



A Request for Proposals For An Evaluation of Alignment Between State Career Technical Education Standards and the Common Career Technical Core

Executive Summary

The National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEc) is issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify a contractor to conduct an alignment study to compare the Common Career Technical Core (CCTC) against state Career Technical Education (CTE) standards.

The CCTC, released in June 2012, includes a set of standards for each of the 16 Career Clusters™ and supporting career pathways, a comprehensive collection of industry-validated expectations of what students should know and be able to do after completing instruction in a program of study. The CCTC also includes an overarching set of Career Ready Practices that apply to all 16 Career Clusters™. The Career Ready Practices include 12 statements that address the knowledge, skills and dispositions that are important to becoming career ready.

To help states facilitate the adoption and implementation of the CCTC, the NASDCTEc Board of Directors has called for a comparable, uniform evaluation of current state and territory standards against the CCTC. The purpose of the alignment study is two-fold. First, to provide feedback to individual states and territories about alignment to inform the development of an adoption plan and an implementation plan. Second, to provide a broad understanding of the needs of states and territories in adopting and implementing the CCTC so that NASDCTEc can develop targeted technical assistance and resources. NASDCTEc also anticipates that the results of this study could contribute to the development of assessments in the future.

NASDCTEc plans to publicly release the results of the full gap analysis in October 2013 during the fall membership meeting. NASDCTEc plans to share each individual state or territory report with the respective CTE State Director by August 31, 2013, prior to the public release.

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Purpose of RFP

As the economy has changed in the past decade, many CTE programs have transitioned from helping students prepare for a job to helping students prepare for a career. As part of that transition, national organizations, like NASDCTE, individual states, and even industry-based organizations created different sets of standards for student learning in career technical programs. The result of this early standards work is that we now have a hodgepodge of standards that vary in quality and specificity from one state to the next. Inconsistency across CTE programs puts some students at a distinct disadvantage for competing in the ever-changing global economy. Recognizing the need for more consistency in today's global marketplace, state CTE directors united around a vision to develop a shared set of standards that meet a quality benchmark for students in CTE programs, regardless of where they live or which delivery system they use. The result of that vision is the Common Career Technical Core, released in June of 2012.

The CCTC is a set of rigorous, high-quality standards for CTE that states can adopt voluntarily. The standards were informed by existing state and industry standards--including the National Career Clusters™ Knowledge and Skills Statements--and developed by a diverse group of teachers, business and industry experts, administrators and researchers. The CCTC aligns with the goals of other recent standards efforts in education, such as the Common Core State Standards for mathematics and English language arts and the Next Generation Science Standards effort, currently in development.

To assist states in the next phase of the initiative, the NASDCTE Board of Directors have called for a comparable, uniform evaluation of current state standards against the CCTC. The purpose of the alignment study is two-fold. First, to provide feedback to individual states about alignment to inform the development of an adoption plan and an implementation plan. Second, to provide a broad understanding of the needs of states in adopting and implementing the CCTC so that NASDCTE can develop targeted technical assistance and resources. NASDCTE also anticipates that the results of this study could contribute to the development of assessments in the future.

Currently, the variety and depth of CTE standards within states is diverse. A number of states have adopted the Knowledge and Skills Statements, others use the Knowledge and Skills Statements to inform existing standards work in combination with some of the industry programs. Still others rely on local school districts to establish standards for learning. In addition, a variety of delivery systems are in place among the states that include comprehensive high schools, career academies, regional technical schools and community colleges within high schools, among other approaches. As a result the study will encompass data that could span K-12 and postsecondary systems.

As part of the initial data collection for the study of all states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Territories, phase one will include a policy scan to determine where states and territories fall within this spectrum of formal adopted CTE standards to none at all. The second phase will be a pilot phase to analyze data from a small sample of states before moving to the large-scale study of all states and territories.

The final product of the study should provide an analysis, by state, of alignment, along with recommendations for addressing gaps. The study should also provide a summary report of each state's gap analysis to inform NASDCTE's efforts to develop a strategy for technical assistance.

NASDCTE plans to publicly release the results of the full gap analysis in October 2013 during the fall membership meeting. NASDCTE plans to share each individual state or territory report with the respective CTE State Director by August 31, 2013, prior to the public release.

This RFP is intended to assist NASDCTEc in identifying a contractor to conduct an alignment study to compare the Common Career Technical Core (CCTC) against state approved, authorized or adopted Career Technical Education (CTE) standards (policy language may vary from state-to-state).

For more detailed resources about the CCTC and to view the standards see: www.careertech.org/career-technical-education/cctc/.

To learn more about the 2008 version of the Knowledge and Skills Statements currently used by a number of states see: www.careertech.org/career-clusters/ccresources/knowledge-skills.html.

About NASDCTEc

The National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEc) was established in 1920 to represent the state and territory heads of secondary, postsecondary and adult Career Technical Education across the nation. NASDCTEc, through leadership, advocacy and partnerships, aims to support an innovative CTE system that prepares individuals to succeed in education and their careers, and poises the United States to flourish in a global, dynamic economy.

NASDCTEc supports visionary state leadership, cultivates best practices and speaks with a collective voice on national policy to promote academic and technical excellence that ensures a career ready workforce. NASDCTEc is an advocate for policies and legislation that enhance and sustain high-quality CTE programs throughout the nation. To that end, the association actively monitors federal and national developments and around the country for the latest research, news, and issues influencing the dialogue on CTE and education policy. NASDCTEc represents the CTE interests of its members in the nation's capital.

To learn more about NASDCTEc see: www.careertech.org.

RFP Timeline and Process

The estimated timeline for the project is outlined below with the dates representing the completion date for each step.

October 26, 2012	RFP issued by NASDCTEc
October 31, 2012	Questions about RFP submitted to NASDCTEc via email
November 2, 2012	NASDCTEc responds to questions via email
November 15, 2012	RFP responses due from bidders by Noon, ET
November 16-30, 2012	RFP committee evaluates responses; selects finalists
December 3-7, 2012	NASDCTEc schedules presentations with finalists; checks references
December 11-12, 2012	Finalist presentations in Silver Spring, MD
December 13, 2012	Notification of contract award; contract negotiations begin
December 20, 2012	Contract signed
January 7, 2013	Project kick-off

An RFP committee, comprised of NASDCTEc leadership and select CTE state directors, will review responses and select top bidders for in-person interviews on December 11 or 12, 2012. The face-to-face interviews will last approximately 2 hours. All expenses incurred as a result of travel related to the interviews are the responsibility of the bidder.

Format For Submitting a Response

Responses should be double-spaced; text should be no smaller than 10-point font.

Deadline For Submitting a Response

Respondents should submit an electronic copy by **Noon, ET on Thursday, November 15, 2012** to Lori Meyer at lmeyer@careertech.org.

Incomplete proposals will not be considered.

Questions About the RFP

Clarification, requests or questions about the RFP should be submitted via e-mail to Lori Meyer at lmeyer@careertech.org by **5:00 pm, ET, Wednesday, October 31, 2012**. NASDCTEc will provide responses by Friday, November 2, 2012.

Rights to Materials Submitted

The information contained in this RFP and in all discussions with NASDCTEc personnel should be treated as confidential and proprietary. The respondent must mark as “proprietary” those parts of its response that it deems confidential and proprietary.

Cost of Proposal Preparation

Respondents will pay all costs associated with the preparation and submission of proposals for this RFP. This includes travel and lodging both to and from the interview in Silver Spring, MD.

Sections to Include in Response

1. Table of Contents

2. Executive Summary (not to exceed 1 page)

Include a statement in the Executive Summary that the proposal is valid for a minimum of ninety (90) calendar days from the proposal due date.

3. Organizational Overview (not to exceed 1 page)

Include in the organizational overview a description of past and current litigation, if any.

4. Summary of Qualifications (not to exceed 2 pages)

Please include a list and summary of the qualifications of the individual(s) who will be directly involved in the study. Be specific about who will gather data, conduct the analysis and write the

final reports. Also, clearly identify a lead project manager who will coordinate with NASDCTEC. Do not include qualifications of leadership or staff who will not be directly involved in the study.

Include complete resumes/CVs for each individual as an Appendix.

5. Methodology (not to exceed 12 pages)

Please describe the methodology for data collection, analysis and reporting. Proposals must address all 3 of these components.

Please focus on:

- The background material and preparation to launch the study, particularly what material is needed from NASDCTEC and/or CTE state directors;
- What role you expect NASDCTEC, CTE state directors or others to play in the study and an approximate timeframe of when you will engage with each, along with an approximate time commitment;
- Project management strategy;
- How you plan to keep NASDCTEC informed throughout the study, along with the full membership;
- The policy scan to determine where states and territories fall within this spectrum of formal adopted CTE standards to none at all;
- The pilot study that will include a small number of states or territories as well as the broader study that will include all states and territories with standards or comparable learning frameworks at the state level;
- The data points that will be collected and the process that will be used to collect data, catalog data, update data and verify data for accuracy to ensure it encompasses the most up-to-date secondary and postsecondary information for each state and territory;
- A plan for sharing raw data with NASDCTEC;
- The process that will be used to analyze data and verify consistency across states and territories;
- The format and data points that will be included in the report of the policy scan of the states and territories;
- The format and data points that will be included in the report of the pilot states and/or territories;
- The format and data points that will be included in the final individual state reports and the summary report that encompasses all state analyses; and
- A history of how the methodology was developed and tested, including common challenges faced.

6. Timeline (not to exceed 1 page)

Please provide an estimated timeline that includes data collection, data analysis and reporting. Use a launch date of January 7, 2013. Be as specific as possible.

7. Budget (not to exceed 2 pages)

Please include budget estimates, using the spreadsheet provided as a guide, along with a brief written summary. Add detail to the spreadsheet as needed. The budget should include all costs associated with each phase of the project (data collection, data analysis, data reporting and other).

8. References (not to exceed 2 pages)

Please provide references for two completed projects within the past three years that are similar in scope. Include:

- Name and address of the organization services were provided for.
- The name and telephone number of a contact person at the organization.
- Customer's primary business.
- A brief description of the project.

9. Appendix

Include complete resumes/CVs for each individual that will be involved directly in the study.