



Request for Proposal (RFP):

NewSTEPS (Newborn Screening Technical assistance and Evaluation Program) Website

Issued: October 14, 2016

Letter of Intent Due Date: October 31, 2016

Application Due Date: November 15, 2016

Submit to: Sikha Singh, Manager, NewSTEPS (newsteps@aphl.org)

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Summary

The Newborn Screening Technical assistance and Evaluation Program (NewSTEPS), a program of the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) in collaboration with the Colorado School of Public Health (CSPH), is looking to identify a vendor to redesign and update the [NewSTEPS website](#). APHL anticipates that the vendor will receive \$150,000 for the services it renders over one year.

Background

Newborn screening (NBS) is a baby's first exposure to public health and is a public health program that entails many components; including testing, diagnosis, follow-up, treatment, education and evaluation. In the United States, 4.5 million newborns receive newborn screening annually. The Advisory Committee on Heritable Disorders in Newborns and Children (ACHDNC) evaluates and recommends disorders to be included on the Recommended Uniform Screening Panel, (RUSP), however, each state mandates the specific disorders to be tested, implements a screening process, including follow-up of out-of-range results, and is responsible for quality improvement of the entire newborn screening system.

APHL has received funding through a five-year cooperative agreement with the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Genetic Services Branch to design, develop and implement NewSTEPS. This program provides 1) a newborn screening (NBS) data repository and 2) an interactive website for sharing resources and educational materials. NewSTEPS provides tools to state newborn screening programs to ensure that states can adequately evaluate, analyze, and benchmark the performance of their tests and the quality of their newborn screening programs. The purpose of NewSTEPS is to implement quality improvement efforts and to strengthen existing newborn and genetics screening programs by gathering and providing data as well as offering technical and educational resources to various NBS stakeholders. The project entails facilitating the harmonization of newborn screening activities through innovation and technology, with the goal of being able to analyze, compare and continuously improve newborn screening systems.

NewSTEPS addresses the challenges faced by state NBS programs by providing training, technical assistance, and a data repository for evaluation and assessment of NBS performance. Activities include information gathering and analysis (formative analysis) to determine the needs of the state NBS programs in education, communication and data analysis, evaluating definitions for key NBS outcomes and data components, and seeking input from state NBS personnel.

About APHL: APHL is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization that works to safeguard the public's health by strengthening public health laboratories in the United States and globally. The Association's members include state and local laboratories, state environmental and agricultural

laboratories, and other government laboratories that conduct testing of public health significance. To obtain more information about APHL, please visit <http://www.aphl.org>.

Eligibility Criteria and Overview of Anticipated Work

APHL is looking for any organization with an ability to fully perform the scope of the project with regards to updating the NewSTEPS interactive website.

The following notes on general issues, assumptions and preferences, while not requirements, provide an overview of the non-functional requirements and preferences that are important issues for consideration by applicants as they describe key aspects of the NewSTEPS website that would be most appropriate.

1. The interactive website must meet web standards and be browser independent; it must not require any plug-ins so that it can work on every platform; and it must be 508 compliant.
2. The applicant must work in conjunction with 5AM Solutions on facilitating website updates, as they are the original website developers. APHL will facilitate this collaboration once an applicant is selected.
3. The website must be user friendly and easy to navigate; it must utilize contemporary features (described, but not limited to, the details below); and must have a clear and simple design and present information in an intuitive, logical manner.
4. The applicant must allow for the NewSTEPS team to provide incremental adjustments and feedback, and training must be provided for staff regarding how to routinely update the website.

Anticipated RFP Schedule

Applications are due by 5:00 pm ET on November 15, 2016. APHL may request meetings or a teleconference with the respondents prior to announcement of the final contract recipient. Please review the following dates:

- i. October 14, 2016: RFP Issued
- ii. October 31, 2016: Brief statement indicating intent to apply due by 5:00 pm ET to APHL
- iii. November 15, 2016: **RFP responses due** by 5:00pm ET to APHL
- iv. December 9, 2016: Full evaluation of proposals completed and vendor notified of acceptance
- v. December 12, 2016 - June 30, 2017: Website enhancements and redesign

RFP Process Overview

The proposal must contain the full legal name and signature of the authorized representative of the contractor. The applicant must include the telephone number, email and business address of the point of contact.

Letter of Intent

APHL requests that prospective applicants submit a brief email statement indicating a firm intent to submit a proposal by no later than October 31, 2016. Although a letter of intent is not binding and does not enter into the review of the RFP, the information that it contains allows APHL's evaluation team to estimate the potential review workload and plan the contract development and review process. Potential applicants must include the name of the organization or individual that will submit the proposal in their email.

The prospective bidders must email this statement to Sikha Singh, MHS, PMP, Manager of NewSTEPS at sikha.singh@aphl.org with a copy to newsteps@aphl.org using the subject line: LETTER OF INTENT: NEWSTEPS WEBSITE RFP. APHL must receive this information by **5:00 pm ET on October 31, 2016**.

Submission of RFP

Complete responses must be submitted by **5:00 pm ET, on November 15, 2016**. Responses can be sent by the following methods: via email to newsteps@aphl.org with a copy to newsteps@aphl.org or by US MAIL, Commercial delivery service or hand delivery to Sikha Singh, MHS, PMP, APHL, 8515 Georgia Avenue Suite 700, Silver Spring, MD, 20910.

Email attachment is the preferred means of receipt. Regardless of delivery method used, all responses must be **received** at the APHL office by 5:00 pm ET on November 15, 2016. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the response is received at APHL by this deadline.

Responses should be limited to 20 pages of text and should include information requested in the below sections of this RFP. References, charts and graphics are not included as part of the page limit.

Submitters will receive a confirmation of receipt of their response by APHL. APHL may terminate or modify the RFP process at any time during the response period. All changes to the RFP will be posted to the [APHL Website](#). No changes will be made to the RFP within one week of the due

date. Responses that are not received by the stated deadline will be determined non-responsive and may not be considered in the review of the applicant at APHL's discretion.

Response Requirements

Applicants must provide a point-by-point response to each of the General Requirements and Website Requirements specified in this RFP below. For each requirement, respondents should provide documentation as requested.

General Requirements

Executive summary

Provide a narrative summary of the proposal being submitted. The summary should identify the design, development and services that are being offered in the proposal.

Organization/management capabilities and financial stability

Applicants should describe their company's organizational structure and provide a brief history of their business.

Applicant Organizational Infrastructure

The applicant must provide an overview of how his/her organization would be able to respond to the website updates and administration requests.

References

Respondents should include a list of clients, organizations or institutions that can be used as references. At least one reference should be from an organization where a similar project was developed. Selected references may be contacted to determine the quality of work performed, competency of personnel assigned to the project, etc. The results of the reference checks will be provided to the evaluation team and may be used in scoring the written proposal.

These references should be capable of verifying information supplied by the respondent in their proposal. The data required for each reference should include:

- Company Name

- Address
- Point of contact name, email, phone number and address

Examples of successful implementation

Respondents should include a description of their relevant experience designing and updating web based resources. Please provide information about specific platforms used, dates implemented and customer satisfaction. APHL encourages Testimonials as well.

Staff qualifications

The applicant must provide a project team organizational chart, followed by resumes of key personnel assigned to the system update and redesign. Each key personnel must be an employee of the respondent or be identified as a subcontractor. The applicant must include roles, responsibilities and estimated time allocated for each key personnel.

Timeline

The applicant must provide details regarding a timeline and methodology for updating and redesigning the website, including deliverables and milestones to support the development.

Budget

The applicant must include a budget for this project that includes updates and redesign. The applicant must provide a cost estimation to accomplish the scope of work. The budget must encompass all production and software acquisitions necessary for the updating and maintenance of the website. Please include any costs associated with additional maintenance, support, upgrades and long-term annual maintenance. This budget is not binding but will provide information to NewSTEPs for project development.

Training Capabilities and Plan

The applicant must include a training plan to include administrator/configuration training as well as user training, and should address training at initial implementation and any training necessary as a result of new development or APHL staffing changes. The applicant must discuss their plan for making a test environment available for user testing and validation.

Website Requirements

The applicant for the NewSTEPs website should describe how his/her organization will meet the required specifications below. Please note that these are suggestions, and creative thought beyond desired specifications is encouraged.

Required Specifications:

User friendly and easy to navigate

- All web pages should be resized to conform to a more commonly used display resolution, utilizing an aspect ratio of 16:9 at a width (px) of 1366 and height (px) of 768.
 - Highlighted items under tabs should appear vertical instead of horizontal.
 - Similar to the [Administration for Children and Families](#) website, all website pages and subpages should be outlined at the bottom and hyperlinked to improve ease of navigation.
 - There should be a robust search bar at the top of the home page.

Clear and simple design

- All pages should have a common look and feel. The use of fonts and layouts should be consistent and visually appealing throughout the website.
- The navigation should be intuitive and easy-to-access, with most heavily trafficked pages accessed by fewer clicks, including “About”, “Contact”, “News and Events” and “Disorder Specific Activities.”
- The pages must be redesigned and utilize infographics to appear more aesthetically pleasing.

Desired specifications:

Utilization of innovative and contemporary features

- Similar to the [Cystic Fibrosis Foundation](#) website, all articles, news, and events should have a share page feature in which users can share content on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr, LinkedIn, the APHL blog, Vimeo and YouTube.
- All tabs under the “News and Education” section should have a scrolling feature similar to Twitter.
 - The applicant should allow for integration of a third party software to create microsites that incorporate information from other newborn screening sites similar to the [Million Hearts microsite](#).
 - The applicant should develop Interactive state maps from the data repository to be developed or made available in order to provide information in real time (see BabysFirstTest.org).

Community-oriented online tools to facilitate communication

- The applicant should increase interaction through incorporation of infographics in lieu of tabs when possible from information provided by NewSTEPs (see below [Cystic Fibrosis Foundation](#) home page).
- The applicant should provide Additional infographics desired for additional pages (primarily “Disorder Specific Activities” and “Reports”).

Technical Requirements

Please refer to the accompanying Appendix A: NewSTEPs Website RFP Requirements and ensure you respond to how you will achieve these requirements in your response.

Evaluation of Responses

The evaluation team will evaluate applications based on budget, demonstration of technical understanding of the application and creativity in the response. APHL will evaluate each application based on the description of the [General Requirements](#), [Website Requirements](#), and [Technical Requirements](#), listed in the RFP. Please see Appendix A: NewSTEPs Website RFP Requirements for specific evaluation criteria.

Initial Review

APHL’s NewSTEPs program staff will conduct an initial review of all proposals for completeness. Any application that is incomplete on the RFP due date (see RFP Schedule above) will not be considered and will not receive a formal evaluation.

Evaluation Team

An evaluation team will be assembled to evaluate competitive proposals and then assess their relative qualities based on the [Evaluation Criteria](#) outlined below, as well as any other factors and sub-factors noted in this RFP. This evaluation team will consist of APHL employees, NewSTEPs employees and select members of the Association.

APHL will ask review committee members to disclose any potential conflict of interest, and APHL will not place any individual conflict of interest on the evaluation team. In the event that a reviewer identifies a conflict of interest after the evaluation team has been assembled, APHL will exclude that reviewer from further participation in the review process and will eliminate the reviewer’s completed reviews from the evaluation process. Reviewers will complete a Conflict of Interest Form administered before the evaluation process.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated individually against the specific criteria listed below.

- **General Requirements of the Proposal**
 - Does the executive summary provided identify the design, development and services that are being offered in the proposal?
 - Does the applicant's project description demonstrate an understanding of how their project relates to meeting the scope of the project as outlined in the RFP? Are all components of the RFP addressed? Did the submitter stay in the page limit?
 - Do references contacted support proposal claims?
 - Does the organization have examples of successful implementation that support NewSTEPs needs?
 - Are personnel roles and responsibilities reasonable and realistic? If collaborating with others, are roles clearly defined?
 - Is there inclusion of training information for NewSTEPs staff regarding how to routinely update the website?
- **Budget and Timeline Requirements**
 - Is the budget realistic and reasonable?
 - Is there clear justification given for all budget line items?
 - Does the budget encompass all phases of this project, including development and maintenance? Does the budget encompass costs associated with additional support relative to long-term annual maintenance?
 - Is the timeline for completion of the project reasonable? Are the described deliverables and milestones appropriate?
- **Website Requirements**
 - Are creative suggestions included for website redesign
 - Are required specifications addressed in RFP response?
- **Technical Requirements**
 - Does the website meet requirements outlined in Appendix A: NewSTEPs Website RFP Requirements?

Please note your application may be disqualified if you do not follow all instructions.

Suggestions for a Successful Application

- Do not submit a single spaced application.
- Stay within the page limitations and submit on time.
- Develop a realistic budget and timeline.

- Define any partners or collaborators and their scope of work.
- Be specific when describing technical requirements.

Award

APHL has allocated \$150,000 for all phases of this project. Monies will be delivered over one year, with invoices expected on a monthly basis and all activities consistent with the statement of work and completed by the selected applicant by June 30, 2017. Applicants must budget for one in-person kick-off meeting in Silver Spring, MD to initiate activities.

Term of Project

The project term will be from the date of contract signing (December 1, 2016) through June 30, 2017. Renewal of funding, as needed, will occur on an annual basis thereafter. Any modifications to the funding amount or statement of work will be addressed on an as-needed basis.

Post-Evaluation Procedures

The selected applicants will be notified by APHL program staff by December 9, 2016 of the completion of the evaluation discussed above and the name of the selected contractor will be posted to APHL's procurement website, www.aphl.org/rfp on the same day. Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of these results by e-mail or by U.S. mail within 30 days of the date the name of the winning vendor is posted.

All applicants will be entitled to utilize APHL's RFP Appeals Process to formulate a protest regarding alleged irregularities or improprieties during the procurement process. Specific details of this policy are located on the procurement website.

Conditions of Award Acceptance

The eligible applicants must be able to contract directly with APHL.

RFP-Related Questions

Applicants must direct all questions to Sikha Singh at sikha.singh@aphl.org with a copy to newsteps@aphl.org. Questions received from interested parties, together with the answers provided, will be posted to APHL's procurement website (www.aphl.org/rfp).

Disclaimer and Other General Matters

This RFP is neither an agreement nor an offer to enter into an agreement with any respondent. Once the evaluation is complete, APHL may choose to enter into a definitive contract with the selected RFP applicant(s).

APHL must ensure that the selected applicant(s) are neither suspended nor debarred from receiving federal funds and that the applicant(s) meet any other funding eligibility requirement imposed by the Cooperative Agreement. APHL's determination of whether the applicant is eligible to receive Cooperative Agreement funding will be definitive and may not be appealed. In the event that APHL determines that the selected applicant(s) is ineligible to receive Cooperative Agreement funding, APHL will nullify the contract or will cease negotiation of contract terms.

Each applicant will bear its own costs associated with or relating to the preparation and submission of its application. These costs and expenses will remain with the applicant, and APHL will not be liable for these or for any other costs or other expenses incurred by the applicant in preparation or submission of its application, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the response period or the selection process.

Appendix A: NewSTEPs Website RFP Requirements

Requirement #	Requirements Description	General Assumptions	Score (1-3)*
Overall			
1.1	The interactive website must meet web standards and be browser independent; must not require any plug-ins so it will work on every platform; must be 508 compliant.		
1.2	Ability for incremental adjustments and feedback	An iterative and collaborative way of updating	
Technical Requirements			
1.3	The NewSTEPs website should include updated pages with dynamic content, including interesting facts, pertinent news, links and other identified sections for key stakeholder groups: NBS Laboratory, Follow-Up and Medical Personnel; Parents and Caregivers; Public Health Decision Makers.	The applications should be easy to navigate. Information should be grouped and presented in a logical manner.	
1.4	All pages should have a common look and feel. The use of fonts and layouts should be consistent throughout the website.	Applications must be visually appealing and attractive, be able to mold to the NewSTEPs branding scheme, and use infographics in lieu of text when possible. Updated examples of website should be presented in response.	
1.5	The website should be updated such that content is unburied and easily found	"Quality Practice Resources" and "Videos" sections should be independently displayed on the homepage. Specified existing design blocks should be regrouped and additional design blocks should be created when appropriate to ensure desired content is easily found.	

1.6	All web pages should be resized to conform to a more commonly used display resolution utilizing an aspect ratio of 16:9 at a width (px) of 1366 and height (px) of 768		
1.7	Web pages should be designed such that NewSTEPS staff can easily modify static text/content on each page.		
1.8	Allow users to perform search by keyword on the website.	The website must use a robust search engine feature to index and search the public site.	
1.9	The website should utilize innovative and contemporary features, and display community-oriented online tools to facilitate communication	Features include but are not limited to: Share options (social media), a suggestions page and integration of microsites. All tools should better facilitate communication and provide a forum for education and information sharing.	
Training			
1.10	Training session for NewSTEPS staff upon redesign of website	Training session will be developed in conjunction with NewSTEPS staff	
1.11	Ongoing training modules for NewSTEPS staff upon development of new functions or modules	Training session will be developed in conjunction with NewSTEPS staff	
1.12	Vendor availability for support to changes in the website - resources to manage technical changes, upgrades, etc.		

*scores assigned between 1-3 demonstrate the degree to which the respondent demonstrates that they meet the requirement.

1= did not meet

2= met the requirement

3= exceeded expectations

The scoring and evaluation will included, but is not limited, to the requirements listed in Appendix A. See [Evaluation Criteria](#) for additional parameters.