

# University Partnerships Request for Proposals: FAQs

## BACKGROUND

**Question: How can I review the informational webinar held on 12/13/13?**

Response: It is available on our homepage, and at <https://vimeo.com/81882098>

**Question: Can you provide general information on the application processes involved and availability of TA support?**

Response: The primary guidance for the proposal writing is the RFP. As with Children's Bureau application processes, there is not technical assistance provided by the Children's Bureau or the Institute. If a program has questions, please feel free to pose these questions to the relevant persons identified in the RFP.

**Question: Can we get a copy of a completed proposal?**

Response: There will not be a sample proposal or completed proposal available for review. Feedback will be provided to all applicants after the review process is completed.

**Question: Where/to whom is the application to be submitted and how?**

**Response:** Please submit the application via email as noted in the RFP, to:  
[universitypartnerships@ncwwi.org](mailto:universitypartnerships@ncwwi.org)

**Question: Can you give examples of actual partnerships that occurred in this last five year period, i.e., what social work schools partnered with what child welfare agencies?**

Response: A summary of legacies and lessons learned from the last 5 years of our traineeship programs is available at

[http://www.ncwwi.org/files/NCWWI\\_Traineeships\\_Comprehensive\\_Summary\\_Legacies\\_Lessons\\_Learned\\_Sept2013.pdf](http://www.ncwwi.org/files/NCWWI_Traineeships_Comprehensive_Summary_Legacies_Lessons_Learned_Sept2013.pdf)

You can also read about each of the previous 12 programs here:

[http://www.ncwwi.org/files/NCWWI\\_Traineeships\\_Summary\\_Packet.pdf](http://www.ncwwi.org/files/NCWWI_Traineeships_Summary_Packet.pdf)

## FORMATTING

**Question: Do tables have the same formatting requirements as the body of the proposal, i.e., one-inch margins and 12-Point font?**

Response: Yes, the formatting should be followed to enhance the readability by reviewers and to be fair with regard to space requirements.

**Question: Would the committee review additional materials in the Appendix?**

Response: There is no page limit or restrictions for the Appendices. There are required elements in the Appendices but a program can choose to include additional information. The Appendices are not formally "scored" in the review of the proposals apart from required



elements. There is certainly no penalty for adding material.

**Question: Must the budget have one-inch margins and all 12-point font? Our budget and contract office uses Excel, which may not meet those requirements.**

Response: The Excel version for the budget is acceptable.

**Question: Is there a form that we have to use to complete the proposal?**

Response: Included in the RFP is a cover page, which is the only form. Include the cover page with your proposal (narratives and appendices).

**Question: Please advise who the joint letter should be addressed to? Should it be on agency or university letterhead?**

Response: Address it to "National Child Welfare Workforce Institute" or "NCWWI." You may use the official letterhead of either entity. The primary applicant is the social work program so that may make the most sense but either one is acceptable.

**Question: The RFP states that the application must be submitted "as a PDF, in a single package." Does this mean a PDF portfolio, or a single PDF document?**

Response: A single PDF document is preferred.

**Question: Is the project summary/abstract part of the page count?**

Response: The Summary/Abstract is not part of the page count

**Question: What is meant by the statement on page 13 of the RFP that "a receipt of arrival should be procured?"**

Response: When you submit the proposal, we will send you a notification that it was received. If you do not receive such a notification, please follow up with us to make sure we got the document!

**Question: What is the preferred convention for citations?**

Response: The preferred convention is APA. There is no requirement for a literature review.

**Question: Are we limited to the three appendices listed on page 6 of the RFP?**

Response: There is not a limit to the number of appendices.

**Question: Is there a font size limit or minimum for the charts and timeline?**

Response: Their font size needs to be readable and reasonable.

## **BUDGET**

**Question: What is the flexibility range for use of stipends [e.g., full-time only; part-time; specific levels of program; or, be creative].**

Response: Stipends are primarily intended to support student tuition but a program can describe additional uses for the financial support. Part-time and full-time students are eligible.

**Question: Are there expectations or stipulations regarding the nature of the traineeship stipends? Specifically, we wondered if they could include tuition**

**contribution, a cash stipend, or a combination of these options. We currently have a Title IV-E partnership with our state agency and are considering whether to use a similar model or a different approach?**

Response: Preference is for the funds to be used for tuition but an applicant can make the case for a different arrangement.

**Question: We have been discussing the possibility of using a "loan repayment format" for the stipend monies. Would this model of stipend payout be administratively acceptable within the Federal guidelines that NCWWI must follow about year-to-year budget monies as the stipend payouts would not be made during the year in which the funds were actually approved but in the following year?**

Response: This model does not match federal requirements and allowances. It is a great idea but not doable this time.

**Question: How much should we budget for first year travel? Will we only be required to attend an orientation session? Will there be two orientation sessions? Who attends orientation sessions?**

Response: There is an orientation for the Dean, but this will take place at the annual NADD (National Association of Deans and Directors of Social Work Programs) meeting in Spring of 2014. Most Deans attend this meeting, so there should not be much, if any, additional cost. A second LADD conversation with the Dean is hosted via webinar. There will not be any travel costs for the child welfare agency director in year one, either. In year two, there will be 2 face-to-face meetings: one at CSWE and one at the child welfare agency directors' annual meeting in June 2015. The primary year one travel is sending the PI(s), plus any other team members if relevant or possible, to an annual meeting for the University Partnerships (most likely in Chicago in June).

**Question: Please explain the budget (\$147,000 for up to five years). Does that mean the Program can be awarded only a maximum total of \$147,000 for the entire 5 years, or does it mean that you can be awarded up to \$147,000 each year up to 5 years?**

Response: The budget is up to \$147,000 for each of five years. The language says "up to" because a program can ask for less money per year. I would recommend preparing a budget that hits or comes close to \$147,000 for each of five years. So the total award over five years would be close to \$750,000. In that budget, there is a limit on the indirect rate as stated in the RFP, and 65% of funds should be directed toward supporting students (primarily tuition for students but you can also justify other expenses). My guess is that your budget will mostly be the 65% for students, funds for personnel to run the program, some travel, and the indirect funds. Some applications may have supplies and services and other items. Please provide a brief (one paragraph is fine) justification for each budget category.

**Question: Can a student "stipend" include the cost of tuition?**

Response: The student stipend should include tuition! We expect that a good deal of the 65% for students would be directed toward tuition assistance.

**Question: Is the 8% indirect rate on top of the \$147,000 or must that cap include both direct and indirect costs?**

Response: The indirect (8%) is included in the \$147,000. The federal share of the budget should not exceed \$147,000; IDC is included in that amount.

**Question: What are allowable costs that can be included in the stipend amount that is given to students? Along with the cost of tuition and other fees, is it allowable to provide some funds for trainees to travel to sites for training or field work (the geographic area that our proposal will encompass is vast and funds to support travel would assist students tremendously)? Can travel funds for conference presentations be included in each traineeship award?**

Response: Tuition is probably most important but you are free to make the case for additional supports--it sounds like you have a solid case for travel that can be presented in your budget justification. The goal is the successful completion of your social work program.

**Question: We were thinking that we need to include funds for paid internships for our students for a variety of reasons, including the higher cost of living for where we are trying to place and support them. Since grant administrative funds are a bit tight, would it be possible us to use some of the 65% allocated to student stipends toward this purpose?**

Response: The 65% of grant funds needs to go to directly support the student financially (not the field agency, advisors, etc.). Typically this is primarily in the form of tuition, but some programs may also provide a stipend to the student if their financial aid system provides such a mechanism. The budget requires a justification which needs to explain the support for students. The administrative support is a bit tight and the percentage of funding for students is significant. This is the weighting approved and supported by the Children's Bureau.

**Question: Since at least 65% of the total budget is directed toward the stipends, this means \$51,540 (\$147,000-\$95,550) is left over for all remaining expenses per year. Is that correct?**

Response: Yes. Just subtract the student support (65%) from the total.

**Question: Is Indirect calculated on the entire budget including the student stipends, or just the remaining balance?**

Response: Indirect is not calculated on stipends. Consequently, this provides a bit more money for administration/program expenses.

**Question: Would the Children's Bureau allow any carry-over of stipend funds if all are not expended in a budget year?**

Response: Yes, funds can be carry-forwarded with justification. Also, you get a full budget amount in Year One and hopefully administrative costs are lower in Year One as it is a half-year; which will provide a carry-forward to help in future years.

**Question: The 65% mandate is challenging to budget. Can we only expend 60% in a given budget year?**

Response: You must budget for 65% each year. I know that this is a big part of the budget and that leaves less for program costs, but it is a federally-supported percentage requirement. If you came in less in one year (say 60%) but came in at more the next year (say 70%), that might work but it would not provide additional funds for operations, as you would just be applying the 65% differently over the 5 years.

**Question: What is the budgeting year?**

Response: The budget year is the same as the federal budget year: October 1 to September 30. The NCWWI federal five-year grant period is from October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2018. The University Partnership programs will receive full first year funding but awards will not be made until mid-year Year One of NCWWI (March 2014). I would recommend a grant period of March 1, 2014-September 30, 2014 as Year One for a University Partnership Program. The next four years will follow the federal budget year ending September 30, 2018. (The University Partnership programs will follow their graduates after September 2018, but the funding for that time period after the formal end of the grant will be with carry forward dollars.). Obviously, with awards being made in March 2014, there will be a full budget for a half year, and this should result in carry forward dollars (which eventually will help in Year Five when the budget ends on September 30, 2018 but the trainees do not graduate, typically, until spring 2019).

**Question: If a program provides additional funding above the \$147,000 limit, should the 65% calculated for stipends be based on the total amount (\$147,000 plus our cost-share portion), meaning that the amount for stipends could exceed \$95,550? Or, should the 65% calculated for stipends be based on only the \$147,000 funds requested from NCWWI, meaning that the amount for stipends will be \$95,550?**

Response: Only calculate the stipend percentage on the federal share: the 65% of the \$147,000. If a program decides to contribute more money, that does not have to figure into the student share.

**Question: Should we budget for five years or just one year, if renewal each year is contingent on funding.**

Response: The first year is most important but please budget for five years. In fact, the budgets can be re-negotiated each year so don't worry too much if it is difficult to project out that far.

## ELIGIBILITY

**Question: Can a state welfare agency partner with more than one university and submit multiple, separate applications, one in collaboration with each university?**

Response: Yes. A state/county/tribal child welfare agency can choose to partner with multiple universities on multiple, distinct UP applications. The agency does not have to make a decision to only apply with one university – a state agency can agree to partner with a number of different universities in their state, and be engaged in multiple, distinct applications.

**Question: Can private agencies apply?**

Response: We recognize the invaluable contributions and work of private non-profit agencies. However the lead partner for the University Partnerships, particularly in relation to the LADD, needs to be the county/state/tribal child welfare system, which hopefully has a strong

collaborative relationship with its contracted private agencies. Partnerships may include a number of agencies (including private agencies that are contracted to provide basic child welfare services and may contribute the field placements for a number of traineeship students). But there needs to be a public lead agency (such as a county agency in a county-administered child welfare system, or a state or tribal agency) because a child welfare director with responsibility for the entire child welfare system needs to be involved in the LADD.

**Question: Is there a possibility for an online Social Work Master’s degree?**

Response: The RFP does allow an online or hybrid BSW or MSW program.

**Question: Are universities who are an NCWWI institutional partner eligible to apply?**

Response: No. Institutional partners of NCWWI are not eligible to apply. So, for example, Michigan State University or Portland State University may not submit proposals.

**Question: Is the RFP limited to schools of social work? What about schools of education and counseling?**

Response: The RFP is limited to Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited social work programs.

**Question: Can association or consortia of child welfare agencies apply?**

Response: Associations and consortiums are allowed to apply. However, only one primary social work program leader and one agency leader must be designated for the Leadership Academy for Deans/Director/Chair (LADD). There needs to be a “lead” social work program (the applicant) and lead agency, and one dean/director/chair needs to be committed to the Leadership Academy for Deans/Directors/Chairs along with the relevant child welfare agency director.

**Question: Can universities collaborate?**

Response: Yes, universities can collaborate in responding to the UP RFP. In NCWWI’s first five years (2008-2013), several universities collaborated with another university for a traineeship program and this is permitted in this new round of University Partnership applications. Given the strong connection to the Leadership Academy for Deans/Directors/Chairs and Child Welfare Directors (called LADD), a collaborative proposal would need to identify a “lead” school and single Dean/Director/Chair to participate in the LADD.

**Question: Our Director of the School of Social Work is already in the Leadership Academy on Aging – could we still qualify?**

Response: It is wonderful that many social work leaders have participated in the Leadership Academy on Aging. This participation in no way disqualifies or disadvantages an applicant for the NCWWI University Partnerships. In fact, the NCWWI proposal requires that the Dean/Director or Chair participate in a Leadership Academy, with the relevant child welfare agency director, so it is probably helpful to have a director who understands this type of commitment and participation.

**Question: If we have our final accreditation around February 15th, a couple of weeks after the grant deadline, might we be eligible, even though the RFP states that "programs in candidacy are not eligible for these traineeships"?**

Response: Schools that are accredited by March 1, 2014 are eligible to apply. Theoretically, there could be a delay or problem that would need to be addressed but most programs that are close to final accreditation are accredited on time. The next COA meeting is Feb 4-8th so programs can apply if they are being reviewed at this meeting. If the program is not accredited by March 1, 2014—the time that announcements are made—it would not be eligible to gain a UP.

**Question: Would it be appropriate to include juvenile justice traineeships, workforce development, and curriculum design as a component of a proposal? Our state child welfare agency serves both child protective services and juvenile justice populations.**

Response: No. Do not include juvenile justice--the focus is traditional child welfare services.

**Question: Would it be appropriate to describe partnership activities with both the state child welfare agency and private agencies with state partnerships? We use both state agency and contracted private agencies field placements in our Title IV-E program and wondered if those would be appropriate in a UP proposal.**

Response: Yes, those public and private partnerships are appropriate when the private agency is providing traditional child welfare services under public contracts.

**Question: Could you provide guidance on how to proceed considering that the current Chair of our Social Work Department is retiring, and we do not anticipate concluding the process of selecting a new Chair within the application period?**

Response: As you recruit a new chair, that person would need to know that she/he is obligated to participate in the Leadership Academy and support the University Partnership program, if it is awarded to your school. Having such a partnership grant should be attractive to a new or prospective chair and hopefully your school would want a leader who understands the value of such partnerships. The letter for the application would need to be written by your current chair affirming your social work department's deep support.

## **REQUIREMENTS & EXPECTATIONS**

**Question: If the state agency sees potential in the delivery of a "Certificate in Child Welfare" which might not result in a full degree but would enhance the practice of already committed workers, would that be considered acceptable?**

Response: The University Partnership program (and federal regulations) requires a degree program—admitting and educating social work students to gain a BSW or MSW and to work in child welfare (this is where at least 65% of the funding is directed—supporting these students). This is the “traineeship” part of the University Partnership program. There is understandable value in a “child welfare certificate” for existing agency workers but in this case it has to be in the context of earning a social work degree. If the social work program, in response to the needs and interests of the public agency, developed other educational opportunities, classes or certificates that would be fine, as they could be examples of the partnership activities linked to workforce development that are also a part of the University Partnership program. But the

certificate program or additional opportunities with the agency would not replace the traineeship component at the school of social work, as there has to be a core child welfare degree program.

**Question: What content in the curriculum is expected at the BSW and MSW levels?**

Response: The proposal should describe the child welfare-relevant curriculum content that is in the social work program and/or will be developed. A child welfare relevant curriculum is necessary for the traineeship students but the exact courses (and other academic supports) are for the social work program to identify. There is no specified list.

**Question: Can you provide clear definitions of "trauma-informed" and "evidenced-based" from the perspective of the NCWWI, as one can find multiple definitions of each of these terms in the professional literature?**

Response: There is no single model of trauma-informed or evidence-based practice being identified or promoted by NCWWI. Each program should describe its courses and approach or approaches or how it intends to construct these areas of concentration within their curriculum.

**Question: What about recruitment, development and retention of middle aged child welfare workforce?**

Response: The age and career stage of potential traineeship students is open—the proposal should describe the program’s approach, design, and eligible social work students.

**Question: Is it possible to use this grant to develop leadership skills for mid managers instead of just for BSWs and MSSWs?**

Response: There are other avenues within NCWWI to address middle manager leadership development skills (See the Leadership Academy for Middle Managers/LAMM). The University Partnership program does not have middle manager development as an area of attention.

**Question: Would it be feasible to apply for a student training program and a community professional training program in the same proposal?**

Response: This proposal is specifically for the University Partnership programs. A number of these programs will also be selected for a more intensive workforce development initiative (this is optional and would be expressed in a “letter of interest” in the proposal).

**Question: Will funds received by students in this program be considered as scholarship money? When would students who participate in the program be eligible to receive funds from this program?**

Response: Funds designated for students, primarily tuition, have been classified as scholarship money in past traineeship projects. University Partnership students selected for the first cohort of trainees will be selected in spring/summer 2014 and funds should be awarded to the students in a timeframe that makes sense for the student and program. There will be five cohorts of students during the full grant period.

**Question: It states that job descriptions/bio sketches/resumes should be 2-3 pages. Is this 2-3 pages in total or per individual listed with a role in grant?**

Response: Per person. The Children's Bureau needs to assess the qualifications of key personnel.

**Question: The RFP says that the 40 page limit includes all pages [title, abstract/summary, appendices] but the webinar noted that the appendices [letter of interest on the LAMM, LAS, etc.; brief bios; letter of agreement on participation from the Director of the SSW and the Director of the State Agency] do not count in the 40 pages. Which is correct?**

Response: The latter is correct - the title, abstract and appendices are not included in the page limit.

**Question: The RFP states we need to provide several project timelines (e.g., one for the University Partnership Activities, and another for the University Partnerships Curriculum Development, etc.) Is it acceptable to provide one comprehensive timeline as part of the grant application?**

Response: One comprehensive timeline is fine, and a good idea.

**Question: How long do trainees need to be gainfully employed following graduation?**

Response: Typically, for every year that the student accepts traineeship stipend monies. So if the trainee is a second year MSW student in a traditional 2-year program, there would be a one year employment obligation.

**Question: Could you clarify what "assurances" entails?**

Response: Please simply state that you will comply with the grant requirements. This indicates you know what the obligations are, have incorporated them into your planning and are intent on follow-through.

**Question: We are utilizing both our BSW and MSW Programs for this proposal. BSW students are admitted every semester, while MSW students begin Fall Semester if they are campus-based, Spring Semester (if Distance Foundation) and Summer Semester (if Distance Concentration). We run a robust 12-month program without the traditional semester break. If we are awarded one of the grants, we will begin with Summer of 2014 students (not Fall). Is this OK?**

Response: Yes. The goal is a steady stream of trainees across the five years. Every school has its own timing on admissions, as long as there is an equivalent to five cohorts. Just explain your process.

**Question: We also have a question regarding the designation of key staff, specifically whether we should list the faculty members who would be involved in curriculum enhancement as consultants and include their bio-sketches.**

Response: It is not necessary to include bio-sketches for faculty consultants who will be contributing to curriculum construction--this could get to be a lot of people! Key staff leading the project should have a bio-sketch and it may make sense to name the consultants in your narrative if you want to explicitly acknowledge their expertise/contribution.

**Question: Whose job descriptions should we include? The child protection worker job description from the State (our CPS partner) or job descriptions for the university staff who will be working on this project?**

Response: The job descriptions should be for the key staff (primarily social work program but could include agency personnel) who are working on the University Partnership program. These job descriptions can be confined to the aspects of their jobs that are relevant to the program.

**Question: The project description's approach section (organizational profile) requests information on key project staff qualifications, roles and responsibilities. Additionally, the Appendix requests "job descriptions." Are the "job descriptions" for the key personnel and their current positions, or are they intended to be job descriptions of the project team? If so, how does this differ from "roles and responsibilities" in the organizational profile?**

Response: In the narrative, under the organizational profile section, the identification of roles and responsibilities is requested, but this can be covered in a few sentences. The Appendix provides an opportunity for a more detailed job description, saving space in the page-numbered and page-limited narrative. So there is potential overlap but much of the position description can be in the appendix rather than the narrative. We only need to know the person's job duties in relation to the grant. If you have explained this in the narrative, simply note that in the appendix.

## **PARTNERSHIP WITH CHILD WELFARE AGENCY & the LADD**

**Question: Who can or should apply to participate in the LADD?**

Response: Consistent with the approach and philosophy of the Children's Bureau, we expect each University Partnership Program to have one state child welfare director and one social work dean/director/chair participate as partners in LADD under most situations. A tribal child welfare director will partner with a dean/director/chair of a social work program when a recognized tribe participates in the University Partnership Program. In strong county administered child welfare systems, it may be appropriate for the LADD agency partner to be a county child welfare director or commissioner. In that case, the application must justify that partnership rather than the state-university approach. We understand that a state child welfare director and a social work dean/director/chair may assemble a team to help advance workforce development initiatives during LADD. Those activities will be among the topics of discussion between the state child welfare agency director--social work dean/director/chair partners. Many different types of child welfare agencies, including private, nonprofit agencies, will appropriately participate with social work programs in the University Partnership Program, as providers of field placements and in engagement activities with university faculty to collaboratively address specific systems challenges that hinder the transition to work, specialized practice, and retention of traineeship graduates. These activities are critical to the success of University Partnerships and take place outside of the Leadership Academy for Deans/Directors/Chairs and Child Welfare Directors.

**Question: Large portions of our child welfare system are privatized in our state. In our region, all foster care services are contracted out to a lead private agency. Since they are the lead agency for our local foster care system, we were planning to include the director of this agency as our LADD partner. Please let us know if this would be an appropriate choice.**

Response: No. We expect that in state-administered systems, regardless of the privatization status, your partner for LADD will be the state child welfare director who oversees the entire state system.

**Question: Who or what is the child welfare jurisdictional leader?**

Response: It is a creative attempt to be inclusive of the child welfare leader from either a county or state or tribal agency!

**Question: If we apply as a 'state' - meaning the agency is a single entity but we include multiple universities - is there a preference on how we approach the selection of the Dean/Director that attends?**

Response: Any collaborative proposal would need to identify a “lead” school and single Dean/Director/Chair to participate in the LADD. Who is chosen as lead is a decision left up to your individual collaboration.

**Question: Does the child welfare "director" have to be the actual state director of child welfare or can it be a designee (such as a regional/county director)?**

Response: Yes, the actual state director of child welfare is to be the primary partner and LADD participant. We recognize that the projects on workforce development will potentially involve a team of leaders in the state agency, such as regional directors. The agency partner for the Leadership Academy needs to be the administrator with the ability to make decisions and provide direction for the public agency with regard to workforce policy and practice.

Consequently, in state-administered systems, it is expected that the state child welfare director is the designated agency partner person for the Leadership Academy. In a county-administered system, the county director has the authority to direct child welfare workforce development so the county child welfare director is an appropriate person to be engaged in the LADD. We appreciate the role of private agency leaders and county and regional leaders in workforce development and would expect that such leaders will be partners and agency team members in a number of University Partnership activities, but in a state-administered child welfare system the LADD agency representative should be the state child welfare director.

**Question: Can you provide clarification about the role of the Dean and Agency Director with respect to the LADD? Are you seeking commitment from the person holding the leadership position or the person on the leadership team who will have implementation responsibility for the change initiative?**

Response: We are seeking the commitment of the top administrator of the social work program—the Dean/Director or Chair. That is the person who will attend Leadership Academy meetings and participate in this academy. A significant aspect of the LADD is working on change initiatives in the social work program and agency. We recognize that a dean/director/chair may delegate aspects of this work and its implementation or assemble an implementation team. However, the dean/director/chair is expected to participate in the Academy. The UP program’s



principal investigator will be responsible for the UP program and it is not required that the dean/director or chair serve as the principal investigator for these efforts.

**Question: What are the requirements for the letter of support from the state child welfare agency?**

Response: The letter of support from the state agency is better understood as a mutual partnership agreement with the social work program and its dean/director/chair. The features that should be addressed in this letter are identified in the RFP (such as the section on assurances). This letter will serve as a “memorandum of understanding” between the social work program and the child welfare agency, and clearly identify the partnership elements and change projects being proposed.

**Question: Can you give more information on the LADD and roles of Dean and Director of the State Agency?**

Response: The Leadership Academy for Deans/Directors/Chairs and for the county, state or tribal child welfare director (called LADD) will include one leader from academia and the agency child welfare director who will work together over a multiple year period of time to enhance their leadership skills, strengthen their capacity for collaboration, and design and implement change projects that strengthen the workforce in the relevant jurisdiction (county, state, tribal region). The leaders will meet twice a year for approximately one day each time, be in contact in between these meetings, and be engaged with an expert coach to facilitate the development and implementation of the change initiatives and other aspects of leadership development. In the letter of support from the state agency, the potential change initiatives should be identified or a process for determining these initiatives should be described.

**Question: How many agencies are required to participate per university partnership?**

Response: There needs to be a lead agency in the University Partnership (such as a county agency in a county-administered child welfare system; or a state agency) but such partnerships may include a number of agencies (including private agencies who are contracted to provide basic child welfare services and may contribute the field placements for a number of traineeship students).

**Question: Can a child welfare agency director and a school of social work dean/director be part of LADD without doing the RFP for University Partnerships, or is the LADD only for those who are funded for the University Partnerships?**

Response: The LADD is only for leaders engaged in the University Partnerships at this time.

**Question: What is the commitment and travel involved for LADD?**

Response: During the first year (2014), LADD partners will have separate orientations (NADD in April, BPD in March); coaching calls for between May and June; webinars for all LADD participants in April and July; coaching for LADD partners between August and September. During the second year (2014-2015) and similarly in Years 3 and 4, the full LADD routine begins, inclusive of the following:

- Face-to-face at CSWE meeting Oct 23-26, 2014 in Tampa for all LADD participants,
- Coaching for LADD partners between November 2014 and January 2015

- LADD webinar for all participants in February 2015
- Coaching between March and May, 2015
- Face-to-face at NAPCWA in June 2015
- LADD webinar in July 2015
- Coaching between August and September 2015

**Question: Two of our state university campuses have a long history of working with the child welfare agency, and will collaborate on the proposal. Can we be co-PI's?**

Response: Yes. However, while the two of you can serve as co-PI's, only one person can be the lead person in the LADD. So please specify who will have that role in the proposal.

**Question: How many joint letters of commitment or support are needed? We are a bit confused as to whether the letter of support from the dean/director is all that is necessary, or if you need to review other letters of support from partnering organizations too?**

Response: One joint letter from the Dean and the state child welfare agency director is required. A second letter from the state child welfare agency director is optional, and expresses interest in additional organizational workforce interventions.

**Question: We are also hoping that our Dean and I will be able to serve as co-PIs. Is it feasible to submit the proposal as such, and to budget travel for both of us to attend the annual University Partnership meeting and LADD? Could you clarify who attends LADD?**

Response: You are welcome to apply as co-PIs, but your Dean must be the participant for the LADD.

**Question: Will the LADD annual meeting take place over 2 or 3 full days, and will two of those days be combined with other meetings?**

Response: The annual meeting will be one-and-a-half days and in conjunction with a meeting that the leaders may already be attending: most likely CSWE (fall 2014) and the annual meeting of the National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators (summer 2015). There is no meeting in Year One requiring travel associated with the LADD apart from an orientation dinner at NADD, April 2014.

**Question: There is a reference to coaching - is this coaching that the executive would do for others in the School or agency, or does the executive receive coaching from someone?**

Response: The state child welfare director will be engaged in coaching with NAPCWA consultants and deans/directors with NCWWI consultants. This will most likely focus on helping the leaders plan and achieve their change initiatives as well as other topics related to the Academy.

**Question: All materials indicate the LADD participant must be the program Dean but we are wondering if "one leader from academia" indicates a possibility that the participant can be someone other than the Dean, or is simply another way to say Dean/Director/Chair? We are trying to delineate the role of our Associate Dean.**

Response: The academic leader is the Dean/Director Chair. The Dean/Director/Chair will participate as the one person in the Leadership Academy. As the Dean/Director/Chair works on a change initiative, we expect that in many cases the Dean/Director/Chair will engage a team in the social work program to get the work done - a great spot for an Associate Dean as team member.

**Question: Will there be any problem having the academic LADD participant (Dean) for the grant also being a Co-PI?**

Response: Yes, a Dean/Director/Chair can be a Co-PI or PI.

**Question: What are you looking for in response to the section on potential change initiatives or process for identifying simultaneous, collaborative workforce change initiatives in the LADD?**

Response: For the LADD change initiatives, either identify potential change initiatives that are under consideration by the school or state or both, and/or describe a process for figuring out change initiatives that will be incorporated into the work of the Dean through the Leadership Academy.

**Question: When does LADD travel begin?**

Response: LADD travel begins in Year Two: October 1, 2014 is the start date of year two. In Year One the orientations will take place at NADD for Deans/Directors, at BPD for BSW directors, and by webinar for agency directors. We are on a federal budget cycle to determine what constitutes a budget year.

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH TITLE IV-E**

**Question: Can you provide information on how the UP program differs from Title IV-E programs?**

Response: There are shared features between a Title IV-E program and a University Partnership program, particularly in relation to providing financial help for students with a career commitment to child welfare. Title IVE programs are eligible to apply (as are non-Title IVE programs). The University Partnership program has a primary focus on partnerships, including a Leadership Academy of social work program deans/directors/chairs and agency child welfare leaders (LADD), workforce activities, and specific content areas of a social work curriculum.

**Question: What is the relationship between the NCWWI Traineeships and Title IV-E grants?**

Response: Title IVE programs and University Partnerships share a number of common features and will work to communicate and exchange information with each other in the years ahead. Some Title IVE programs may also gain a University Partnership program. There are differences in focus and content but both aim to advance a social work-educated child welfare workforce.

**Question: Can students who receive IV-E stipends also receive tuition reimbursement from the UP?**

Response: They can. Please explain in your budget justification what financial aid you are providing students.

## CONNECTION TO LAMM/LAS

**Question: Is the use of the NCWWI supervisory curriculum a requirement?**

Response: There is no required curriculum or training curriculum content. There are a number of training and curriculum resources available on the NCWWI website and elsewhere in child welfare, but each program can determine its curriculum.

**Question: Can you offer more insight regarding requirements and creativity surrounding the NCWWI supervisory curriculum? We have a supervisory core curriculum that has evolved to represent the culture of our state, and are interested in exploring the maintenance of our curriculum with augmentation via NCWWI's.**

Response: The NCWWI has developed a training curriculum for experienced supervisors through the Leadership Academy for Supervisors (LAS). NCWWI has also developed a curriculum for leadership development and middle managers—the Leadership Academy for Middle Managers (LAMM). These are described on the NCWWI website at [www.ncwwi.org](http://www.ncwwi.org). The curriculum from the LAS and the LAMM are not required for the University Partnership programs. Those programs that are awarded a University Partnership grant may choose to also include components from the LAS and LAMM in their partnership activities with the child welfare agency or if they express an interest in becoming a “workforce excellence” site. These enhancements are optional and are described briefly in the RFP.

## PARTNERSHIP WITH TRIBAL CHILD WELFARE AGENCY

**Question: Is the collaborative/partnership between a university and tribe or university and tribal region. Both are used in RFP; if it is limited to tribal region, what consists of tribal regional partnership?**

Response: The partnership with a tribe or tribal region needs to be defined and described by the applicant—what makes sense and what is the most relevant and realistic boundary and definition of a tribal partner for that social work program and that locale?

**Question: Please discuss engagement with tribes - can we work with more than one partner tribe?**

Response: It is possible to work with more than one tribe. In fact, that may make the most sense in a given location. However, only one tribal child welfare agency leader can be designated as the participant in the Leadership Academy for deans/directors/chairs and child welfare agency directors (LADD).

## ORGANIZATIONAL INTERVENTION/WORKFORCE EXCELLENCE SITES

**Question: "Three jurisdictions (such as county, state, or tribal region) will be selected to work with NCWWI in this intensive and integrated model of service delivery that involves multiple NCWWI components described above." Can you please explain more in depth what this entails?**

Response: After the University Partnerships are awarded (up to 11 social work programs with their agency partner), up to three of these programs will be identified as potential sites for more intensive work together (called Workforce Excellence sites). These Workforce Excellence sites will involve additional assessment, contracting and planning, and implementation of the leadership academies for Middle Managers (LAMM), Supervisors (LAS), and other forms of technical assistance to address relevant and targeted workforce development goals and projects. An interest in such potential involvement by the agency should be expressed by the agency in the application (through a second letter that is in addition to the primary partnership letter from the Dean/Director/Chair and Child Welfare Agency Director/Leader). An interest in the Workforce Excellence projects is optional. And there will be a further assessment and communication before such an agreement would be set in place.

**Question: If the LAMM, LAS, and Organizational Interventions are of interest and are already a focus of the work of the SSW and the state agency, how much of the proposal should address those as opposed to the central issue of the partnership and LADD?**

Response: Interest in the organizational intervention/workforce excellence projects should be expressed through the 2<sup>nd</sup> optional letter that is in addition to the primary partnership letter from the Dean/Director/ Chair and Child Welfare Agency Director/Leader.

**Question: If our state agency is interested in pursuing more than one of the other workforce development initiatives as well as the stipend partnership, should there be a separate letter of interest for each one or is a single letter indicating the multiple interest areas enough?**

Response: The application requires one mutual letter with regard to the University Partnership program and the Leadership Academy. If the state is interested in considering becoming a workforce excellence partner (additional workforce development initiatives), this should be reflected in a second (optional) letter expressing the agency's interest in a larger workforce initiative(s).

**Question: There is a reference in the RFP to extra points given for the inclusion of a "change initiative." Would this require a separate budget? Are there additional funds for this? Or is it something to be included within the limits of the budget guidelines?**

Response: With regard to the proposal, the change initiative or workforce excellence project is a letter from the state director indicating a readiness and desire to pursue more extensive projects related to workforce. If selected for a University Partnership, this letter of intent would trigger an assessment process by NCWWI working with the state to figure out the feasibility, capacity, readiness, and details of such a change initiative. The "extra credit" shows that we recognize that this letter indicates, perhaps, a higher commitment or interest to workforce development. There is no supplementary budget or extra funding. At this point, simply a letter of intent (along with the required joint letter from social work program leader and state child welfare director committing to the University partnership program and LADD). This second letter of intent with regard to the change initiatives is optional.

## EVALUATION

**Question: What is meant by the university "will evaluate the student experience"? Is this in reference to participating in the national evaluation or will each university be responsible for developing their own student evaluation plan?**

Response: The experience of traineeship students during their traineeship and with their agency after graduation is of high interest to the Children's Bureau, and will be evaluated in conjunction with - and guided by - the NCWWI evaluation team. The social work program will not be required to develop its own evaluation plan, and participation in the national NCWWI cross-site evaluation is a requirement of the grant.

## OTHER QUESTIONS?

If you have any other UP questions, please direct them to Dr. Gary Anderson ([gary.anderson@ssc.msu.edu](mailto:gary.anderson@ssc.msu.edu)) or Cheryl Williams-Hecksel ([will1534@msu.edu](mailto:will1534@msu.edu)) at Michigan State University School of Social Work

Questions with regard to the Leadership Academy for Deans/Directors/Chairs and Agency Directors (LADD) should be addressed to Dean Katharine Briar-Lawson ([kbriarlawson@albany.edu](mailto:kbriarlawson@albany.edu)) at the University at Albany School of Social Welfare.