

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR AN EXTERNAL EVALUATOR
YOUTH LEADERSHIP ADMINISTERED BY CADCA
RFP – 01-25**

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January 24, 2025

You are cordially invited to submit a Proposal to be the External Evaluator of CADCA's Youth Leadership programs in accordance with the attached specifications, terms and conditions. Prospective respondents are advised to read this information over carefully prior to submitting a proposal.

Proposals must be emailed to youth@cadca.org in a PDF format with Youth Leadership External Evaluator Proposal as the subject.

RFP Contact:

Nicole Helguero
CADCA
(703) 706-0560, ext. 250

Preliminary questions can be submitted in writing to nhelguero@cadca.org

Interested parties are also welcome to join a virtual information session to learn about the project and ask questions on Thursday 01/30/25, 12:00-1:00 PM EST.

- Zoom Registration Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/vm-W1Y7ORAafSWMDcjARiQ>

DEADLINE: All proposals/bids must be received by Friday, February 14, 2025, at 5:00 PM EST

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Summary and Background

CADCA seeks proposals from qualified external evaluators to assess the effectiveness, impact, and outcomes of its Youth Leadership programs, training, and activities. The selected evaluator will develop and implement an evaluation framework that provides data-driven insights to improve program quality, inform strategic decisions, and demonstrate the value of youth leadership initiatives to stakeholders.

CADCA's Youth Leadership programs follow a youth-led, adult-guided framework and are designed to empower youth to lead substance use prevention efforts in their communities. These initiatives include, but are not limited to:

- State-based programs: In recent years, CADCA has begun partnering with state-level agencies to implement youth-driven initiatives with various focuses. CADCA's state-level youth leadership model has three components: capacity building amongst existing coalitions and organizations on issue area through training and technical assistance, supporting youth-serving adults to better engage youth leaders and drive youth-led prevention efforts through learning networks and communities of practice, and facilitating a youth advisory/action council to oversee additional youth program offerings.
 - In Maryland, CADCA operates Take Back Your 10 (TB10), a youth movement focused on the prevention and control of commercial tobacco. The TB10 initiative includes a state-wide youth advisory council, the development of local chapters embedded within existing prevention coalitions, a learning network for youth-serving adults, and an annual summit for youth and adults.
 - In Kansas, CADCA operates Upstream Kansas, a statewide initiative focused on increasing opportunities for youth leadership within the substance use prevention movement. The Upstream Kansas initiative includes a statewide Prevention Action Council, a community of practice for youth-serving adults working in prevention, regular trainings and technical assistance for coalitions working to increase youth engagement, and a youth-led conference.
- National programs: CADCA maintains contracts with multiple federal agencies to develop and implement youth leadership programs at a national level. Included in this evaluation are two national communities of practice (CoPs):
 - National Youth Action Council (NYAC): NYAC is a CoP comprised of 26 youth leaders in high school and college from across the country. NYAC members convene monthly for workshops on topics selected by the cohort and to develop and implement youth-driven action projects (e.g. policy toolkits for youth coalitions to take action at the school and local level). The objectives of NYAC include leadership development of the cohort members and the promotion of best and promising practices to the field of youth-led substance use prevention.

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR AN EXTERNAL EVALUATOR
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- Partners in Prevention: Partners in Prevention is a CoP comprised of ten highly effective adult practitioners with experience supporting youth-led substance use prevention in diverse communities across the countries. Cohort members convene monthly for peer learning, workshops, and action planning. Like NYAC, objectives of Partners in Prevention include professional development of the cohort members and the promotion of best and promising practices of youth engagement to the field of substance use prevention coalitions.

Youth-led, adult-guided refers to a collaborative approach where young people take the lead in planning, decision-making, and implementation; while adults provide guidance, support, and resources to ensure their success. Rooted in positive youth development, this framework values youth voice, fosters meaningful participation, and builds skills by recognizing the strengths and potential of young people within a supportive adult partnership.

The purpose of this study is to determine the contributions of CADCA's Youth Leadership programs to the field of substance use prevention through coalitions, as well as their impact on individual participants. CADCA staff are considering the following questions to guide evaluation, but applicants are encouraged to include other questions and topics of inquiry within their evaluation proposal.

Impact on Individual Outcomes (short-term):

1. Do our youth-serving programs improve individual behavioral health outcomes (i.e. build protective factors)? Do they build leadership skills? Advocacy skills?
2. Do our adult-serving programs improve youth engagement skills?
3. Commercial tobacco specific: Do our tobacco control activities effectively empower youth to engage in tobacco control at a community level? Do they have an impact on participants' knowledge and attitudes toward commercial tobacco use and its dangers?

Impact on Community Outcomes (long-term):

1. Take Back Your 10: Do our programs impact the level of youth-led commercial tobacco control advocacy at the community and/or state level?
2. Upstream Kansas: Do our programs impact the opportunities for youth leadership within and the youth engagement practices of prevention coalitions across the state?
3. NYAC: Does this CoP produce informational resources and tools that are effective and useful for other youth leaders in substance use prevention coalitions across the field?
4. Partners in Prevention: Does this CoP produce informational resources and tools that are effective and useful for other youth-serving adults working to support youth-led substance use prevention in coalitions across the field?

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RFP – 01-25**

Contractor Responsibilities:

The external evaluator will work in close collaboration with CADCA’s Youth Leadership staff to design, implement, and manage a comprehensive evaluation of Youth Leadership programs. The evaluation will assess the programs’ processes, outcomes, and impacts, focusing on their effectiveness in engaging youth, promoting leadership, advocacy, and community-level initiatives, with an emphasis on commercial tobacco control and prevention.

Responsibilities

1. Evaluation Design

- Develop a detailed two-part evaluation project in collaboration with CADCA staff, including a logic model and theory of change specific to Youth Leadership programs:
 - The first part of the evaluation plan should include evaluation of the short-term outcomes listed above and should be able to be completed within the time frame of this contract.
 - The second part of the evaluation project should include the development of a multi-year evaluation plan of the long-term outcomes listed above. The evaluation framework and plan should be developed within the time frame of this contract; and the data collection, analysis, and reporting would take place in years to come, contingent on funding availability.
- Establish key evaluation questions, metrics, and indicators for both short- and long-term outcome evaluations.
- Advise on and refine methodologies for addressing evaluation questions, ensuring cultural responsiveness and inclusivity.

2. Data Collection

- Conduct both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods; such as surveys, focus groups, interviews, and program observation:
- Ensure all data collection methods adhere to ethical standards and reflect diversity and inclusivity.

3. Data Analysis

- Clean and analyze qualitative and quantitative data to identify trends, outcomes, and correlations related to program objectives.
- Evaluate the impact of Youth Leadership programs on participants’ skills, confidence, and engagement in advocacy and leadership activities.

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR AN EXTERNAL EVALUATOR
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RFP – 01-25**

- Compare findings to established benchmarks and best practices in youth leadership and prevention programs.

4. Evaluation Reporting

- Develop and deliver interim progress reports and a detailed end-of-contract report, including overall and program-specific findings.
- Reports should include descriptive and analytical summaries of findings, success stories, and actionable recommendations for program improvement.
- Present findings through formal presentations to CADCA leadership, stakeholders, and funders.

5. Ongoing Support and Consultation

- Provide guidance on using evaluation findings to improve program design, scalability, and sustainability.
- Offer ad hoc consultation on evaluation-related matters.
- Participate in biweekly check-ins with CADCA staff to discuss progress, challenges, and next steps.

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR AN EXTERNAL EVALUATOR
YOUTH LEADERSHIP ADMINISTERED BY CADCA
RFP – 01-25**

Deliverables

1. **Evaluation Instruments:** Design, review, and refine qualitative and quantitative tools for data collection.
2. **Progress Reports:** Provide routine monthly progress reports summarizing evaluation findings and insights.
3. **Year-End Reports:** Produce comprehensive evaluation reports measuring program impact and offering recommendations.
4. **Success Stories:** Document two key success stories annually to showcase program achievements.
5. **Presentations:** Deliver formal presentations summarizing evaluation findings and insights.

Focus Areas for Evaluation

- **Process Evaluation:** Identify strengths and areas for improvement in program design and implementation.
- **Effectiveness Assessment:** Evaluate the extent to which Youth Leadership programs meet their stated objectives.
- **Impact Analysis:** Assess both short- and long-term impacts of the programs on participants and their communities.
- **Participant Experience:** Understand the experiences, satisfaction, and perspectives of youth participants and adult stakeholders.

Contractor Requirements

The contractor must assign a senior-level evaluator with a relevant graduate degree and proven expertise in program evaluation. The evaluator should have experience working with youth-focused programs and demonstrate a commitment to equity, inclusivity, and cultural responsiveness.

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR AN EXTERNAL EVALUATOR
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Proposal Submission Requirements

Interested evaluators should submit a proposal that includes:

1. Organizational information:
 - a. A brief 1-page biography or organizational description
 - b. A 2-3 page description of relevant evaluation experience as it relates to work with state recipients of CDC and other federal/state grant funding specific to youth programming. The organization must have at least five years' experience in providing program evaluation support to federally funded programs (e.g., CDC, CMS, HRSA). As part of your description of evaluation experience, please provide a list of grants for which you or your organization served as the principal evaluator, including the types of grants, average amount of award, funding source, and length of grants. Contractors do not have to list each individual grant by name or the clients which received the grants. For example, contractors may state that they have evaluated three, federal five-year Chronic Disease Prevention Cooperative Agreements funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention with an average funding of \$1 million per grant.
 - c. Biographies and CVs of all study leaders, including publications and/or academic or professional memberships. Assigned project lead must hold at least a Master of Public Health degree or a related field of study.
2. Deliverables: A description of the services to be provided based on the major deliverables and requested products mentioned above. Include specific examples and be sure to address your proposed services related to each Learning Collaboratives.
 - a. Ensure the description of services includes a plan for the evaluation of short-term outcomes to be executed during the contract period, as well as the development of a multi-year plan for evaluation of long-term outcomes to be executed in years to come, contingent on funding availability.
 - b. Provide timelines for deliverables/services. Include a Gantt chart or table outlining your planned work.
 - c. Provide a description of the technical resources you will be using to create the deliverables. CADCA offers use of our data collection platform, SoGo Survey, for quantitative data collection, but the contractor will need to provide any technical software required for qualitative data collection and both qualitative and quantitative data analysis.
 - d. Provide one quantitative and one qualitative instrument sample addressing the outcomes listed above.
3. Budget: Detailed budgets to July 31, 2025, totaling up to \$55,000. All proposals must include a summary of proposed costs to complete the tasks described and a detailed budget that accounts for salaries, fringe benefits, indirect, supplies, travel, etc. Though Contractor quality is our primary focus, CADCA desires to be cost-conscious.

This Request for Proposal represents the requirements for an open and competitive process. Proposals will be accepted until Friday, February 14, 2025, with an anticipated start date of March 1, 2025. Any proposals received after this date and time will not be accepted. This agreement is for an

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initial term of five months (March – July 2025), with a strong likelihood of extension for additional years and increased work as funding or number of programs grow. Each subsequent year is contingent upon the successful completion of deliverables from the prior year and the availability of funding from partners.

All proposals must be signed by an authorized agent or representative of the company submitting the proposal.

If the organization submitting a proposal must outsource or contract any work to meet the requirements contained herein, this must be clearly stated in the proposal. Additionally, all costs included in proposals must be all-inclusive to include any outsourced or contracted work. Any proposals which call for outsourcing or contracting work must include the name and description of the organizations being contracted.

All costs must be itemized to include an explanation of all fees and costs.

Contract terms and conditions will be negotiated upon selection of the winning candidate for this RFP. All contractual terms and conditions will be subject to review by CADCA legal agents and will include scope, budget, schedule, and other necessary items pertaining to the project. To ensure consideration for this Request for Proposal, your proposal must be complete.

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Timeline

- **RFP Release Date:** 24 January 2025
- **Proposal Submission Deadline:** 14 February 2025
- **Contract Award Date:** 21 February 2025
- **Project Start Date:** 1 March 2025
- **Project Completion Date:** 31 July 2025

Submission Instructions

Submit proposals electronically to:

youth@cadca.org

For questions or additional information, contact:

Nicole Helguero

Senior Evaluation Analyst, CADCA

nhelguero@cadca.org

This RFP outlines the framework for a collaborative and impactful evaluation that aligns with CADCA's commitment to youth empowerment and substance use prevention. We look forward to reviewing your proposals.