proposing services of special interest to the federal government and to achieve geographic distributions of grant awards.

PROPOSAL FORMATING INSTRUCTIONS AND PREPARATION

The application must be typed, double-spaced, printed on only one side, with at least one inch margins on each side and the top and bottom, using standard 12-Point fonts (such as Times New Roman or Courier). All pages must be numbered.

All copies of an application must be submitted in a single package. Because each application

will be duplicated, do not use or include separate covers, binders, clips, tabs, plastic inserts, brochures or any other item that cannot be easily processed on a photocopy machine with an automatic feed. Use a clip (not a staple) to securely bind the application together.

Submit your application in paper format. Electronic submissions are not accepted. Grant applications cannot be accepted via fax or e-mail.

Submit one original and two copies of the complete application.

Page Limit: **The application limit is 25 pages.** Pages over this page limit will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed. This page limit does not include the cover sheet, abstract /summary page and the appendices.

DUE DATE

The due date for applications is Friday, **February 13, 2009**. Applications received after 4:30 PM, Eastern Time, on the due date will be classified as late and will not be considered. Applications must be received (not post marked) by this due date.

SUBMISSION BY MAIL

National Child Welfare Workforce Institute
C/o Michigan State University School of Social Work
254 Baker Hall
East Lansing, Michigan 48824

This RFP will also be posted on the website for the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute. The website is www.NCWWI.org.

A “frequently asked questions” section is forthcoming.

If there are any questions, please direct them to Dr. Gary Anderson at Michigan State University School of Social Work (gary.anderson@ssc.msu.edu); 517-355-7515.

END NOTES

Systems of Care (SOC) framework and Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) guiding principles.

Adopted from its application in the mental health field, SOC refers to the conceptual framework and set of principles that direct child welfare agencies and systems to pursue individualized, coordinated, and holistic approaches to working with children and families. A SOC approach is community-based, child-centered, family-focused, strengths-based, culturally competent and comprehensive. It addresses the physical, mental, emotional, social, educational, and developmental needs of children and their families while taking into account the individual, family, community, and broader systemic risk and protective factors that contribute to

a child's safety and well-being. (More information regarding SOC can be found at <http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/service/soc/>). Adopting a SOC approach in child welfare requires a commitment to collaboration and often demands the reform of conventional agency practice and organizational culture.

CFSR guiding principles of child safety, permanency, and well-being are closely tied to the SOC framework. Furthermore, the Federal Regulations that support the CFSR's state that services should be organized along a continuum and linked to a wide service array to meet the multiple service needs of families. For more information about changing the culture of the workplace to be consistent with CFSR principles can be found at [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/cwmonitoring/changing culture. htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/cwmonitoring/changing%20culture.htm).

RFP Cover Sheet

1. Applicant's Name (PI):

2. Applicant's mailing address:

3. Applicant's e-mail address:

4. Applicant's telephone number:

5. Applicant's School of Social Work:

6. Project Title:

7. Number of Traineeships to be awarded on an annual basis (and amount of funding per trainee each year):

8. Total Amount of Funding Requested: