**Appendix D:**

**Sample Interview Questions and Preferred Responses**

**for Selecting an Evaluator**

This document lists sample questions and preferred responses for interviewing External Evaluator candidates. This document should be edited to match the specific position that needs to be filled based on the needs of the scope of work and existing capacities. Space is provided to take notes during the interview and later mark if responses deem the candidate to be qualified or not qualified to be selected as an Evaluator.

| Questions and  Preferred Responses | Notes | Qualified? | Not Qualified? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| What is your formal education/highest degree attained and in what field?  Preferred Response:  Graduate level or higher in public health, social sciences or related fields. |  |  |  |
| Please describe past work on similar projects.  Preferred Response:  Experience conducting evaluations of programs similar to yours; experience conducting evaluation for a local public health agency; knowledgeable in coalition-based programs and empowerment evaluation; experience with policy advocacy evaluations (vs. individual behavior change). |  |  |  |
| How familiar are you with the population and community we serve?  Preferred Response:  Describes demographic characteristics of your population, political and cultural elements, number of government jurisdictions, and experience, if any, working in the community. |  |  |  |
| Provide a summary of past experience with various evaluation methods, i.e., qualitative and quantitative data collection tool development, data collection, data analysis and reporting.  Preferred Response:  Experience in a variety of both qualitative and quantitative methods including development of the instrument, collection of data according to the protocol or training, providing technical assistance to data collectors, synthesizing and communicating results. |  |  |  |
| Please describe an example of how you have worked with clients to help them understand data.  Preferred Response:  Provided report in advance of meeting; discussed key findings; collaboratively identified next steps; finalized report with client input. |  |  |  |
| Please provide an example of one recommendation you have made to a program based on your data analysis.  Preferred Response:  Suggested enhancing or changing the timing of a program activity or adding an activity, e.g., after analyzing Key Informant Interviews with policymakers that indicated low support for a proposed policy, suggested strengthening community education to build support for the proposed policy before conducting a public opinion poll in the same jurisdiction. |  |  |  |
| Are you willing to train our staff on evaluation as part of your services? If so, please describe how you will help staff understand how each part of the evaluation fits with the program.  Preferred Response:  Is willing to train staff and describes technical assistance and capacity building activities, e.g., when developing a tool, will discuss the goal of the tool and how the information will be used. |  |  |  |
| What is your capacity to take on the work, e.g., availability, number of current projects?  Preferred Response:  Describes organizational structure of other projects, principal/dedicated evaluator, percentage of time evaluator will spend on the project, number of similar/different projects. |  |  |  |
| How will you handle competing project deadlines to ensure reports and other evaluation deliverables are submitted on time?  Preferred Response:  Regular communication, schedule adjustments when necessary, and suggestions for how to mitigate problems and prevent future complications. |  |  |  |
| The deadlines for final evaluation reporting at the end of the contract term are firm and not negotiable. How will you ensure on-time submission of final evaluation reports?  Preferred Response:  Describes history of on-time submission of reports and other deliverables; indicates will start developing report 2-3 months ahead of time; and communicate with staff to complete all activities one month ahead of due date. |  |  |  |
| Do you have any limitations, e.g., the way you want to work, the type of work you do/do not perform, travel, timing of activities, workload, etc?  Preferred Response:  Need one-month turnaround after data collection to produce data collection reports, etc. |  |  |  |
| How do you structure your fees?  Preferred Response:  They will describe 1) project cost, 2) hourly rate, or 3) percentage of your budget. It’s up to each CTCP-funded program to ensure that figure meets the requirements (e.g., minimum of10% FTE, 208 hours for Local Lead Agencies) specified in the guidelines. |  |  |  |
| Do you have any questions for me/us?  Preferred Response: Demonstrates that the candidate has done research about your organization and asks questions to see if it’s a good fit |  |  |  |
| Ask the candidate(s) to provide sample evaluation activity report (e.g., Public Opinion Poll), Brief Evaluation Report and Final Evaluation Report  Review the samples of the evaluator’s work to be sure they are written clearly, understandable to you and to those with whom you share evaluation findings. |  |  |  |
| Please provide names, titles, relationship, and contact information for three references  Contact references and ask about their experiences with the evaluator, how the evaluator worked collaboratively with the project directors and staff, communications and technical assistance skills, etc. |  |  |  |
| What about this position really appeals to you? What is the most important contribution you can bring to our team?  Preferred response: interest in utility of evaluation, using evaluation for decision making, indication that they know what we do, self-reflection of their contributions |  |  |  |
| Describe a situation where you have to convince people about the importance and utility of evaluation  Preferred response: emphasized use of data and evaluation results to inform next steps or make decisions, importance of gathering input and sharing with various stakeholders |  |  |  |
| Describe a time when you received criticism. What actions did you take as a result?  Preferred response: active listening, didn’t get defensive, took steps to improve, asked for clarification, followed through on corrections |  |  |  |
| Tell me about a time when you went the extra mile.  Preferred response: saw the potential or opportunity to make a meaningful difference, findings were used, mobilized stakeholders |  |  |  |
| Tell me about a time where you felt disappointed with your work e.g. things not going as planned, not meeting other's expectations, others not meeting your expectations for example, your team members were not doing their part or not producing quality work, etc. What did you do?  Preferred response: identify what they thought went wrong and potential ways to improve next time, communicated concerns with the team, provided team with constructive feedback, offered potential solutions and next steps |  |  |  |
| How do you stay current on evaluation techniques? What are some of your professional development goals?  Preferred response: knowledge and use of professional networks such as AEA, APHA, or other regional organizations that promote evaluation and professional development opportunities and standards |  |  |  |