

# RFQ Response Form

## *RFQ for Participation in a University/Government Research Partnership*

### **APPLICANT INFORMATION**

Applicant Name: Carlow University

Authorized Representative Name & Title: Janice McCall, PhD, LSW, Assistant Professor

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Partners included in this Application:

This application represents academic partners across Carlow University. Academics and professionals below represent various areas of discipline such as: Business Administration, Professional Counseling, Education, Evaluation Research and Planning, Political Science, Psychology, and Social Work. Carlow University's team has broad expertise in quantitative and qualitative research methods, and a demonstrated commitment to academic scholarship, teaching and training, and community collaboration, which are all informed by our alignment to our mission-driven institution.

1. Sibdas Ghosh, PhD, Provost & VP of Academic Affairs, Carlow University
2. Stephanie Wilsey, PhD, Professor & Interim Dean of the College of Leadership & Social Change
3. Edith Cook, PhD, Senior Director of Institutional Research Effectiveness, Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning
4. Michael B. Jones, PhD, Executive Director of the Library & Learning Commons and Professor, Department of Political Science
5. Enrique Mu, PhD, MBA, MS, Professor, Department of Fraud and Forensics
6. Rae Hirsh, DEd, Associate Professor, Department of Education
7. Courtney Alvarez, PhD, Assistant Professor, Department of Professional Counseling
8. Terri Collin-Dilmore, PhD, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology
9. Melanie Kautzman-East, PhD, Assistant Professor, Department of Professional Counseling
10. Janice McCall, PhD, LSW, Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work

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How did you hear about this RFQ?

Dr. McCall was alerted to this opportunity through a personal correspondence from Peter Jhon, who is presently employed with Allegheny County.

### REFERENCES

Provide the name, affiliation and contact information [include email address and telephone number] for three references who are able to address relevant experience with your organization.

*Please do not use employees of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services as references.*

- Allyson M. Lowe, Ph.D.  
Vice President, Academic Affairs  
Trocaire College  
[Redacted]

- Deborah Acklin  
President and CEO  
WQED Multimedia  
[Redacted]

- Larry Berger  
Executive Director  
SLB Radio Productions, Inc.  
[Redacted]

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#### **CERTIFICATION**

Please check the following before submitting your Proposal, as applicable:

By submitting this proposal, I certify and represent to the County that all submitted materials are true and accurate, and that I have not offered, conferred or agreed to confer any pecuniary benefit or other thing of value for the receipt of special treatment, advantaged information, recipient's decision, opinion, recommendation, vote or any other exercise of discretion concerning this RFP.

#### **REQUIREMENTS**

Please respond to the following. The maximum score a Proposal can receive is 75 points. Your response to this section should not exceed 10 pages.

##### Background (30 points)

1. Describe your experience and/or interest in conducting research on topics related to improving local government/social services.

Carlow University was founded through the efforts of the Sisters of Mercy who were motivated by the needs presented by people experiencing social marginalization such as poverty, immigrant status, and lack of access to healthcare and education. Today, Carlow University continues its tradition of engaging with those who are most in need.

Carlow University is an integral part of the community. We offer an array of service and volunteer opportunities for our staff, students, and faculty to engage with our community, raise awareness of our community's challenges and needs, and show our students the many ways they can become more involved. Through these efforts, Carlow University fosters connections between our community partners and student volunteers and non-profit organizations' service capacity to the community is increased. Our volunteers experience personal transformations and professional connections and networks are further nourished in the spirit of the Mercy tradition.

At Carlow University, community engagement and the improvement of services takes many forms—including volunteerism, advocacy, education, philanthropy, and scholarship—which, when integrated, create the greatest possibility for community development and learning. Some history of the University's involvement in government and social services include:

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The Social Justice Institutes (SJI) at Carlow University aim to facilitate systemic change by informing practice and educating for social justice. SJI supports the University's strategic plan by serving as an incubator for faculty research, providing opportunities and securing partnerships for community-based learning, and serving as a conduit for community engagement. In 2016, when the American Medical Association declared gun violence a "public health crisis," Carlow University put gun violence prevention at the top of its social justice agenda. It was the inaugural "Educating for Justice Issue" of Carlow's Social Justice Institutes.

The Grace Ann Geibel Institute for Justice and Social Responsibility develops approaches that advance knowledge in an effort to challenge systemic oppression locally, nationally, and internationally, by engaging students, faculty, staff, and community in research education, and outreach.

The Women of Spirit Institute<sup>®</sup> program informs practice in communities through public scholarship/programming. Programming involves leadership and advocacy training, as well as public education and outreach.

The Center for Youth Media Advocacy empowers teens to express their own voices, with a focus on education reform and improving the school environment, through the identification and analysis of the problems and the creation and distribution of high-quality media to advocate for change.

The Center for Community-Engaged Learning provides Carlow University students with the opportunity to apply disciplinary knowledge to contemporary social problems through partnerships with local nonprofits.

Furthermore, in addition to the individuals listed in this RFQ is the larger body of Institutional experts at Carlow University. Among faculty and staff are those who also share in Carlow's commitment to working with economically disadvantaged neighborhoods and communities of color. The following represent a sample of community spaces in which Carlow faculty and staff have served:

- Representation on Department of Justice's National Initiative for Building Community Trust & Justice
- Representation in Allegheny County's Black Girl Equity Alliance
- Representation on Allegheny County's Gun Violence Prevention Advisory Board
- Representation on board of Young Women's Christian Association
- Representation on board of Mediators Beyond Borders
- Representation on board of Center for Victims of Violence and Crime

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- Representation on advisory board of the Women's Law Project
- Representation on board of National Black MBA Association–Pittsburgh Chapter
- Representation of board of Hilltop Alliance
- Representation on board of Allegheny County Office of Violence Prevention Advisory Committee
- Representation on board of Family Services of Western Pennsylvania
- Collaboration with Neighborhood Learning Alliance
- Collaboration with Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation
- Collaboration with Pittsburgh Public Schools

In addition to Carlow's Institutional structure, the Carlow team assembled in this RFQ have a demonstrated history and commitment to produce scholarship addressing the needs of vulnerable populations and service improvement. For example, in recent years, individual scholars on this team have published and presented on the following topics:

- **Alvarez, C. & Lee, S. (2012).** An international perspective on professional counselor identity. *Journal of Professional Counseling: Practice, Theory & Research, 39(1)*.

This publication provides a robust discussion of the training and practice standards of professional counselors and in particular the influence of geographical context in which individuals are trained and are in practice. Findings from this publication recommend that professional counseling practice must be informed by local cultural values and norms.

Within Allegheny County, we acknowledge the variety of diverse spaces in which social services and individuals and families co-exist in addition to initiatives for increasing the inclusivity of spaces where Allegheny County residents live, work, and thrive. Multicultural efforts that are designed, implemented, and evaluated are paramount for the delivery of social services and well-being of community members.

- **Collin Dilmore, T., Moore, D., & Bjork, Z. (2013).** Developing a competency-based educational structure within clinical and translational science, *Clinical and Translational Science, 6(2)*, 98-102.

This publication demonstrates our commitment to improving professional practice and ensuring professional competence in service delivery. This publication describes a process for developing a competency-based educational framework in a graduate training program for clinical and translational science.

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In Allegheny County, it is vitally important to have competent clinical professionals throughout its four priority populations (children, transitional aged youth, adults, and older adults).

- **Cook, E. (2015).** License to drive: Data driven decision making. Presented at the 2015 American Evaluation Annual Meeting, Chicago, Illinois.

This advanced-level conference session at the American Evaluation Association was facilitated by Dr. Cook and centered on the need to understand the role and purpose of data. The added value to this session was to disseminate the pragmatic and transformative nature of both smaller data and big data in driving decision-making.

- **Hirsh, R. (2017).** Creativity: Cultural capital in the mathematics. Encyclopedia on Creativity, Invention, Innovation, & Entrepreneurship Vol 2.

Dr. Hirsh demonstrates her firm grasp of the importance of responding to diversity in the community, particularly in the context of building cultural capital. Her encyclopedia entry centers on acknowledging contemporary students who face economic and environmental challenges. She instructs and urges the adoption of new problem-solving strategies that incorporate the arts and facilitates creative problem solving.

- **Proctor, J., & Kautzman-East, M.** The strong Black woman race-gender schema: Implications for clinical practice. Presented at the 49th Annual Pennsylvania Counseling Association (PCA) Conference, King of Prussia, PA.

The University Government Partnership RFQ also offers an opportunity for student learning as demonstrated by this scholarly work between Dr. Kautzman-East and one of her undergraduate students. Both presented this work which served to advocate against the barriers presented to African American women and to enhance their help-seeking behaviors for mental illness. The impact of stereotypes onto African American women were discussed with the intention to inform and activate conference participants. Their presentation aligns with the mental health field and community-based mental health services as together they strive to improve access to services, encourage engagement with clients participating in mental health services, and to ensure the quality of care that is received.

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- **McCall, J.,** Rodriguez, K., Barnisin-Lange, D., & Gordon, A.J. (Accepted). The history and experiences of graduates with veterans treatment court in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. *International Journal of Offender Rehabilitation and Comparative Criminology*.

This publication utilized qualitative methods to inform readers about a specific treatment model within Allegheny County, PA and the experiences of veterans who were involved in its criminal justice and courts system. The publication sought to elevate the innovation and enhanced service coordination efforts of key service providers in the County and sought to humanize the experiences of the participants of the treatment court. The effort of this publication also included shared authorship with key County entities.

- **Wilsey, S.,** Welty, A., & Van Wyhe, W. (2018). Community engagement in a former steel town: The role of a living-learning community. *PRISM: A Journal of Regional Engagement*. In press.

This study is a program evaluation of an urban living-learning community in Beaver Falls, PA and is also a prime example of Carlow's commitment to improving the community around us, engaging our student learners, and producing scholarship in the tradition of seeking a just and merciful world. This study highlights key living-learning community models to promote the value of rebuilding communities harmoniously and enhancing college students' civic engagement.

#### Infrastructure (45 points)

2. Describe the specific resources (academic/administrative staffing, materials, etc.) that will be dedicated to this project.
- Carlow University maintains an Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure that all human subjects' research is reviewed in advance by responsible, knowledgeable peers to protect these rights. Carlow University is committed to these laws based on moral, ethical, and legal grounds. All research that comes under the aegis of the University must meet the procedures established to ensure the privacy and protection of human subjects.

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- The Division of Information Technology at Carlow University provides a broad range of technology services for all members of Carlow University's community. Multiple services include media lab support, access to software and applications, and networking and telecommunication infrastructure. Faculty are able to access and use statistical analysis software, such as SPSS.
  - Carlow University's Grace Library maintains access to major journals and publication databases in relevant fields, such as: counseling, criminal justice, education, public health, psychology, and social work. Three full-time librarians are also available to assist faculty in accessing additional information resources outside the institution's collection to support research projects.
  - The Professional Counseling Program maintains two graduate assistants each academic year. These two assistants are available to provide support under the direction of faculty engaged in a specific project for approximately eight hours per month.
  - The Department of Social Work's Master in Social Work program includes a program evaluation course and grant writing course – both which may be amenable to community-partnering for student experiential learning products.
  - Specific resources not listed here may be negotiated at the time of all project determinations.
3. Describe the governance structure within your organization that will support this project, integrating other faculty, students, etc.

The faculty team that have come together on this RFQ represent a cohesive body that will support this project. This team also includes representation from the Provost of Academic Affairs and the Dean of the College of Leadership and Social Change, two leaders on our campus administration who are supportive of community partnerships and engaged learning.

Within our fields at our Institution, we each have expectations and responsibilities to integrate scholarship into our classrooms, student learning exposures, and as faculty development goals. In addition, as current faculty, we engage in teaching, scholarship, and service that are consistent with the Boyer Model (1990) where we are expected to engage in scholarship that includes: active involvement in the creative, intellectual, and research development of the individual's discipline across contract types and ranks. Types of acceptable scholarship suggests teaching, discovery, artistic creation,



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integration, and application to the greater community as the primary forms of scholarship for the purpose of promotion and tenure at Carlow University.

4. Describe activities, such as internships and fellowships, that will support this project.

Studies show that students who participate in experiential learning while in college are more likely to lead meaningful lives, have more socially-satisfying relationships, secure financial well-being, engage more with their communities, and maintain better physical health. Experiential Learning in the Carlow Experiential Learning Tradition (CELT) consists of five distinct areas:

- 1) Undergraduate Research

Research is a form of experiential learning through which students will produce innovative research projects in which they develop a creative portfolio of visual art or writing, or conduct critical or scientific research. Each project will include a reflective observation (on their art, writing, critical inquiry or scientific process) or a written or oral presentation of the project, further conceptualizing the content of students' research.

- 2) Internships

Internships and professional work experiences integrate career-related experience into students' education through participation in planned, supervised work. This work emphasizes professional development and the assessment of real-world job performance. Students "learn by doing."

- 3) Study Abroad

Study abroad is a form of experiential learning through which students enrich their global perspectives, further develop their studies, exercise independence, and gain experiences that make them well-rounded, highly competitive college graduates. Carlow students can study abroad for an entire academic year, one semester, several weeks, or over spring break. These opportunities are available in locations around the world—from England to Russia to Tanzania to Thailand.

- 4) Service Learning

Service-learning addresses human and community needs, together with structured opportunities for reflection.

- 5) Leadership

Student leadership develops skills in team-building, collaboration, and effective leadership. These experiences assist students in shaping their identities as citizens who will create positive change in the world. Some of the leadership opportunities at Carlow

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University are through Student Government, clubs and student organizations, and service as peer tutors. Off-campus opportunities may include leadership roles in community groups and organizations, religious organizations, or churches.

In addition to these core areas, within the College of Leadership and Social Change are graduate programs in Social Work and Professional Counseling that also encourage students to take part in community-based opportunities of social change and social justice.