Amended 2.17.21 with questions received and ASWB responses (see last page).

ASWB
Association of Social Work Boards

Regulatory Research Literature Review

Request for Proposals (RFP)
ASWB Member Engagement and Regulatory Services
January 8, 2021

Purpose of the RFP

ASWB seeks a literature review of the current research related to occupational and professional regulation, with an emphasis on social work regulatory best practices. The review will support the association's curation of regulatory research to promote best practices and informed decision-making on behalf of social work regulators in the United States and Canada. The literature review will provide knowledge of existing research and identify gaps so additional research can be encouraged.

Deadline:

March 12, 2021

SECTION I PROGRAM SUMMARY, BACKGROUND, AND PURPOSE OF THE RFP

A. PROGRAM SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

The Association of Social Work Boards is the nonprofit organization composed of the social work regulatory bodies of all 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and all ten Canadian provinces. ASWB's mission is to provide support and services to the social work regulatory community to advance safe, competent, and ethical practices to strengthen public protection.

ASWB owns and maintains the social work licensing examinations that are used to test a social worker's competence to practice ethically and safely. ASWB also supports its membership in a variety of capacities, including through the provision of research and other information for the development and administration of social work regulation.

ASWB's 2019–2021 Strategic Framework envisions ASWB as "the conduit for and repository of quality research about best practices in social work regulation." It is ASWB's goal to curate research for best practices in regulation to support informed decision-making on behalf of member regulatory authorities. The publishing of this RFP and the resulting end product is a first step toward this goal; future efforts will focus on commissioned research to fill gaps identified in the comprehensive review of available literature. ASWB will provide funding to support the successful bidder to complete this project.

B. PURPOSE OF THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

ASWB requires a literature review of the current research, including grey literature (public documents), to identify regulatory best practices. Representative examples of what might be addressed in the literature review include the following topics:

1. The evolution of social work regulation and how it gave rise to the regulatory models and licensing (registration) frameworks that exist today in the United States and Canada
2. The administration and operationalization of professional regulation
3. Purpose of regulation to mitigate harm
4. Supervised practice experience required for licensure
5. Entry to practice competencies
6. Supervisor qualifications and responsibilities
7. Professional practice standards
8. Licensure renewal requirements, policy, and procedures
9. Continued competency (continuing professional development plans, continuing education, supports to ensure continued safe and effective practice)
10. Electronic practice
11. Endorsement, reciprocity, compacts, and temporary licensure
12. Enforcement (complaint receipt/processing, investigation, disciplinary procedures, adjudication, sanctions, remediation, supervision as sanction, recidivism reduction measures, prevention, etc.)
13. Assessment and evaluation of the administration of regulation

14. Impact of licensing exemptions

Sources of literature may include traditional research publications as well as grey literature. Examples may include the following:

1. Research articles (preferably primary sources in refereed journals)
2. Books
3. Legislative, executive, and agency reports and materials
4. Case law
5. Statutes and regulations

SECTION II MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

All proposals received on or before the proposal due date and time and at the location specified in the Request for Proposals will be evaluated to determine whether they meet the minimum qualification requirements set forth in this Request for Proposals as follows:

A. ORGANIZATIONAL ACCESS

The successful bidder must have a means of accessing the relevant research and technical publications from appropriate sources.

B. RESEARCHER QUALIFICATIONS

The successful bidder must have the educational background, knowledge, and skills necessary to discern the difference between primary and secondary sources in research. In addition, the successful bidder must be able judge the rigor and scientific merit of research publications by evaluating the experimental design, data collection procedures, statistical procedures and analysis, and validity/appropriateness of conclusions drawn. Technical articles in refereed and nonrefereed journals may contain appropriate literature; the successful bidder must be able to understand such articles and assess their value to include in the review.

C. COMMUNICATION SKILLS

The successful bidder must be able to communicate the results of this study in a well-written manuscript with comprehensive bibliographic citations, suitable for publishing (in English). The successful bidder may also be asked to present a summary of the results at a future ASWB event.

D. BUDGET

A detailed project budget including tasks, a timeline, and a schedule for deliverables must be included with the proposal. A specific budget cap has not been established for this project; ample financial resources have been allotted because of the importance of this project to ASWB's strategic objectives. Proposals and projected expenses will be considered and evaluated based on the overall strength of the proposal, including intellectual merit and project design.

SECTION III DELIVERABLES

A. A study plan and outline for review and feedback (due three months after the contract is implemented)

B. Periodic progress reports
C. A comprehensive list of all research and grey literature evaluated
D. A literature review manuscript* suitable for publication by ASWB listing all published research and summarizing previous work, grey literature of direct relevance to the topics noted, trends that have emerged, research possibilities that have been overlooked, approaches that show promise or have proven sterile, and recommendations for further research. The summary should discuss the quality, merit, and scope of the research studies and grey literature included
E. An article* suitable for publishing that summarizes the work and its relevance and applicability to professional regulation
F. Presentation of the findings of the literature review at an event coordinated by ASWB

*All research documents submitted to ASWB remain the property of the successful bidder; however, the successful bidder shall enter into an agreement with ASWB regarding publication and presentation of the product, disbursement of funds, and ASWB access to research data.

SECTION IV PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All proposals must be received by 5 p.m. EST, March 12, 2021.

Responses must address all of the program components and include the following four sections:

A. PROGRAM PLAN/NARRATIVE

The narrative must be a clear and concise description of the bidder's overall program content, program design, scope of services, ability to perform all required services, and a comprehensive work plan. The narrative should show that the bidder has a clear understanding of the needs identified in this RFP and demonstrate how the program plan will meet the RFP's goals and objectives. Bidders must provide a detailed description of the methodology for accomplishing the tasks in this RFP, including how non-English citations are to be reviewed. As part of the work plan, proposals must include at a minimum:

1. Proposed timeline or schedule
2. Tasks and subtasks
3. Schedule for deliverables
4. Key personnel involved in implementation

B. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

The organizational capacity section should demonstrate adequate human, organizational, and technical resources and professional ability to meet the needs of this RFP. The organizational description must include at a minimum:

1. Resumes or curriculum vitae of key personnel
2. An explanation of how the provider's internal monitoring system adheres to generally accepted accounting principles

C. DEMONSTRATED EFFECTIVENESS

Proposals must include a description of all prior experience in the provision of these or

similar services. At a minimum, this description should include the background and experience of the bidder in providing these services.

D. BUDGET

Proposals must include a detailed budget that stipulates how funds will be spent, including direct costs, salaries, wages and benefits, administration and overhead (if applicable), contractor costs, materials and supplies, and travel (if applicable).

SECTION V PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCEDURES

ASWB will review all proposals submitted timely to determine whether bidders meet all of the requirements prescribed in the RFP. A committee will evaluate all accepted proposals using the following criteria:

EVALUATION CRITERIA

RESPONSE CATEGORIES	CHARACTERISTICS
Program plan/Narrative	Methodology, program design, scope timeline, ability to perform all required services, and innovative elements
Organizational capacity	Evidence of adequate resources (human, organizational, and technical) and professional ability to meet requested services
Demonstrated effectiveness	Evidence of prior successful experiences in the provision of services
Budget	Budget plan, including project tasks, timeline, and a schedule of deliverables; reasonableness of total cost; and comparison with other proposals

The chosen bidder will be notified in writing of its winning proposal, and a contract will be drawn that will include reference to this RFP, its attachments and addenda, the bidder's proposal, and any additional contract language that may be required by ASWB or by law. All other bidders will be notified that a winning proposal has been selected.

SECTION VI PROPOSAL PACKAGE FORMAT/SUBMISSION DETAILS

1. **Cover letter**. Bidders shall submit a cover letter transmitting the proposal package to ASWB. The cover letter shall be signed and dated by an authorized individual representing the bidder's organization.
2. **File format and type**. Bidders shall submit proposals as a Word document. Proposal text shall be in a font size of no less than 12-point type, with not less than a one-inch margin on all pages, in order to facilitate the proposal review process. All pages must be consecutively numbered. Attachments and appendices do not need to be consecutively numbered from the main body of the proposal as long as any referenced attachment or appendix pages are easy to locate and the pages within each attachment or appendix are consecutively numbered.
    - **Contents page**. Bidders shall include a Contents page with page numbers. Proposals are not page-limited; however, applicants are encouraged to be concise while providing sufficient detail to convey their ability to undertake the proposed request.

3. **Proprietary content**. The contents of any proposal are considered proprietary to ASWB and the respective bidder. All bidders agree not to discuss their proposal with any other parties, including competitors, at any time.
4. **Costs**. Any costs incurred by the bidder in the preparation, transmittal, and presentation of any proposal or material submitted in response to this RFP shall be borne solely by the bidder.
5. **Revised proposals**. Any bidder may submit a revised proposal before the due date. Such revised proposals must be complete replacements for a previously submitted proposal and must be clearly identified as such in the cover letter.
6. **Withdrawal**. Bidders will be allowed to withdraw their proposals at any time prior to the proposal submission deadline. To withdraw, bidders shall email a withdrawal notice signed by the bidder's duly authorized representative to csanner@aswb.org.
7. **Timeframe**. Responses to this RFP, including negotiated costs, will be considered firm for 180 days after the due date for the receipt of proposals.
8. **Questions**. Please email questions about the proposal requirements to Cara Sanner, ASWB Regulatory Services Coordinator: csanner@aswb.org.

Please submit the entire proposal package in one email to: csanner@aswb.org.

ASWB Regulatory Research Literature Review Request for Proposals
Responses to questions from interested parties as of February 17, 2021

1. When does ASWB expect the project to be completed?

Ideally, project deliverables will be completed by the end of this year. However, ASWB has some flexibility in this regard and can extend the timeline out for competitive bidders as late as the fall of 2022. It is anticipated that a proposal will be awarded by April 1, 2020 which could extend the receipt of project deliverables to as late as the fall of 2022.

2. What is the maximum project budget or cost parameters?

ASWB specifically excluded a maximum budget amount from the proposal. We do not want to limit the resources necessary for a successful outcome as determined by the bidder. We intend to use the strength of the proposal, including methodology, project task detail, scope of source documents, and description of deliverables to evaluate if the proposed budget is justified. ASWB has allocated ample resources to this project. It directly supports a key strategic initiative of the association. Bidders are encouraged to think broadly as it relates to the types of literature to be included in the review, and how the project will be implemented to achieve the desired outcomes.

3. Is ASWB is expecting to end up with a collection of the articles used in the literature review?

ASWB is not requiring receipt of, or access to, all of the articles reviewed or cited in the literature review. However, a comprehensive list of all research and grey literature evaluated is a required deliverable including references and brief information about the article. References should include: the author(s), year published, title, journal title and volume (if relevant), page number(s), publisher, and place of publication. Additionally, where relevant, retrieval information should be included such as URLs, digital object identifiers, identifiers assigned by the library of congress, international and national standard identifiers, etc.

4. Will the project support indirect costs? Is there a predetermined indirect cost rate?

The project will support indirect costs. A predetermined indirect cost rate has not been established. ASWB will evaluate how the indirect costs are justified and indirect costs will be negotiated as part of the awarded contract(s). Note: although the project is exclusively funded by ASWB, federal guidelines will be used to help ASWB understand whether indirect costs are appropriate. As such, bidders should be mindful that indirect costs are consistent with the applicable cost principles set forth in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E & Appendix IV for non-profits. More information is available from the U.S. Department of Labor: https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasam/centers-offices/office-of-the-senior-procurement-executive/cost-price-determination-division/guide-for-indirect-cost-rate-determination-for-nonprofit and https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASAM/legacy/files/DCD-2-CFR-Guide.pdf.

5. How many bidders will be accepted?

ASWB anticipates one bidder, however, we are open to the possibility that multiple bids may be accepted if they offer complimentary and not overlapping research ideas.

6. Is there a restriction on the use of alternative work assignments?

No, there is no restriction on the use of alternative work assignments for any academic personnel involved with

the project.