

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

May 11, 2022

Introduction

The Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC) is a non-profit organization founded in 1926 that operates as an institutional accreditor of distance education institutions. The DEAC is recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education. DEAC provides accreditation to postsecondary distance education institutions that offer programs primarily by the distance education modality from the non-degree level up to and including the professional doctoral degree. DEAC's goal is to ensure a high standard of educational quality in the distance education institutions it accredits by requiring compliance with its published standards, policies and procedures and by supporting continual self-assessment of institutional effectiveness and improvement.

Scope of Proposal

DEAC is issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) from individuals or teams for the development and implementation of an institutional research function within the accrediting organization. The individual or team will 1) provide leadership and oversight of functions related to the collection, interpretation, and use of institutional data submitted by DEAC institutions for assessment and decision-making in accreditation-related activities, 2) support the collection of student outcomes data, annual reporting, and ensure the integrity of data/information released in reports or studies, provides data analysis, reports, or researches as needed, to support DEAC in strengthening its efforts to support the continuous improvement of its accredited institutions, and 3) work closely with DEAC institution members to promote and support institutional research best practices that advance institutional effectiveness and outcomes assessment activities.

Timeframe

DEAC is accepting proposals through June 15, 2022 to establish a two-year initial contract for the institution researcher position with an option to extend into subsequent years.

Key Deliverables for Institutional Research Activities

The proposal should demonstrate an understanding of higher education accreditation and effective institution improvement strategies as well as convey the ability to address the following activities:

- Coordinates or conducts organization research activities as necessary, including qualitative and quantitative studies through the use of surveys, statistical methods, and focus groups to support strategic planning for DEAC.

- Assists with the design of the DEAC annual report format, reviews and analyzes data submitted within the reports, formulates and recommends benchmark requirements.
- Participates in supporting DEAC's recognition by the US Department of Education and Council for Higher Education Accreditation.
- Provides training programs in quality improvement methods and the use/analysis of data related to institutional effectiveness strategies.
- Monitors the overall integrity of institutional data submissions taking appropriate steps to identify and correct data discrepancies when noted.
- Develops and administers a systematic program review that assesses the validity and reliability of DEAC accreditation standards and procedures that includes data analysis, reports and recommendations to be considered by the Commission.
- Designs and conducts research studies to facilitate the ongoing refinement of DEAC standards dedicated to the evaluation and assessment of distance education programs and institutions.
- Reviews and recommends technology products to support data collection and DEAC's online data submission procedures for accredited institutions.

Qualifications

Particular attention will be given to individuals or teams who possess the following background and credentials:

- Master's degree from an accredited college or university in research, statistical analysis, assessment, higher education administration, or other related field.
- Three (3) years of full-time professional experience conducting higher education research, assessment, data management and/or data analysis.
- Knowledge and experience with IPEDS, SIRIS, and/or other reporting practices.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills; strong presentation skills; analytic, consultative, and project management skills.
- Demonstrated strong analytical skills and experience with statistical analysis and research.
- Proficient in advanced concepts of Microsoft Excel and other Office suite products to increase efficiency/turnaround of data requests.
- Experience developing and administering online surveys.
- Strong organizational skills and a high attention to detail and accuracy.

- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively on team-based projects.
- Ability to achieve stellar outcomes through collaboration and partnership rather than direct authority.
- Experience proactively developing, proposing, and executing projects to benefit an organization.

Preferred Qualifications

- Doctorate from an accredited college or university in research, assessment, higher education administration, or other related field.
- Proficient in business intelligence and data visualization tools and methodologies.
- Five (5) years of full-time professional experience conducting higher education research, assessment, data management and/or data analysis.
- Strong management, interpersonal skills, including active listening, flexibility, and empathy to accurately obtain information from and provide information to senior leadership and organization board members

Deadline for Submission

Proposals should be received by DEAC no later than June 15, 2022 to receive full consideration. Proposals should be emailed to Leah Matthews, Executive Director, DEAC at leah.matthews@deac.org.

Submission Requirements

Applicants should submit a thoughtful, clear and well-organized proposal that addresses the key deliverables described above and demonstrates that qualifications are met. In addition to the written proposal narrative please include:

- A budget for the two-year timeframe.
- An example of work product comparable to this project.
- Key team member resumes.
- Three professional references.
- A written statement indicating a willingness to adhere to DEAC's conflict of interest, code of conduct and confidentiality policies.

Expenses incurred by the respondents in replying to the RFP are at the respondents' own expense and risk. For more information, please contact Leah Matthews, Executive Director, at 202-234-5100 ext 101 or leah.matthews@deac.org.