



PROCUREMENT JUSTIFICATION FORM (PJF)

This form must accompany all contract requests and sole source requisitions (RQS) over \$5,000 submitted to the Division of Procurement Services.

INSTRUCTIONS: Please provide the requested information in the white spaces below. All responses (except signatures) must be typed; no hand-written forms will be accepted. See the guidance document posted with this form on the Division of Procurement Services intranet site (Forms page) for additional instructions.

PART I: OVERVIEW			
Department Office/Division/Program:		DHHS / OCFS/ Early Care and Education	
Department Contract Administrator or Grant Coordinator:		Jennifer Levesque/ Stacy Martin	
(If applicable) Department Reference #:		CFS-22-618 C	
Amount: (Contract/Amendment/Grant)	Current: \$10,693,774.00 Amend C: \$ 120,738.00 Revised: \$10,814,512.00	Advantage CT / RQS #:	CT 10A 20210514*3233
CONTRACT	Proposed Start Date:	Proposed End Date:	
AMENDMENT	Original Start Date:	Effective Date:	7/1/2021 10/1/2023
	Previous End Date:	New End Date:	9/30/2023 12/31/2023
GRANT	Project Start Date:	Grant Start Date:	
	Project End Date:	Grant End Date:	
Vendor/Provider/Grantee Name, City, State:		University of Maine System DBA University of Southern ME Portland, ME	
Brief Description of Goods/Services/Grant:		Professional Development Network (PDN)	

PART II: JUSTIFICATION FOR VENDOR SELECTION

Check the box below for the justification(s) that applies to this request. (Check all that apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	A. Competitive Process	<input type="checkbox"/>	G. Grant
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	B. Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/>	H. State Statute/Agency Directed
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	C. Single Source/Unique Vendor	<input type="checkbox"/>	I. Federal Agency Directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	D. Proprietary/Copyright/Patents	<input type="checkbox"/>	J. Willing and Qualified
<input type="checkbox"/>	E. Emergency	<input type="checkbox"/>	K. Client Choice
<input type="checkbox"/>	F. University Cooperative Project	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	L. Other Authorization – Competitive Award Adjustment/RFP Extended

Please respond to ALL of the questions in the following sections.

PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

1. Provide a more detailed description and explain the need for the goods, services or grant to supplement the response in Part I.

This Amendment C extends the PDN services for three additional months to 12/31/2023; and adds three (3) months of Preschool Development Grant (PDG) funding and deliverables for early childhood services for children birth through age five (5).

This Professional Development Network contract meets requirements outlined in the federal Child Care Development Fund Block Grant and Title 22 M.R.S.A §3732 by providing statewide training, technical assistance, consultation, career, and degree attainment opportunities for all early childhood professionals to provide safe, high quality, inclusive early childhood programs to Maine's children. The PDN also operates a public facing website used by parents to locate child care and a database that produces data on the workforce needed for annual federal reporting.

The State's Professional Development Network (PDN) shall increase knowledge and Professionalism of all Child Care Providers in the State including: Child Care Centers, Family Child Care Providers (FCC), Head Start programs, School-age Child Care Programs, and Family, Friends, and Neighbor (FFN) (license exempt) programs; as well as increase overall accessibility and affordability of Child Care Services. The PDN contains the system evaluation and delivery of services for Child Care Providers including training, technical assistance, and the database system, which is available to all Child Care Providers located in the State.

The Preschool Development Grant Birth Through Five (PDG-B5) is a grant available to states to support early childhood services for children birth through age five (5). There are two (2) types of PDG-B5 grants: Initial grants support states in conducting a comprehensive statewide birth through five (5) Needs Assessment followed by in-depth strategic planning; and renewal grants providing funds to states to carry out the Activities in their Strategic Plan. On 12/30/2022, Maine was awarded \$8 million per year for three (3) years, through the Preschool Development Grant Renewal (PDG-R). The grant is a partnership between the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the Maine Department of Education (DOE), and the Governor's Children's Cabinet.

The Maine DHHS was selected by the Mills' Administration to oversee and manage this renewal grant. Staff at the Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) in DHHS are responsible for operating both the new Help Me Grow program and the Child Care Development Block Grant which includes the Child Care Subsidy Program, Maine Road to Quality Professional Development Network, the Quality Rating System, and licensing and background checks for child care providers. In addition, OCFS staff, in partnership with DHHS' Chief Health Officer, oversee social and emotional behavioral health services for young children and their families. Lastly, DHHS operates most programming for vulnerable young children including TANF, child welfare, maternal and child health, home visiting services, public health nursing and Medicaid. The PDG-B5 grant is an integral part of the services provided to young children and families in Maine. Specific goals for the PDG-B5 include,

- Strengthening the Early Care and Education Workforce
- Improving parent engagement and leadership
- Better align Maine's Early Childhood Education System with the Early Elementary years to ensure better preparation for Kindergarten and ensure smoother transitions into Kindergarten
- Increase quality Early Childhood Care and Education programming
- Expand public Pre-K slots in communities with limited or no public Pre-K

PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

- Build an Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) to inform policy decisions

Many of the projects outlined in the grant, particularly those related to workforce development, training, and improving quality child care, can only be carried out by Maine’s PDN. USM designed the PDN in partnership with the Department under a Cooperative Agreement. After the Cooperative Agreement, the PDN scope of work has been contracted through multiple RFPs and USM has won the bid each time.

Changing the provider of the MRTQ PDN services from USM to a new provider would potentially result in Maine withdrawing from participation in the PDG, since a significant overlap would be needed to transition the work to a new vendor. For example, MRTQ PDN operates a Learning Management System (LMS) to track training and professional development for all child care staff statewide as well as operates a public facing website, required by the federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF), that families use to find child care. MRTQ PDN also manages quality indicators for all child care programs statewide in a separate database. DHHS estimates it could take 1-3 years for a new vendor to establish a new LMS. Additionally, the MRTQ PDN has created trainings offered to child care providers that count toward college credits for attaining a degree. It takes years to develop this relationship with higher education institutions and a transition to a new provider would potentially leave a gap taking years to rebuild. The time needed to have a new vendor provide these services would not allow for the implementation of the PDG activities.

2. Provide a brief justification for the selected vendor to supplement the response in Part II. Reference the RFP number, if applicable.

The Provider was competitively awarded through RFP 201702020.

Initial Start Date *	7/1/2017	Initial End Date *	6/30/2019
Renewal 1 Start Date	7/1/2019	Renewal 1 End Date	6/30/2021
Renewal 2 Start Date	7/1/2021	Renewal 2 End Date	9/30/2022

Amendment A: The Department was approved for an additional three-month extension of Renewal Period #2 (originally ending on 6/30/2022 bringing it to 9/30/2022), to allow the contracts resulting from the upcoming RFP to align with the Federal Fiscal Year, starting on 10/1/2022.

Amendment B: Extended the Renewal #2 contract for an additional twelve (12) months to add ARPA Discretionary funds to stabilize child care services through enhancing incentives and supports. Without this extension, there would not be sufficient time to complete an RFP process, negotiate a contract, and allow the Provider adequate time to use the funding before it expires 9/30/2023.

In June 2023, OCFS submitted a written request to delay RFP OCFS20213 for Professional Development Network (PDN) Services to continue Maine’s commitment to strengthening our early childhood system and to foster the strong cross-agency work of the Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Education, and the Children’s Cabinet outlined in the PDG B-5 grant. On 7/5/2023, DCM advised that OCFS can continue to renew the contract through the requested 12/31/2025 date.

Amendment C: Extends the contract with the Provider to 12/31/2023, to be followed by a 2-year renewal (1/1/2024-12/31/2025).

PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

3. Explain how the negotiated costs or rates are fair and reasonable; or how the funding was allocated to grantee.

As part of the RFP scoring process there was a comparison of the costs and rates of the submitted bids. The costs and rates of this vendor were considered fair and reasonable and the best value for the Department.

The costs for the new Preschool Development Grant (PDG) work were negotiated with the provider. The costs were reviewed by OCFS, DOE, and GOPIF project leadership and determined to be fair and reasonable.

4. Describe the plan for future competition for the goods or services.

The Department intends to competitively procure these services for a 1/1/2026 contract start date.

PART IV: AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) / MAINE JOBS & RECOVERY PLAN (MJRP)

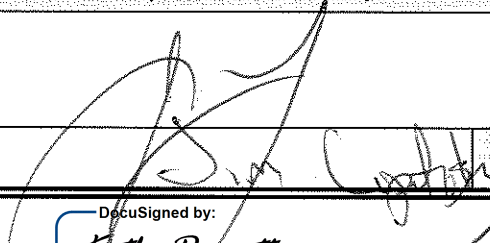

Does this request utilize ARPA/MJRP funds?

Yes – If Yes, please attach the approved Business Case(s).

No – If No, proceed to Part V.

PART V: APPROVALS

The signatures below indicate approval of this procurement request.

Signature of requesting Department's Commissioner (or designee):			
Typed Name:		Date:	28 Feb 23
Signature of DAFS Procurement Official:	DocuSigned by:  41C2BA36FAF44CD...		
Typed Name:	Kathy Paquette	Date:	11/3/2023