 **CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA**

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

**Grant Evaluation Services**

**PROPOSALS SUBMITTED UNTIL: July 25, 2014 3:30 PM Central**

**PHYSICAL ADDRESS: Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma**

 **Internal Audit Department**

 **1705 W. Locust Street**

 **Durant, OK 74701**

**CONTACT: Bruce Barnett 580.924.8280 ext 2186**

 **bbarnett@choctawnation.com**

**Background Information**

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (Nation), a federally recognized Native American Tribe, is seeking qualified grant evaluators for federal grants and programs.

The Nation currently serves around 200,000 tribal members and employs over 5,000 full-time employees. The Nation’s territory covers 10.5 counties in Southeast Oklahoma. The Nation’s governing structure follows the revised 1984 Constitution. Three branches of government are utilized – legislative, executive, and judicial. An elected Chief heads the Executive Branch, along with an appointed Assistant Chief. An elected Tribal Council comprises the legislative function, elected by twelve geographic districts. The Nation operates a Court of General Jurisdiction, which resolves tribal disputes within the 10.5 counties of the Choctaw Nation, including a three-member appellate division.

**Purpose of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ)**

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (Nation) will accept *Applications to Serve as Contracted Program Evaluator* (see attachment) from qualified individuals or firms to provide Grant Evaluation Services. The completed applications and responses will be used to pre-qualify multiple grant evaluators for an in-house selection committee. We desire a competitive process where multiple grant evaluators can be pre-selected before the busy grant applications are prepared. The initial qualification period covers August 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015. The Nation intends to pre-qualify a group of grant evaluators annually.

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma usually receives over 20 federal grant applications annually. Some grant applications require high-quality grant evaluation services, providing the Nation with the best opportunity to receive grant funding in a highly competitive environment. Evaluation services will be on an “as needed” basis for grants that require the services of an external grant evaluator.

**Instructions**

Your response should include the requested information in this RFQ and the completed *Application to Serve as Contracted Program Evaluator* (referred to as Submittals in this RFQ). Submittals that do not follow these instructions may be disqualified. Interested individuals and firms are encouraged to provide additional materials, further describing their capabilities and experience. Additional materials can be included with the submittal package as a separate item. Each submittal should include one original and one copy of the *Application to Serve as Contracted Program Evaluator*.

A completed *Application to Serve as Contracted Program Evaluator* should be received from each interested individual or firm. **These completed applications will be accepted until 3:30pm Central Standard Time on July 25, 2014.**

Submittals should be clearly labeled RFQ for Grant Evaluation Services on the outside of the submittal package and be addressed to:

 Bruce Barnett, Director of Internal Audit

 Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

 1705 W. Locust Street

 Durant, OK 74701

Planned selection schedule:

 RFQ released June 26, 2014

 Deadline for questions about RFQ July 15, 2014

 Deadline for answers to RFQ questions July 17, 2014

 RFQ due date July 25, 2014

 Identify Qualified Grant Evaluators July 31, 2014

**Qualifications of Submittals**

The Nation reserves the right to reject any and all submittals as it may determine in its sole and absolute discretion. Submittals will be evaluated by the Nation’s professional employees and such advisors and consultants as it deems necessary. During the qualification process, the Nation may request additional information from prospective individuals or firms.

**Subcontracting**

Subcontracting will not be allowed for any portion of the services requested within this
RFQ without the prior written consent of the Nation.

**Dispute Resolution**

Both parties agree to make a good faith effort to resolve any disputes that arise. However, if a court proceeding becomes necessary, both parties agree that the venue for any litigation arising from this contract shall lie in Bryan County, Oklahoma.

**Selection Criteria**

All applicants must meet the base screening criteria, as follows:

1. Applicants must possess relevant professional education and training in grant writing and evaluation as evidenced by answers on the *Application to Serve as a Contracted Program Evaluator*.
2. Applicants must have a minimum of two years recent experience (within the last ten years) serving in a grant evaluation capacity.
3. Applicants must have a history of satisfactory consultation or employment with the Choctaw Nation or its affiliates.
4. Key members of the applicant’s staff, who will be working with the Nation, must successfully pass a federal background check as administered by Choctaw Nation Law Enforcement personnel.

By August 15, 2014, applicants will be notified in writing if they do not meet the base screening criteria or did not pass the background check. These applicants will be moved to a “not qualified” category.

**Process of Selecting Qualified Grant Evaluators**

Experienced staff members will apply additional screening and ranking after completion of the base screening criteria. Selected individuals and firms might be contacted by the Nation for questions and possible interviews. A distinguished committee of CNO grant professionals will be responsible for final approval of the qualified grant evaluators. All chosen grant evaluators will be notified in writing.

The additional screening explores proficiency in:

* Grant writing process
* Program development and implementation processes
* Cultural knowledge
* Data collection, management, and analysis

The Executive Director or Director over the CNO grant project will choose a grant evaluator from the pre-qualified list. Our intent is to keep the same grant evaluator for the duration of the entire grant project period, unless poor performance or other causes shall require removal. Depending on the type of grant, the grant evaluator must agree to assist with developing the funding application.

**Scope**

The individual or firm selected will be required to perform all services and duties usually performed by an external grant evaluator. Depending on the type of grant, the expected procedures from grant evaluators could include:

* Meeting with CNO Program Directors and Grants Department during startup of a grant-funded program
* Collaborate with CNO staff to
* develop goals and objectives of the program
* research, develop, and review the needs assessments
* research, develop, and review the performance measures for the program
* select program curriculum and assessment tools
* create instruments for program data collection
* research and assist with online data collection process
* direct, provide, or attend staff trainings and Advisory Board meetings as needed
* Developing an evaluation plan (including higher level research) that provides the necessary process, product, formative and summative information
* Establish procedures for conducting evaluations throughout the project period, using a system that is well-prepared for audits and grantor reviews
* Assist with procedures in the Nation’s scope of work
* Assist with reporting requirements to grant agencies
* Assist with grant closeout and evaluation procedures

The Nation reserves the right to seek grant evaluation services from other sources as needed. If the grant evaluation services do not meet the Nation’s expectations, the Nation’s best interests will be protected.

**Contract Negotiation and Fees**

The fee for evaluation services shall be limited to the amount designated within the terms of each individual grant. Final fees will be negotiated and determined at the time that the Nation’s managers (Executive Director or Director) select a qualified grant evaluator from the pool of pre-qualified evaluators and finalize the contract terms.

**Questions and Answers**

All questions regarding this RFQ process should be directed to Bruce Barnett at bbarnett@choctawnation.com. Questions will be accepted by e-mail until 4:30pm on

July 15, 2014. One set of responses will be provided by e-mail on July 17, 2014. The Nation will need e-mail addresses from interested individuals or firms by July 15, 2014 to distribute the responses (send e-mail addresses to bbarnett@choctawnation.com). In fairness to all responders, no verbal responses to questions will be provided by the Nation. It is the responsibility of each interested person or firm to decide how the questions and responses affect your submittals.

**Conditions for Submission**

All responses to this RFQ must meet the following conditions to be considered:

* The qualified individual or firm shall disclose any business relationship they have or had with a current Tribal Council member or other employee of the Choctaw Nation. Failure to disclose shall be grounds for termination of any contract then entered into with the qualified individual or firm.
* The Nation reserves the right to reject any and all submittals, and to negotiate portions thereof. Submittals that address only part of the requirements in the RFQ will not be considered.
* The Nation reserves the right to select any individual or firm that it deems most advantageous, regardless of price.
* The qualified individual or firm shall furnish additional information, if requested by the Nation.
* The Nation will not be liable for any cost incurred in the preparation of submittals.
* The Nation will not be liable for any cost resulting from the interview process or additional questions related to this RFQ.
* Delivery will be accepted by mail or in person only. No faxed or electronic submissions will be allowed. It is the responsibility of the submitting party to ensure that his or her submittal package is received at the appropriate destination by the advertised time.