

JUSTIFICATION FOR OTHER THAN FULL AND OPEN COMPETITION

VA Rehabilitation Research and Development funded project, Supported Employment: Motivational Enhancement for Entry and Outcome (D7306R).

Identification Number (purchase request/solicitation number): 518-12-1-227-0001

1. Identification of the agency, contracting activity, and specific identification of the document as a justification for other than full and open competition.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, NCO 1 (New England) 650/90C proposes to enter into a contract on a basis of other than full and open competition for the project "Supported Employment: Motivational Enhancement for Entry and Outcome" conducted by Dr. Lisa Mueller of the VISN1 MIRECC, Bedford VA Hospital - Psychology Research Division.

2. The nature and/or description of the action being approved, i.e., sole source, limited competition, establishment of a new source, etc.

This is a sole source action for a new research contract. The proposed contractor is Rose, Gary S & Associates, Chelmsford, MA (DUNS 929103034). A five (5) year indefinite delivery contract is under consideration. The contractor will expended an estimate of approximately 100 hours per year during the five year duration supporting research into supported employment.

3. A description of the supplies or services required to meet the agency's needs.

The requirement is to provide expert consultation on the application of motivational interviewing principles to a randomized clinical trial of VHA vocational rehabilitation at the Bedford VA Hospital. The development of the motivational interviewing intervention and the training of research staff in the new intervention (December 2010 to January 2011) having been accomplished, the contractor shall assist in implementation of fidelity monitoring and further refinement of the intervention (January 2011 to March 2012). In addition, the contractor shall be involved in the interpretation of data and write-up of the results for publication (March 2012 to November 2013). The preponderance of the work shall be accomplished within that time frame, however follow-on work is foreseeable depending upon the success of the research and funding.

These services require previous experience designing a motivational interviewing intervention for the VHA's Compensated Work Therapy program in a randomized clinical trial and conducting fidelity monitoring of that intervention. The contractor possesses this specific experience which is essential to the successful completion of the project. The contractor is a practicing clinical psychologist and a member of the

steering committee of MINT (the Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers). The contractor has been teaching motivational interviewing techniques to health care professionals since 1992. The contractor provides training and consultation to various clinical and research units within Tufts School of Medicine, Harvard Medical School, the University of Massachusetts Medical Center, and the University of Wales College of Medicine. The contractor has worked closely with Dr. Rollnick (the founder of Motivational Interviewing) on the development of Motivational Interviewing instructional tools. Finally, the contractor participated in the design and implementation of the motivational interviewing intervention in Dr. Drebing's study, on which the present project is based, and possesses specific knowledge and experience from that study that can be utilized to refine the motivational interviewing (MI) intervention for this project.

This contract will allow the Bedford VA's MIRECC (Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center) to accomplish their mission to provide VHA policymakers, VHA investigators, and non-VHA vocational rehabilitation specialists, with findings and recommendations regarding (a) the utility of an extended motivational interviewing protocol for veterans and their significant others, and (b) topic areas for the development of additional strategies to improve access and outcomes in Supported Employment (SE). If effective, the motivational interviewing protocol could be provided by clinicians or case managers of veterans with serious mental illness to increase rates of entry in SE as well as rates of competitive employment.

4. The statutory authority permitting other than full and open competition.

The statutory authority permitting other than full and open competition is 41 U.S.C.253(c)(1) as implemented by the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Subpart 6.302-1 entitled, "Only One Responsible Source and No Other Supplies or Services Will Satisfy Agency Requirements."

5. A statement demonstrating the unique qualifications of the proposed contractor or the nature of the action requiring the use of the authority.

The contractor, Dr. Gary Rose, is uniquely qualified to provide these services to based upon the following:

- a. He has experience developing and implementing a motivational interviewing intervention to encourage entry into vocational rehabilitation as part of RR&D funded randomized clinical trial for the VHA's Compensated Work Therapy program. Previous experience in this area is essential to the success of the contract.
- b. He has extensive knowledge of the unique issues that veterans with mental illness, substance abuse, and physical problems face when they consider

entering a vocational rehabilitation program and can utilize this knowledge to design an appropriate intervention to address these barriers.

- c. He has already designed a detailed "if..then" decision tree that can be used to address complicated clinical and interpersonal issues that arise during the motivational interviewing intervention. This project will include the added complexity of involving the veteran's friend or family member in the intervention, which will require a revision of the decision tree. Dr. Rose's experience, training, and skill that contributed to designing the first decision tree is necessary to adapt it to this new population.
6. **A description of efforts to ensure that offers were solicited from as many potential sources as is practicable. Include whether or not a FedBizOps announcement was made and what response, if any, was received, or include the exception under FAR 5.202 if not synopsisizing. Describe whether any additional or similar requirements are anticipated in the future (this may not be included as an addendum, but must be in the body of the JOFOC).**

As part of the development of the research project, the undersigned contacted a number of colleagues regarding experiences with designing a motivational interviewing intervention to address entry into vocational services. Although the colleagues mentioned a number of individuals who had designed motivational interviewing interventions to enhance entry and participation into other types of services, the only person who could be identified as already having designed a motivational interviewing intervention to enhance entry into VHA vocational rehabilitation services as a part of randomized clinical trial was Dr. Gary Rose. The feedback from the colleagues indicated that entry into VHA vocational services was a complex phenomena related to a number of personal, social, and environmental factors, and that not utilizing the contractor's expertise in this area would hinder the successful investigation of whether motivational interviewing would be useful in this area.

A FedBizOpps announcement will be made; interested persons/parties will be referred to the program office.

7. **The anticipated dollar value of the proposed acquisition, including options if applicable, and a determination by the Contracting Officer that the anticipated cost to the Government will be fair and reasonable.**

The first two years of the acquisition will comprise approximately \$10,000.00 each year. The out years, if any, will be at approximately the same amount. The aggregate value of orders placed under this contract will not exceed approximately \$50,000.00

8. **A description of the market research conducted and the results.**

As stated in section 6:

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9. Any other facts supporting the use of other than full and open competition.

The total budget for this project, including all research staff salaries, payment for contractors, subject payments, and equipment is \$691,710. Without Dr. Gary Rose's expertise acquired from the previous study of a single motivational interviewing session with the veteran to impact entry into VHA's Compensated Work Therapy, the results of which form the foundation of the current project, we will not be able to fully test the impact of a 6 session motivational interviewing intervention with the veteran and his/her significant on entry into VHA vocational rehabilitation services. This would result in a loss to the Government of not only the funds of the project but also the potential positive outcomes veterans' may experience from such intervention without the best possible product and results based on Dr. Rose's input.

10. A listing of any sources that expressed a written interest in the acquisition.

None.

11. A statement of any actions the agency may take to remove or overcome any barriers to competition, if subsequent acquisitions are anticipated.

.The program office and COTR continue to monitor and survey developments in this field. This action will be synopsized to FBO. Interested persons will be referred to the program office.

I certify that the facts and representations under my cognizance, which are included in this justification and which form a basis for this justification, are complete and accurate.

