

Request for Information



State of Alaska
Department of Health
Division of Senior and Disabilities Services

RFI Number: 27-004
Date Issued: October 9, 2026

PROJECT SEARCH EMPLOYMENT TRAINING PARTNER

Introduction:

Through this Request for Information (RFI), the Alaska Governor's Council on Disabilities and Education (GCDSE) is seeking information from qualified disability services organizations that provide employment training services to fill the separate instructor and skills training staff roles at an identified potential new Project SEARCH adult or non-school district enrolled student site. For this RFI the specific site development is focused on an adult based program, where the interns are no longer enrolled in school or have graduated, and there would be no school district partner unlike typical school district or youth-based Project SEARCH site models.

Project SEARCH is a well-known program designed to help young adults with disabilities gain work experience. The program brings together businesses, schools, and services that support people with disabilities. By working as a team, these organizations help create a program that can keep running on their own if everyone fulfills their roles. Sites typically operate throughout the academic year for 9 months, and all provide work experience through working in a host business environment. In Alaska, the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education (GCDSE) has obtained the necessary licensure to use the program at our individual sites.

The partnership model is key to the program and part of the model foundation. The program follows specific guidelines, curricula, fidelity requirements, and lessons developed by Cincinnati Children's Hospital as the trademark owner to ensure program sites can achieve outcomes (listed below in background).

Background Information:

Project SEARCH was developed to help young adult individuals primarily with intellectual and developmental disabilities gain employment. Recognizing that training and immersive exploration of career paths through apprenticeships and strong support networks creates strong outcomes, current vendors provide instruction and skills training to interns at sites hosted under a business partner. Site instructors are the main point for a given site to run daily operations. They provide direct student training, run the daily needs of the site for all required paperwork and system data entry, work with vocational rehabilitation staff to identify interns' current skills and employment goals and create employment plans, and meet with all required site partners and families to ensure participant services and outcomes are well delivered and address any issues that arise. Will meet with host business managers and discuss training and support needs and work to gain more internship rotations in the business. Skills trainers provide all required direct one-on-one job skill training, check-ins, meetings, and assessment reporting for interns under the direction of the instructor.

The entirety of a Project SEARCH site is a partnership model. Sites will follow all fidelity requirements and objectives to remain licensed and will receive technical assistance from Cincinnati Children's Hospital National Office and the Alaska Statewide Coordinator. Total workplace immersion and experiences provided to interns via instruction, work experiences, and individual job search and placement are to lead to the overall outcomes. Outcomes are expected to have graduates in integrated, year-round, sixteen (16) hours a week or more at minimum wage jobs. **For more information, see: <https://www.projectsearch.us/our-model>**

Response Information:

Vendors interested in providing details about their capabilities to provide employment training services and fill instruction and skills training roles at an identified potential new adult or non-school district intern Project SEARCH site are invited to submit responses addressing the following:

1. Provide your organization's name, address, primary contact person, telephone number, email address, and website for its RFI response.
2. Describe your organization's experience in providing academic year services to a cohort of interns in employment skills development and learning. Please include examples and program data.
3. Describe how your organization has been involved in a state- or nationally employment training curriculum with specific program outcomes and processes.
4. What experience does your organization have with gathering and collecting statistics, data, and reporting relevant to this RFI?
5. Describe your overall staffing plan, estimated costs, and timeline for this project. Please also include your transition timeline and your availability to start the project within the next six months.

Interested parties who believe they can provide the services described in this RFI must submit their response in writing via email by **2:00 PM on Wednesday, October 28, 2026**, to the following person:

Dorothy Tauaese-Puletapuai
Procurement Officer
Department of Health
Departmental Support Services

Phone: (907) 444-6313

Email: dorothy.v.tauaese-puletapuai@alaska.gov

Please also copy doh.procurement.proposals@alaska.gov on the email submission.

It is the responsibility of the interested party to follow up via email to ensure your response was received prior to the specified date and time.

All questions must be directed to the procurement specialist listed above.

Important Notice:

This RFI does not extend any rights to prospective vendors or obligate the state to conduct a solicitation or execute a contract. Nor will the State be financially responsible for any costs associated with the preparation of any response to the requested information. This RFI is issued for the sole purpose of obtaining information as described in this notice. However, the information obtained from this request may be used to prepare a solicitation or contract in the future.

Disclosure of Response Contents:

If a solicitation or contract results from this RFI, all response information, including the name of the respondent, will be held confidential until the time a Notice of Intent to Award is issued. If a contract is executed, responses will be held confidential until the time of contract execution. Thereafter, responses will become public information.

The Alaska Public Records Act (ARPA) requires public records to be open to reasonable inspection.

Trade secrets and other proprietary data contained in responses may be held confidential if the respondent requests that in writing to the procurement officer, and if the procurement officer agrees in writing. The respondent's request must be included with the response, must clearly identify the information to be held confidential, and include the reasons for confidentiality.