

Incorporating Evidence into Request for Proposals and Subsequent Contracts

Purpose: Use the following strategies to ensure that both parties understand and include appropriate evidence from the beginning of the process.

When preparing to issue requests for proposals (RFPs) for new contracts, consider incorporating evidence requirements into the RFP. This increases the likelihood of selecting a partner whose services align with research.

1. **Clearly Define Evidence:** Defining “evidence” ensures that potential partners know the criteria programs must meet to qualify as “evidence-based.” This allows you to score proposals against those criteria.
2. **Prioritize Evidence:** Prioritizing evidence in the selection and scoring rubric ensures that you will invest more of your funds in services that are most likely to improve outcomes.
3. **Define Desired Outcomes:** Defining and communicating your priority outcomes in your RFP allows you and your partners to strategically fund activities to help you achieve your program’s goals (include Academic Goals, Implementation Goals, and Stakeholder Experience Goals).
4. **Build Evidence through Evaluations:** Designing programs with ongoing evaluations ensures you can gauge their effectiveness and use findings to inform future investments and programmatic decisions.
5. **Implement Performance Management:** Using performance management, such as setting expectations, monitoring performance, and providing feedback to improve individual and organizational outcomes, ensures bi-directional accountability and supports continuous improvement throughout program implementation.
6. **Advance Equity in Contracting:** Promoting equity through contracting ensures inclusive participation by engaging communities in program development and identifying strategies to address inequities.