



**Title:** Request for Proposals (RFP)  
**Issue Date:** November 18, 2015  
**Issuing Agency:** Smart Start of Forsyth County, Inc.  
7820 North Point Blvd. Ste. 200  
Winston-Salem, NC 27106  
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Website Address: [www.smartstart-fc.org](http://www.smartstart-fc.org)

Sealed proposals subject to conditions made a part hereof will be received until 5:00 p.m., January 8, 2016.

Interested Parties must submit an original with 12 copies of the proposal application and budget with narrative.

Send original proposals with requested copies to Smart Start of Forsyth County, Inc. at the address shown above.

All inquiries concerning this RFP should be directed to Charlette Lindell, Director, Operation & Business Partnerships, 336-714-4347.

Interested grant applicants must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) no later than **November 16, 2015**.

**A voluntary grant review and information webinar will be conducted on 11/24/15, 10:00 a.m.** Prospective Applicants are encouraged to attend. Invitations and log-in information will be provided to all parties submitting a LOI on or before the LOI deadline.

The Grant Applicant is responsible for reviewing all grant documentation prior to submission. The applicant may submit questions or request assistance in proposal development, in writing, to Charlette Lindell at SSFC: [charlettel@smartstart-fc.org](mailto:charlettel@smartstart-fc.org). All questions or requests must be received by Ms. Lindell no later than December 15, 2015. A summary of all questions and answers will be posted on the SSFC website, [www.smartstart-fc.org](http://www.smartstart-fc.org).

This RFP is for a **ONE-YEAR BID FOR SERVICES**. To receive services, prospective Contractors must submit a cost proposal with an annual budget ending 6/30/2016. Contract(s) for the proposed funding year will be executed only after confirmation of the availability of funds for this purpose.

## Introduction

Founded in 1994 as the Forsyth Early Education Partnership, Inc., Smart Start of Forsyth County, Inc. (SSFC) has been serving the birth-to-five population by supporting children, parents, educators, centers, and policy makers through collaborative programs, consumer education, and advocacy. A passionate team of education and community advocates, led by Dean Clifford, Ph.D., set SSFC on its path of mobilizing resources and shaping public opinion to improve early childhood care, development, and education. Since its founding, succeeding cohorts of volunteer leaders and professional staff have continued Forsyth County's local early education partnership to provide parents, educators, and policy makers with tools for raising healthy, successful children, and ensuring that children have access to preventative health, dental, and vision care.

Smart Start of Forsyth County, Inc. (SSFC) is soliciting proposals from agencies interested in providing services that contribute to the well-being and optimal development of young children, birth through 5 and their families through the use of an **evidence-based or evidence-informed** programs in the areas of:

1. Early care and education
2. Health
3. Literacy
4. Family support/Engagement
5. Other (please specify)

The purpose of this request is to acquire the services of qualified contractor(s) through competitive negotiations.

## Funding Opportunities

**Area 1: Early Care and Education:** Building and maintaining an affordable, comprehensive, high quality early development and education system for Winston-Salem/Forsyth County.

Through the provision of services that include but are not limited to:

- Increasing the number of high quality early care and education programs and facilities, where high quality is a rating of 4 or 5 stars in North Carolina's star rating system.
- Increasing the number of young children participating in high quality early care and education programs.
- Assisting in underwriting the cost to families of high quality early care and education (e.g., scholarships).
- Maintaining a level of high quality in early care and education settings.
- Improving the education or qualifications of the early care and education workforce.
- Assisting families in creating or choosing high quality early learning environments or experiences.

**Area 2: Health:** To improve child health through nutrition, physical activity and obesity-prevention strategies

Through the provision of services that include but are not limited to:

- Provide special training to child care providers so that they are able to educate preschoolers about health options for physical activities, eating habits, and food safety and also learn how to effectively use kits of educational materials, interactive games, and hands on lesson plans that engage that help to engage children about health lifestyles
- Nutrition and physical activity self-assessment for child care
- Assuring Better Child Health and Development

**Area 3: Early Literacy:** To promote early literacy experiences for young children and 2) to increase parents understanding of strategies that they can use to enhance children's reading experiences.

Through the provision of services that include but are not limited to:

- Shared reading programs

The goals of early literacy, especially shared reading programs include:

- Promoting early literacy experiences for young children and their parents.
- Increasing parents' understanding of strategies they can use to enhance children's reading experiences.
- Promoting family literacy habits, including increasing parent-child reading frequency.
- Improving reading readiness and school readiness of young children.
- Increasing young children's access to books.

**Area 4: Family Support and Engagement:** Connecting families with young children or expecting young children to information, resources, and support concerning early development and learning, including early literacy practices.

Through the provision of services that include but are not limited to:

- Group-based parent education and support programs
- Home visiting programs
- Shared reading programs

Family support is typically provided through group-based parent education and support programs or programs that provide support to families through home visits.

The goals of group-based parent education and support programs typically include:

- Improving healthy child social-emotional development
- Improving attachment between the child and parent
- Enhancing family functioning
- Improving positive disciplinary approaches
- Improving overall parenting skills

The goals of home-visiting programs are typically include:

- Providing family support
- Building parenting skills
- Enhancing cognitive development of children
- Promoting a safe and healthy home environment for children
- Preparing children for school

## Qualifications

The contractor must have demonstrated competency in performing services defined in the Funding Opportunities Section of this RFP. Specifically, the Contractor must demonstrate a successful history of providing similar services.

The Contractor, if applicable, must disclose details of any pertinent judgment, criminal conviction, investigation or litigation pending against the Contractor or any of its officers, directors, employees, agents or subcontractors of which the vendor has knowledge, or a statement that there is none. The Local Partnership reserves the right to reject a proposal based on this information.

## Procurement of Services & Evaluation of Proposals

The following is a general description of the process by which prospective Contractors will be selected to provide services.

The Request for Proposals is issued. **A timeline outlining the RFP process is available upon request.**

### Organizations Eligible to Submit Proposals

1. For-profit and non-profit organizations.
2. Public organizations and agencies.
3. Grassroots organizations, such as neighborhood groups, that partner with eligible organizations.

### Restrictions for Proposals

1. Proposed services must impact children from the prenatal period through age five.
2. Proposals must address identified community needs in Forsyth County.
3. Proposals must employ evidenced-based or evidenced-informed programs or practices.

### **Evaluation of Proposals**

Proposal reviewers will consider the extent to which particular applications:

1. Demonstrate congruence with SSFC, Inc.'s vision and mission.
2. Align with the goals of SSFC, Inc.'s 2013 – 2016 strategic plan and PBIS standards.
3. Demonstrate the appropriate use(s) of evidence-based or evidenced-informed programs, strategies, or techniques to improve the lives of children and families.
4. Demonstrate the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County community's need for the proposed program.
5. Demonstrate opportunities for:
  - a. Partnering effectively and creatively with other organizations, and
  - b. Leveraging the resources of other organizations in service to children and their families.
6. Demonstrate on-going improvement in services towards positive program outcomes.

### **Program Monitoring**

The N.C. General Assembly, through NCPC, Inc., holds SSFC, Inc., accountable for the effective use of all NCPC-contracted funds in Forsyth County. Therefore, all funded programs must comply with:

1. Provisions established by the NC General Assembly and the SSFC Board of Directors and set forth in the SSFC, Inc. financial assistance contract.

In addition, funded programs will be required to:

- a. Participate in evaluation planning and reporting;
- b. Submit requests for program documentation in support of program management and monitoring provisions;
- c. Adhere to NCPC and SSFC cost principles to help ensure the efficient and effective use of Smart Start funding and;
- d. Promote and identify the activity as being funded by Smart Start of Forsyth County in messaging and print-format.

## GENERAL INFORMATION ON SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

1. **PROPOSAL EVALUATION.** Proposals will be evaluated according to the criteria listed on page 6 in this document under the heading “Funding Decisions.” The award of a contract (or the specific amount of any contract award) to one prospective contractor does not mean that other proposals lacked merit, but that, all factors considered, the selected proposal was deemed most advantageous to the Local Partnership.
2. **TERMS AND CONDITIONS.** All proposals are subject to the terms and conditions outlined herein. The prospective contractor specifically agrees to the conditions set forth by signature to the proposal.
3. **ORAL EXPLANATIONS.** SSFC shall not be bound by oral explanations or instructions given at any time during the competitive bidding process or after award.
4. **REFERENCE TO OTHER DATA.** Only information which is received in response to this RFP will be evaluated; reference to information previously submitted shall not be evaluated.
5. **COST FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION.** Any costs incurred by prospective contractors in preparing or submitting offers are the prospective contractor’s sole responsibility; SSFC shall not reimburse any prospective contractor for any costs incurred prior to award.
6. **RIGHT TO SUBMITTED MATERIAL.** All responses, inquiries, or correspondence relating to or in reference to the RFP, and all other reports, charts, displays, schedules, exhibits, and other documentation submitted by the prospective contractors become the property of SSFC, Inc.
7. **AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE.** Each prospective contractor shall submit with its proposal the name, address, and telephone number of the person(s) with authority to bind the firm and answer questions or provide clarification concerning the firm’s proposal.
8. **SUBCONTRACTING.** In the event the prospective contractor desires to subcontract any part of the contracted services, the proposal must clearly indicate what work it plans to subcontract and to whom and must provide all required information for each subcontractor. Only the subcontractors specified in the proposal shall be considered approved upon award of the contract.
9. **PROPRIETARY INFORMATION.** Proprietary data which the prospective contractor does not wish disclosed to other than personnel involved in the evaluation or contract administration will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by N.C.G.S. 132-1.3 if identified as follows: each page shall be identified in bold face at the top and bottom as “Confidential.” Any section of the proposal that is to remain confidential shall also be so marked in bold face on the top of the title page of that section. Cost information may not be deemed confidential. In spite of what is labeled as confidential, the determination as to whether or not it is shall be as governed by North Carolina law.

## Submission of Proposal

### Application Format, Certification, and Final Submission:

1. Applicant emails by **5:00 p.m. on January 8, 2016** an electronic, non-pdf version of the proposal in the required format (Microsoft Word, Times New Roman Font 12-point, 1.5 lines spacing/ For budget: Microsoft Excel, Times New Roman Font, 12-point) along with one signed original hard copy proposal and 12 additional copies. Required attachments may be submitted in hard copy.
2. Total proposal application, including the cover sheet and activity budget should not exceed eight (8) two-sided 8.5 x 11 inch sheets of paper (16 pages of text). Required attachments and supplemental information are not included in the 16-page limit.
3. All proposal application pages must be consecutively numbered. Do not number the attachments. Insert page-number footer, or insert handwritten number on budget forms.
4. Collate and secure with paper clip or clasp. **No staples, please.**
5. SSFC staff will certify that grantee's application has been submitted by 5:00 p.m. on January 8, 2016.

### Required Attachments: (Please provide **1 copy** of the following documents.)

1. List of Board of Directors
2. Organizational or department chart for your agency (**Current-funded agencies please submit if there have been changes.**)
3. Job descriptions for any NCPC-funded positions (**Current-funded agencies please submit if there have been revisions made to job descriptions associated with NCPC-funded positions**)
4. Copy of the most recent audited financial statement. If audited financial statements are not available, provide similar independent evidence of financial stability.
5. IRS tax-exempt letter assigning the federal tax identification number/legal name (if applicable). **Current-funded agencies do not have to submit this information.**
6. Proof of Insurance that may include but not limited to: Fidelity Bonding (employee crime or dishonesty, General Business Liability, Professional Liability, Automobile (owned, hired or non-owned), Worker's Compensation, and, as applicable, special events.
7. Completed W-9 Form (**only for first-time grant applicants**).

### **About SSFC's Strategic Plan**

Smart Start of Forsyth County's strategic plan guides our board, staff, and partners in serving Forsyth County's youngest community members and their families, educators, and allied service providers.

**Smart Start of Forsyth County, Inc.**  
**Strategic Plan FY 2013 -14 to FY 2015 -16**  
**Approved by the Board of SSFC on March 20, 2013**  
**Executive Summary**

**Vision:** *The children of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County succeed in school and life because of excellent civic, corporate, and community partnerships for early childhood development and learning that support families in helping their children thrive.*

**Mission:** *SSFC, Inc., mobilizes resources, forges partnerships, and shapes public opinion to assist the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County community to build and sustain an affordable, comprehensive, high quality system of early childhood development and learning*

### **Goals:**

**I. SSFC convenes stakeholders to help foster an on-going community conversation about the components and financing of an affordable, comprehensive, high quality system of early childhood development and learning.**

(A) **Information, Collaboration, and Advocacy:** Engage stakeholders in understanding and promoting the importance of early learning and mission-focused, quality-driven collaboration.

(1) **Messages about Action in Citizen and Corporate Engagement:** Develop and promote consistent, accurate messages about the importance of early learning, and the role of citizen and corporate engagement in maintaining an affordable, comprehensive, high quality system of early childhood development and learning.

(2) **Messages about Economic and Social Impact:** Develop and promote consistent, accurate messages about the relationships among early learning, economic development, and the well-being of the community.

(3) **Media and our Messages:** Use diverse media to seek coverage and promote events in early childhood development and learning.

(4) **Parents and Child Care Providers as Messengers:** Mobilize and train parents and child care providers to advocate on behalf of children and effective services.

(5) **Primacy of Our Organizational Working Groups:** Capitalize on our corporate committees and taskforces to advance our messages and model system building.

- (i) Corporate board and subcommittees
- (ii) Allocations and investment panels
- (iii) NC Pre-K Committee
- (iv) Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Ready Schools Committee

**II. SSFC operates and funds programs to build an affordable, comprehensive, high quality system of early childhood development and learning.**

(A) **Our Community’s Performance:** Target resources to move the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County community beyond the state averages in NCPC, Inc.’s Performance Based Incentive System (PBIS) for early childhood education, family support, and allied services.

(B) **Our Program’s Foundation:** Operate and fund evidence-based and evidence-informed programs.

**III. SSFC builds and sustains sound business operations**

(A) **Board Accountability:** Define and strive for excellence in board composition and performance.

(B) **Staff Accountability:** Define and strive for excellence in staff composition and performance.

**IV. SSFC develops diversified sources of private and public funding, and in-kind support**

(A) **Our Investors:** Develop a comprehensive fund development program with goals in annual giving, major gifts, and corporate and foundation support, as well as for in-kind donations and volunteer service.

(B) **New Endeavors:** Research, design and implement a signature annual event, and explore opportunities for entrepreneurial enterprise(s) and fee-generating activities.