

# Request for Proposals for Providers of Academic Language Interventions to Participate in an Impact Evaluation



**MDRC**

**Abt Associates**

**Florida Center for Reading Research**

## **Important Dates:**

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| • RFP released                            | August 26, 2016                      |
| • Questions from potential bidders due    | August 31, 2016                      |
| • Answers posted                          | September 9, 2016                    |
| • Intent to bid letters due (non-binding) | September 13, 2016                   |
| • Proposals due                           | October 3, 2016                      |
| • Finalist presentations (expected)       | November 30, 2016 – December 1, 2016 |
| • Contract award (expected)               | December 30, 2016                    |

# Overview

MDRC invites developers of academic language interventions to submit proposals to implement their program in multiple school districts across the country as part of a large-scale randomized controlled trial evaluation funded by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) in the U.S. Department of Education (ED). This evaluation will provide rigorous evidence on the effectiveness of selected academic language interventions for English learners (ELs) and disadvantaged non-EL students in grades 4 and 5. This evaluation will be conducted by MDRC, with its partners Abt Associates and the Florida Center for Reading Research at Florida State University (collectively, referred to hereafter as “the study team”).

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the quality of the proposed academic language intervention, training, and ongoing support; prior evidence of efficacy/effectiveness; quality of the plan for managing the scope of work and staff experience providing academic language intervention professional development; and organizational capacity to provide professional development to teachers across multiple school districts. Offerors must have the capacity to provide professional development and implementation support in as many as 36 schools across 12 school districts to be selected by the study team. The technical aspects of the proposals will also be evaluated in conjunction with the pricing presented by the offerors. After a review of written proposals, highly rated offerors will be invited to Washington, DC to present their program and training plans to the study team, IES, and a panel of experts. The study team, in consultation with the expert panel and IES, will then select up to two offerors’ programs for inclusion in the evaluation through a fixed-price subcontract to MDRC.

The study team will be responsible for conducting the independent evaluation of the implementation of the selected programs and their impacts on students’ academic language and reading outcomes. The study team will recruit participating sites, collect and analyze implementation and impact data, and write reports discussing the findings for ED.

This RFP is organized into the following sections: Section A is the background section, which includes the high-level logic model guiding the evaluation, required characteristics and delivery of academic language interventions, description of the impact evaluation, and roles and responsibilities of the study team and selected provider; Section B addresses the statement of work; Section C includes the proposal requirements, including general instructions, review criteria, review process, budget and contract structure, and requirements for the technical and business proposals.

## **A. Background**

This portion of the RFP provides information on the motivation for the Impact Evaluation of Academic Language Interventions; the characteristics of academic language interventions and training required for inclusion in the evaluation; and description of the independent impact evaluation to be conducted by the study team that will test the effectiveness of the selected interventions.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress indicates that only 8% of fourth grade ELs and 21% of their economically disadvantaged peers are proficient readers. This is in distinct contrast to the 36% proficient readers in the general population. Furthermore, the achievement gap is persistent across other academic content areas. Starting in 2017, the Every Student Succeeds Act places a new emphasis on the performance of ELs and disadvantaged students, where schools will be required to demonstrate how they are improving the English language proficiency of ELs and disadvantaged students. Clearly, instructional practices designed for these populations are needed.

Some research suggests that ELs and economically disadvantaged students are at particular risk for poor academic outcomes due to underdeveloped academic language skills (Kieffer, 2010). Academic language generally refers to linguistic features that are prevalent in academic discourse across school content areas that are infrequent in colloquial conversations. Specifically for this project, academic language is defined as knowledge and understanding of words and discourse found in text that forms the basis for the language of schooling. Knowledge of academic words and discourse can be taught, practiced, and demonstrated in school in oral modalities (speaking and listening) and text modalities (reading and writing). There is a growing body of work to suggest that ELs and economically disadvantaged students struggle to develop academic language proficiency that taps the content of academic texts and academic talk; the ability to think and learn like a scientist, historian, mathematician, or writer; and the skills necessary for overall academic achievement (Bailey & Heritage, 2008; Foorman, Koon, Petscher, Mitchell, & Truckenmiller, 2015; Guerrero, 2004; Hakuta et al., 2000; Honig, 2010; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). Further, academic language has been found to correlate significantly with reading comprehension skills in developing readers (Uccelli, Galloway, Barr, Meneses, & Dobbs, 2015).

Although prior studies of academic language instruction provide some initial evidence of efficacious instructional practices, there is little confirmation regarding the large-scale effectiveness of academic language instruction or intervention. The goal of this evaluation is to assess the impact of academic language interventions on EL students' and disadvantaged non-EL students' (e.g., students from low income families) language and reading skill when implemented at a larger scale. This evaluation will contribute to the knowledge base of the instructional practices that improve language and literacy outcomes.

### **A.1. Theory of Action/Logic Model**

The primary hypothesis of this evaluation is that high quality instruction explicitly promoting the acquisition of academic language will improve academic word knowledge and knowledge of academic discourse, as well as reading and academic achievement, for EL students and their disadvantaged classmates who are non-EL students. The study team anticipates that the impact of

high quality instruction will likely be moderated by several student characteristics: English language status, socioeconomic status, baseline word knowledge, baseline reading skills, and grade level.

While the structure and content of the interventions may vary, the study team has developed a high-level logic model of Academic Language Intervention to guide the evaluation. ‘Intervention’ in the context of this evaluation refers to a program or systematic set of instructional practices taught by general education teachers to all students in the classroom (a broader definition of the term than is often used in schools). The general logic model in Exhibit 1 displays connections between academic language intervention implementation supports, the intervention’s core components, and the proximal and distal outcomes to be measured and analyzed by the study team.

Offerors shall submit an intervention-specific logic model that reflects the high level elements in Exhibit 1 and includes these components:

- Implementation supports: Activities and supports provided through professional development and other supports that will ensure high-fidelity implementation of the academic language intervention, as well as increase teachers’ understanding of individual differences in language development, the linguistic challenges that students can encounter in text, and how academic language contributes to reading comprehension.
- Core intervention components: Participation in the professional development and access to other supports associated with the academic language intervention are expected to result in teachers’ acquisition of knowledge about academic language and the adoption of instructional practices that improve the academic language instructional environment for students.
  - Academic language instruction should give students opportunities to engage with academic language orally (through authentic opportunities to speak and listen with teachers and peers) and through text (through rich opportunities to read text and generate written responses).
    - Instruction in academic word knowledge may include emphasis on one or more of the following: vocabulary, morphology, word recognition, and spelling. Examples of academic words include, but are not limited to, the Coxhead Academic Word List (Coxhead, 2000) and tier 2 words as defined in Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards. Word knowledge may also include content-specific vocabulary (also referred to as domain-specific, tier 3, or disciplinary vocabulary).
    - Instruction in academic discourse elements may include complex sentences, metalinguistic awareness, nominalization, connectives, anaphora, syntax, discourse markers, discipline-specific text, and text structure. Academic discourse is emphasized primarily through discussions between students and teachers and between students, as well as in response to reading academic text.
- Proximal student outcomes: Changes in the instructional environment are expected to directly influence students’ academic language skill associated with word knowledge and

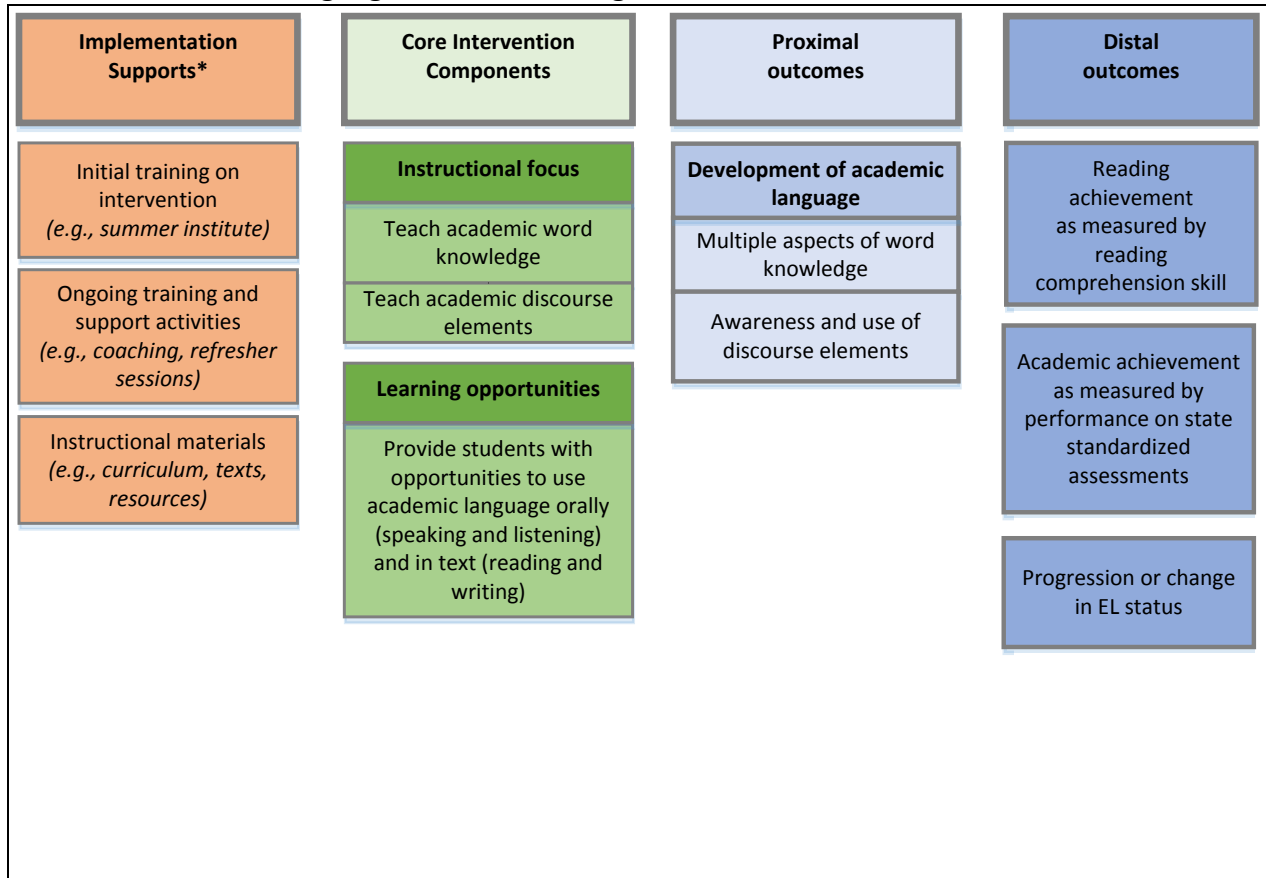
discourse elements.

- Word knowledge may be measured through such elements as academic vocabulary, morphology knowledge, and word recognition.
- Discourse may be measured through cohesive elements, such as connectives, anaphora, syntax, discourse markers, or text organization.
- Distal student outcomes: Improvements in academic language are expected to affect distal student outcomes in reading achievement (as measured by reading comprehension skill) and academic achievement (as measured by performance on state tests). Given that EL students represent one of the subgroups of interest in this evaluation, the study team will also examine whether improvements in academic language also lead to progression in or exit from EL status. These distal outcomes are highly relevant for theory and policy.

Offerors should note that this general logic model is intended to serve as a starting point; as part of the proposal, each offeror shall present a logic model that clearly represents the specific dimensions of and modalities used in the proposed intervention. For example, offerors' logic models may detail the supports provided to teachers, classroom activities in which teachers and students are expected to engage, and the proximal and distal outcomes the intervention is expected to impact.

In addition, the study team recognizes that there are academic language interventions that target content mastery in subject-specific areas such as science or social studies. These interventions will be considered for this study, but offerors must discuss how their proposed interventions are expected to impact the proximal and distal outcomes that are the focus of this evaluation (discussed above) and are applicable across disciplines, as well as represent these outcomes in their logic models. Section A.2 describes the expectations of the offeror in this evaluation.

## Exhibit 1. Academic Language Intervention Logic Model



\*Note: Offerors will be asked to provide specific documentation of implementation supports to the study team. Data related to all other components of logic model will be collected by study team.

### A.1.1. Setting

The focus for the intervention will be students in grades 4 and 5, in order to address the time period when instruction shifts to increased language demands and reading to learn (Catts, Adlof, Hogan, & Weismer, 2005). The study team expects to primarily recruit relatively large school districts in order to have enough schools per district with reasonably high populations of ELs and disadvantaged non-EL students to conduct analyses for the evaluation with appropriate statistical power for both groups. Although the districts and schools have not yet been recruited, the offerors shall assume in their proposals that they will be implementing their interventions in as many as 36 schools across 12 school districts; they will be working with 8 fourth and fifth grade teachers per school and these teachers collectively serve 160 students (an average of 20 students per teacher). The numbers of school districts, schools, teachers, and students presented here represent what the study team believes would be maximum numbers of each of those units participating in this project. These maximum figures are used so that offerors are able to plan for the largest scale implementation they may need to support. These numbers will vary depending on the evaluation design and the pending recruitment of participating sites. Potentially the study team will recruit enough schools for the evaluation across fewer districts (e.g., 8-9 districts), and the discussion of the design options in

section A.3 of this document provides further information regarding how the numbers of schools, teachers, and students might vary depending on the final research design (potentially as few as 32 schools, and 4 teachers and 80 students per school). Given the whole class setting, the selected academic language intervention(s) will be delivered by the general education and/or content area teachers already employed by the school districts in general education classroom settings.

## **A.2. Required Characteristics and Delivery of Academic Language Interventions**

This section describes the requirements for offerors,<sup>1</sup> beginning with the core intervention components and the required academic language intervention implementation supports represented in the logic model. Offerors shall be responsible for submitting a fully developed proposal, with associated documents, representing each of these components of the logic model.

The study team is seeking academic language intervention providers that have a program appropriate to address the language needs of ELs and disadvantaged non-EL students in grades 4 and 5; and are prepared to provide implementation supports for school staff members to facilitate high fidelity implementation of the intervention at scale during the 2017-18 school year. The proposed curricula and other supportive materials must already exist and must have been previously implemented. Funding will not be provided for substantial curriculum, technology, or other program development. However, the project does allow for modest customization or adjustment of the intervention. (Roles and responsibilities of the intervention provider are discussed in Section A.4.2.)

### *A.2.1. Core Intervention Components*

The content of the proposed academic language intervention shall be appropriate for ELs and their disadvantaged non-EL peers in grades 4 and 5, and proposed at a frequency, duration, and intensity needed to impact proximal academic language outcomes and distal reading achievement, and performance on state standardized assessments, as well as progression or change in EL status. Based on a review of the literature, this impact evaluation seeks up to two interventions that do the following:

- Use instruction that explicitly addresses word knowledge and discourse elements of language through the use of both oral and text-based modalities;
- Provide authentic opportunities to use academic language in oral (listening and speaking) and text-based (reading and writing) modalities;
- Review previously taught concepts, words, and strategies;
- Guide discussion of text;

<sup>1</sup> In this document the terms “offerors” and “providers” are used. *Offerors* are the academic language intervention developers who prepare proposals to do this work (i.e., the bidders). *Providers* are the developers who are chosen to do the work of supporting the implementation of their interventions; in other words, they are the selected offerors or selected bidders.

- Scaffold academic language through instructional tools such as short videos, visuals, and graphic organizers;
- Build meta-linguistic and meta-cognitive awareness;
- Structure activities to enhance engagement by all students; and

Offerors should discuss how the components of their intervention align with one or more of the following recommendations from the “Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School” practice guide:<sup>2</sup>

- Teach a set of academic vocabulary words intensively across several days using a variety of instructional activities.
- Integrate oral and written English language instruction into content-area teaching.
- Provide regular, structured opportunities to develop written language skills.
- Provide small-group instructional intervention to students struggling in areas of literacy and English language development.

For the intervention, offerors shall submit descriptions of the instructional methods that will be used, as well as the frequency, intensity, and duration of the intervention, and the content area(s) (e.g., English Language Arts, social studies, science, etc.) in which it will be delivered. In addition, as discussed in section C.5, offerors shall provide or develop a measure of core intervention component fidelity and thresholds for adequate implementation.

In the proposal, offerors shall describe the suitability of their academic language intervention for the target populations of EL and disadvantaged non-EL students in fourth and fifth grade general education classrooms. Offerors shall clearly describe the populations and settings for which the intervention was designed and those with which it has been previously implemented. Specifically, offerors shall describe the characteristics of the students they have served previously, as well as the setting(s) in which instruction was delivered (e.g., school and district characteristics, grade level, mainstream general education setting, bilingual classroom, etc.), and an estimate of the percentage of instruction delivered in the students’ native language, if not English.

If offerors propose an academic language intervention that has not previously been used in general education classroom settings (e.g., only bilingual classrooms), in grades 4 or 5, or with the student population to be included in this study, offerors shall provide a description of the adjustments or modifications to the existing intervention and/or additional supports that will be needed to implement the intervention in such contexts.

If the proposed academic language intervention or a part of it needs to be delivered in a small group setting or involves computer-based instruction, the offeror shall describe how these components will be incorporated into the overall program and the logistics of how school-based staff will deliver these components. Offerors can include the participation of school-based coaches or other support staff in their proposals.

<sup>2</sup> [http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practice\\_guides/english\\_learners\\_pg\\_040114.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practice_guides/english_learners_pg_040114.pdf)



### *A.2.2. Implementation Supports*

Offerors shall submit a comprehensive implementation support plan to support high fidelity implementation of the offeror's academic language intervention in two phases: initial training within three weeks of the start of the 2017-18 school year and ongoing support activities throughout the 2017-18 school year. This plan should detail:

- The amount and logistics of the initial introductory training sessions (e.g., three-day summer workshops for teachers conducted regionally or in each participating district);
- The activities in which the teachers will be engaging during training; and
- The types and frequency of the ongoing training and implementation support activities (e.g., coaching sessions, professional learning communities).

Offerors shall also include the expected dosage for the ideal amount of training teachers receive (e.g., five visits to online resources per month, attend 80% of scheduled sessions), the types and expected number of the offerors' staff members (e.g., one coach per school) needed to support training and implementation, and a plan for how training materials will be disseminated. In order to increase participation in training activities, offerors shall propose and plan to provide reinforcement to teachers to meet the expected amount of training (e.g., continuing education credits, access to supplemental materials, and a pass for a meeting or hall/lunch duty). Furthermore, offerors shall propose a plan for (1) identifying when some or all of the teachers have general or specific difficulties with implementing the academic language intervention and (2) addressing their needs through professional development. Providers shall be responsible for developing and distributing all training materials and tracking teachers' participation in initial and ongoing implementation support activities throughout the 2017-18 academic year (after award, the study team will provide guidance for tracking and reporting participation, along with information about surveys offerors will be asked to complete about training and implementation).

Offerors shall submit descriptions of the instructional materials and related supports necessary for intervention implementation in participating schools:

- Curricular materials and/or texts that will be provided or if the districts' text will be used.
- Specific technology capacity, if needed (e.g., electronic tablets, internet access, computer work stations).
- Any other similar materials or support needed for classroom intervention implementation.

Offerors shall also describe how the materials and any other necessary additional supports needed to implement the intervention will be distributed to teachers. If there are additional supports needed to implement the intervention with fidelity, the offeror shall share a plan for documenting teachers' access to those supports.

### *A.2.3. Capacity*

The offeror must demonstrate experience providing intensive professional development to school staff. In the proposal, offerors shall describe their experience with training general education or content area teachers. The offeror also must demonstrate their capacity (how they will have sufficient qualified staff with professional development expertise) to provide professional

development to 288 teachers in 36 schools across approximately 12 districts geographically dispersed across the US within a limited timeframe (within three weeks of the start of the school year).<sup>3</sup> The offeror must have processes for hiring, training, monitoring, and supporting trainers to ensure high-fidelity implementation of their program on the timeline required for the evaluation. In addition, the offeror must have the ability to coordinate services with school districts and the study team and be willing to work in the context of an evaluation.

#### *A.2.4. Intensity*

Preference will be given to programs with greater intensity, within the current study resource constraints. Offerors must justify the intensity of their program (including the intensity of implementation supports), and describe how the intervention format can be provided realistically within the context of schools schedules and how the intensity is intended to lead to the desired outcomes.

#### *A.2.5. Replicability/consistency of implementation*

The offeror must demonstrate the ability to deliver its program with fidelity in varied locations including, availability of a written curriculum, written training materials/processes, and the use of quality assurance processes for evaluation of personnel (such as coaches/trainers).

#### *A.2.6. Evidence of Efficacy/Effectiveness*

Offerors shall submit citations for any previously published studies of the efficacy and/or effectiveness of the intervention (i.e., randomized controlled trials, quasi-experimental designs) and reference relevant What Works Clearinghouse reviews if they have been previously conducted.<sup>4</sup> Given the populations of interest in this study, offerors shall provide any available evidence on the impact of their intervention with ELs (including the level of English language acquisition of the EL students) and with disadvantaged student populations. For interventions that have focused on a specific subject area, offerors shall provide any available evidence of efficacy and/or effectiveness on subject-specific outcomes and on academic language and reading outcomes that are applicable across disciplines. If reports of intervention findings are not publicly available or are unpublished, the offeror shall provide information that allows the study team to independently evaluate the strength of the previous studies.<sup>5</sup>

In discussing their intervention's evidence, offerors shall describe the populations and contexts involved in the prior studies, and discuss the applicability of the research findings to the expected populations and contexts for this project (e.g., EL and disadvantaged students, fourth and fifth grades, and general education classrooms). This is particularly important when the study populations and contexts differ from those for this project, in which case proposals should explain

<sup>3</sup> Note that this is the assumed maximum number of participating teachers and schools. The study team expects that these numbers may be somewhat lower for the study.

<sup>4</sup> To determine whether a study has been reviewed by the WWC and has a rating already, check the WWC Database of Reviewed Studies (<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/ReviewedStudies.aspx>) and provide the study rating in your proposal.

<sup>5</sup> The What Works Clearinghouse Reporting Guide for Study Authors ([https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/reference\\_resources/wwc\\_gsa\\_v1.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/reference_resources/wwc_gsa_v1.pdf)) lists all of the information offerors must provide about unpublished reports to facilitate the review of their proposal.

why the results are relevant and justify the implementation of the proposed intervention in this study.

### **A.3. Description of Impact Evaluation**

The following provides information about the design of the Impact Evaluation of Academic Language Interventions to be conducted by the study team. The evaluation is designed to provide rigorous evidence on the effectiveness of the selected academic language interventions, and it will include detailed research on the implementation of the selected academic language interventions and the extent to which practices implemented as part of the interventions are different from business as usual. Section A.4.1 (below) provides further information about the project responsibilities of the study team.

The academic language interventions will be implemented during the 2017 – 18 school year. In the spring of 2017, the study team will randomly assign participating schools to treatment group conditions (one for each academic language intervention to be evaluated) and a control group condition, where teachers will continue to implement their established curricula and practices.

The study will include up to 36 elementary schools within high-need districts.<sup>6</sup> To form treatment and control groups, the study team will use one of the two following school-level random assignment designs (in which schools will be blocked within districts). Both designs are shown in Exhibit 2, and currently assume two developers are selected to implement their interventions as part of this evaluation.<sup>7</sup> “BAU” indicates the control condition – classrooms in which teachers implement business as usual (BAU) practices. While the study team will be advised by a panel of experts to aid in the design selection, both designs are included here to ensure that offerors have a clear sense of the possible intervention implementation scenarios created by each design. In Design 1, an A/B design in which every school receives an intervention, schools would be randomized to one of four conditions that vary in terms of intervention and grade level of implementation. Each intervention would be implemented in only one grade level in each of 36 schools, with offerors working with fourth grade teachers from 18 schools and fifth grade teachers from 18 other schools. In this design, students receiving the intervention will be compared with BAU students in the same grade level in other study schools. In Design 2, a traditional 3-arm experimental design in which one group of schools serves only as a control group, schools would be randomized to one of three conditions. Each intervention would be implemented in both grades 4 and 5 in a total of 34 schools, with another 34 schools serving as the control group. In their proposals, offerors shall assume responsibility for implementation of their interventions in 36 schools total across 12 school districts

<sup>6</sup>The evaluation is expected to include schools across multiple school districts with high percentages of economically disadvantaged students and student populations including both ELs and non-EL students. The study team will work closely with school districts when recruiting them so that conditions (for example, time for professional development and minimal existing academic language programming) create as best as possible circumstances amenable to the chosen interventions’ goals and the impact evaluation.

<sup>7</sup>The study team, in consultation with IES and the expert review panel, may select either one or two interventions to be included in this study.

with 8 teachers and 160 students per school participating in the treatment.

**Exhibit 2. Experimental Design Options**

<b>Design 1: A/B Design</b>				
<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>	<b>Group 3</b>	<b>Group 4</b>
<b>Grade 4</b>	Intervention A	BAU	Intervention B	BAU
<b>Grade 5</b>	BAU	Intervention A	BAU	Intervention B
<b># of Schools</b>	18	18	18	18
<b>Design 2: 3-Arm Design</b>				
<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>	<b>Group 3</b>	
<b>Grade 4</b>	Intervention A	Intervention B	BAU	
<b>Grade 5</b>	Intervention A	Intervention B	BAU	
<b># of Schools</b>	34	34	34	

NOTE: “BAU” represents control classrooms in which teachers implement business as usual (BAU) practices

A comparison of treatment and control groups will provide rigorous evidence of the impacts of the selected academic language interventions on implementation of core academic language components in classrooms and proximal and distal student outcomes. That is, the impact of each intervention will be assessed against a BAU control group. In its reports for this evaluation, the study team will include the impact estimates for each intervention.

To ensure that the evaluation provides useful context for other school districts, findings will also include analysis of the fidelity with which selected interventions were implemented, key challenges encountered in training or implementation, and other factors associated with implementation. As discussed in the section A.4.2, offerors will be asked to provide training materials to the study team (e.g., training agendas and attendance logs) and to complete surveys designed by the study team. All other impact and implementation data will be collected by the study team.

Exhibit 3 shows the study’s research questions, as well as the data sources and analysis methods planned to address each question. The study team will collect baseline data for the school year 2016-17, for the implementation year 2017-18, and follow-up data for 2018-19. In addition to collecting data and conducting analyses to address the impact, service contrast, and implementation questions listed in Exhibit 3, the study team will collect publicly available national, state, and local data (e.g., Common Core of Data, school report cards) to describe the contexts in which the interventions are implemented in this evaluation. These data will also be used in analyses that will examine variation in program impacts and implementation by contextual factors.

### Exhibit 3. Research questions, analysis approach, and data sources

Research Question(s)	Analysis Approach	Data Sources
<p><b>Impact</b></p> <p>What are the impacts of each selected academic language intervention on academic language outcomes and general reading outcomes for EL students and for disadvantaged non-EL students in grades 4-5 at the end of the implementation year (SY2017-18) and on student achievement in the follow-up year (SY2018-19)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regression-adjusted differences in academic language and reading outcomes between treatment and control groups accounting for school-level random assignment design and for clustering of students within schools (with separate subgroup analyses)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student test scores on a measure of academic language development and a general reading assessment in spring 2018</li> <li>• Student test scores on state tests of reading and math in spring 2018 and spring 2019</li> <li>• Student characteristics and prior test scores from school year 2016-17 as covariates</li> </ul>
<p><b>Service Contrast</b></p> <p>To what extent did classroom instruction differ between the treatment and control conditions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare instructional practices and assess service contrasts in instructional practices in treatment and BAU classrooms in the implementation year and the follow-up year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher surveys (2017-18 and 2018-19)</li> <li>• Classroom observations of instruction and fidelity of implementation (2017-18 only)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implementation</b></p> <p>Are the selected academic language interventions implemented with fidelity?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct descriptive analyses with measures pertaining to intervention training and support</li> <li>• Compare classroom instruction, as observed, to intervention-specific fidelity measures and general instructional quality measure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intervention training materials</li> <li>• Developer surveys</li> <li>• Teacher surveys</li> <li>• Classroom observations</li> </ul>

#### A.4. Roles and Responsibilities

This section presents a general overview of roles and requirements.

##### A.4.1. Study Team Responsibilities

- **Conduct district and school recruitment.** The study team will recruit and select the study districts. Because districts have not yet been selected for participation, offerors should assume the participating districts will be geographically spread across the United States.
- **Conduct random assignment.** The study team will randomly assign participating schools, within district, to either receive an academic language intervention professional development and materials or continue with typical activities (business as usual).
- **Conduct data collection for the evaluation.** The study team will select and/or develop the data collection instruments described in Exhibit 3 and collect all outcome and implementation data for the impact evaluation. This includes data on the fidelity of implementation of the academic language interventions via classroom observations

conducted by independent observers selected and trained by the study team. The study team will also utilize online teacher surveys to capture elements of implementation fidelity.

- **Provide district support.** The study team will work with district administrators to encourage attendance by teachers to professional development activities and encourage implementation of the intervention to the greatest extent possible.
- **Support district and school staff time.** The study team will be responsible for the cost of any district or school staff time associated with evaluation activities (e.g., survey completion and survey administration) and professional development (e.g., time that school staff will spend in trainings).
- **Coordination of training.** The study team will coordinate the initial training activities, including scheduling the initial trainings, locating and contracting facilities, inviting participants, and monitoring and tracking participation through either on-site collection or offeror-submitted attendance logs. In addition, if there are substantial training events that happen during the year (“substantial training events” to be agreed upon by provider and study team), the study team will provide remote support with coordinating these activities.

#### A.4.2. Selected Academic Language Intervention Provider Responsibilities<sup>8</sup>

- **Provide the intervention materials.** The selected provider shall acquire, reproduce, and disseminate the instructional materials (instructors’ guides, texts, blackline masters, access to online materials, etc.) that are needed to implement the academic language intervention. School districts will not be expected to purchase materials specific to the intervention or the associated professional development.
- **Conduct the professional development.** The selected provider shall be responsible for all initial training and ongoing professional development activities, including finalizing training activities and schedules; preparing and providing all training, curriculum, and coaching materials; and providing formal group training, ongoing consultation, and/or other support throughout implementation. The initial training can be provided within each participating district or at a smaller number of regional locations, and providers must provide a rationale for the proposed format of the training activities. As needed, the provider shall pay for the cost of air, ground transportation, lodging, and meals for all participants attending initial trainings. The provider shall conduct initial training within three weeks prior to the start of school with teachers from each participating district. While school start dates may vary across participating districts, offerors must demonstrate capacity to complete initial training for all districts within a seven-week period, from approximately the last week of July through the first week of September. The provider shall be responsible for providing all professional development staff and ensuring that all professional development staff have appropriate credentials, experience, and preparation. The provider shall pay for the cost of transportation and lodging of its own training staff, as well as any of their own staff

<sup>8</sup> As a reminder, *providers* are the developers who are chosen to do the work of supporting the implementation of their interventions; in other words, they are the selected offerors or selected bidders.

members' time. The study team will support professional development activities by offering logistical support to providers when scheduling and hosting initial training events, as well as providing remote logistical support for substantial training events that take place during the school year ("substantial training events" to be agreed upon by provider and study team).

- **Provide information to districts and schools.** As needed, the provider shall help the study team share information about the intervention with potential districts and schools during recruitment.
- **Provide training materials to the study team.** The provider shall submit training agendas and copies of professional development materials to the study team. The provider shall also enable the study team to collect attendance logs when the study team is present at training events, or collect and submit attendance logs for any substantial training event not attended by the study team.
- **Complete post-training and monthly surveys.** The provider shall complete a survey following the initial training and complete monthly (web) surveys on the fidelity of implementation support, barriers to, and factors supporting implementation in each school and submit to the study team. Providers will also be asked to complete a survey following any substantial training event that takes place during the implementation year ("substantial training events" to be agreed upon by provider and study team). Through surveys, providers will be asked to provide the following: 1) Frequency of training and distribution of other supports to each school/district; 2) Intensity of supports delivered to each school/district; 3) Uptake of training and supports for each primary support provided, by each school/district; 4) Barriers to delivery and receipt of supports associated with each school/district; 5) Factors aiding in the delivery and receipt of supports associated with each school/district; 6) Information about the number of teachers by school/district requiring supplemental training because of struggles with implementation and the training provided.

## **B. Technical Specifications**

This portion of the RFP provides information on the tasks to be undertaken and the anticipated timeline.

### **B.1. Statement of Work**

The selected provider shall provide initial training/professional development within three weeks of the start of the 2017-18 school year and provide coaching, other group trainings, and/or other supports across the 2017–2018 school year. The tasks and deliverables outlined in this section shall be the responsibility of the selected academic language intervention provider. (See Exhibit 4 for a full list of anticipated deliverables and due dates).

Each selected intervention provider shall fulfill the following tasks:

## **Task 1. Project management (December 2016 – August 2018)**

### **Task 1a. Study kickoff meeting**

Key provider staff shall meet with the study team and staff from IES within 14 days of award of contract (anticipated award December 2016). This meeting shall be held in Washington, DC. The objective of this meeting will be to review contractual obligations, review study timeline, and respond to provider questions. Provider shall provide written input on kickoff meeting agenda, which will be prepared by study team, at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Within two weeks following the meeting, the provider shall prepare a memo summarizing the key issues and concerns raised at the meeting and how each will be addressed.

#### **Deliverables:**

- Input on kickoff meeting agenda
- Kickoff meeting summary

### **Task 1b. Periodic calls with study team**

The provider shall participate in regularly scheduled bi-weekly calls scheduled by the study team. During these calls, the provider shall: (1) share immediate plans to coordinate summer and ongoing (i.e., school-year) professional development/training, (2) identify implementation challenges and approaches to resolve, (3) identify any deviations from expected implementation, and (4) present issues or questions requiring feedback/guidance from the study team. The provider shall submit an agenda for each call at least one day prior to the call. The provider shall create a summary of discussions that arose during the call and submit the summary to the study team within three days following each call.

#### **Deliverables:**

- Call agenda
- Call summary

### **Task 1c. Monthly progress reports**

The provider shall submit monthly progress reports with their invoices to the study team by the 16<sup>th</sup> day of the next month for work completed in the prior month. In the monthly reports, the provider shall summarize the major activities and accomplishments for the reporting period. In addition, they shall provide information for each project task regarding challenges encountered and plans for addressing those challenges. The reports shall also specify the extent to which the work is on schedule, briefly describe the activities planned for the next month, identify and discuss significant deviations from the work or staffing as planned (December 2016 – August 2018)

#### **Deliverables:**

- Monthly progress reports



## **Task 2. Finalize intervention materials (January 2017-June 2017)**

### **Task 2a. Intervention description**

The provider will initially submit a 1-2 page intervention description suitable for sharing with districts and schools during site recruitment as part of the proposal package. The provider shall make adjustments to the submitted intervention description to reflect changes resulting from discussions among the provider, the study team, and IES during the selection process. The provider shall provide a modified intervention description to the study team no later than five working days in advance of the Kickoff meeting.

#### **Deliverables:**

- Modified intervention description

### **Task 2b. Intervention-specific logic model and fidelity measure**

The provider will initially submit an intervention-specific logic model and an intervention fidelity measure as part of the proposal package. The provider shall make adjustments to the submitted intervention logic model and fidelity measure to reflect the requirements of the evaluation and reflect any modifications proposed during the selection process and discussions among the provider, the study team, and IES. The provider shall submit the modified intervention-specific logic model and fidelity measure no later than four weeks after the kickoff meeting. The study team will provide comments within three weeks. The provider shall submit a final intervention-specific logic model and fidelity measure responsive to those comments by April 2017.

#### **Deliverables:**

- Modified intervention-specific logic model
- Modified intervention fidelity measure
- Final intervention-specific logic model
- Final intervention fidelity measure

### **Task 2c. Intervention materials**

The provider shall submit a draft of the intervention materials to be used in the evaluation in January 2017. These are likely to be materials that have been previously used with the intervention and, if changes will be made for this evaluation, providers shall include a brief 1-2 page description of modifications that will be made to the materials for use in this evaluation. The provider shall provide final materials to the study team in June 2017.

#### **Deliverables:**

- Draft intervention materials
- Final intervention materials

### **Task 3. Implementation support plan (March-June 2017)**

#### **Task 3a. Initial training plan**

The provider will submit information about their plan for initial training as part of the proposal package. The provider shall draft an initial training plan that includes additional details and reflects changes resulting from discussions among the provider, the study team, and IES during and after the selection process. In the plan, the provider shall include: (1) schedule of training events, (2) staffing plan, (3) agenda for each day, and (4) materials and resources to be disseminated. The provider shall submit a draft of their initial training plan to the study team in March 2017. The study team will review and comment on the draft plan within four weeks. The provider shall revise the plan to reflect comments received and submit the final training plan to the study team in May 2017. (Draft - March 2017; Final – May 2017)

#### **Deliverables:**

- Draft initial training plan
- Final initial training plan

#### **Task 3b. Ongoing implementation support plan**

The provider will submit information about their plan for ongoing implementation support throughout the implementation year (2017-2018 school year) as part of the proposal package. The provider shall draft an ongoing implementation support plan that includes additional details and reflects changes resulting from discussions among the provider, the study team, and IES during and after the selection process. In the plan, the provider shall include: (1) schedule of training activities, (2) mode and structure of support (e.g., online, in-person) (3) staffing plan, (4) agenda for each of the activities, and (5) materials and resources to be disseminated. The provider shall submit the draft implementation support plan to the study team in April 2017. The study team will review and comment on the draft plan within four weeks. The provider shall revise the plan to reflect comments received and submit the final implementation support plan to the study team by June 2017. Should the provider wish to make revisions to this plan during the implementation year, they shall submit the revisions to the study team no less than one month in advance of the activities to allow for study team review. (Draft - April 2017; Final – June 2017)

#### **Deliverables:**

- Draft ongoing implementation support plan
- Final ongoing implementation support plan

### **Task 4. Provide implementation support (June 2017-May 2018)**

#### **Task 4a. Provide initial training**

The provider shall deliver initial training as indicated in the training plan (see Task 3a). The provider shall submit copies of all training agendas and materials at least one week prior to

the start of training. To confirm delivery of training, the provider shall complete a brief online survey created and administered by the study team related, but not limited, to teacher and staff initial training (see A.2 for additional detail). The initial training survey will be administered by the study team at the conclusion of summer (2017) training sessions and providers shall submit their completed survey to the study team by the end of September 2017. The provider shall also be responsible for collecting and submitting attendance logs for any initial training event not attended by the study team. The provider shall submit attendance logs to the study team by September 2017.

**Deliverables:**

- Initial training materials and resources
- Survey completion after initial training
- Attendance logs for initial training events not attended by study team

**Task 4b. Provide ongoing implementation support**

The provider shall deliver ongoing implementation support throughout the implementation year (2017-2018) as indicated in the ongoing implementation support plan (see Task 3b). The provider shall also submit copies of all training agendas and materials to the study team on a timeline mutually agreed upon by provider and study team. The provider shall also be responsible for collecting and submitting attendance logs for any substantial training event not attended by the study team (“substantial training events” to be agreed upon by provider and study team). The provider shall complete a series of brief online surveys at the conclusion of substantial training events, as well as monthly online surveys on implementation status (up to an additional 8 brief online surveys). See A.4.2 for details on the survey content. The provider shall submit completed surveys on a monthly basis and shall submit surveys following substantial training events within two weeks of each event.

**Deliverables:**

- Ongoing support materials and resources
- Attendance logs for substantial training events not attended by study team
- Survey completion after substantial training events (during implementation year)
- Survey completion monthly (during implementation year)

#### Exhibit 4. Provider Schedule of Deliverables

Task	Subtask	Deliverable	Due Date	
1. Project Management	1a. Study kickoff meeting	Input on kickoff meeting agenda	2 weeks prior to meeting Within two weeks of meeting	
		Kickoff meeting summary		
	1b. Periodic calls with study team	Call Agenda Call Summary	1 day prior to calls Within 3 days of calls	
	1c. Monthly progress reports	Monthly progress report	Monthly- 16 <sup>th</sup> day of the month	
2. Finalize intervention materials	2a. Intervention description	Modified intervention description	No later than 5 days prior to kickoff meeting	
		Modified intervention-specific logic model Final intervention-specific logic model	Within four weeks of kickoff meeting By April 2017	
	2b. Intervention-specific logic model and fidelity measure	Modified intervention fidelity measure Final intervention fidelity measure	Within four weeks of kickoff meeting By April 2017	
		2c. Intervention materials	Draft intervention materials Final intervention materials	By January 2017 By June 2017
		3a. Initial training plan	Draft initial training plan Final initial training plan	By March 2017 By May 2017
3b. Ongoing implementation support plan	Draft ongoing implementation support plan Final ongoing implementation support plan		By April 2017 By June 2017	
	4. Provide implementation support	4a. Provide initial training	Initial training materials and resources Initial training survey completion	At least one week prior to initial training By September 2017
Attendance logs (for initial trainings not attended by study team)			By September 2017	
4b. Provide ongoing implementation support			Ongoing support materials and resources Attendance logs (for substantial trainings not attended by study team)	TBD with study team for each intervention TBD with study team for each intervention
		Ongoing support survey completion following substantial training events Monthly ongoing support survey completion	TBD with study team for each intervention First week of the month October 2017- June 2018	

## C. Proposal Requirements

### C.1. General Instructions

Offerors are encouraged to submit their best offer, as they may not have an opportunity to revise their proposal, and awards may be made without discussion. Each offer must consist of two separately packaged proposals: a technical proposal and a business proposal. All information necessary to judge the technical soundness, staffing, and management capabilities of the offeror must be contained in the technical proposal. The technical proposal must not refer to pricing data.

The technical proposal must include enough detail so that an expert review panel can effectively assess the technical quality of the offeror's academic language intervention, the previous evidence available to support that academic language intervention, and implementation support plan. Simply restating the requirements of this RFP will not be sufficient. The offeror's proposal must clearly describe:

- The logic model and evidence supporting the proposed academic language intervention and its relevance to the logic model specified by the study team (see Exhibit 1) and the populations and general classroom education setting of the evaluation;
- The core intervention components, as indicated in section A.2.1; and
- The implementation support plan, as indicated in section A.2.2 (and the proposed measure of implementation fidelity (see section C.5.2)).

The technical proposal also must demonstrate that the offeror has the staff expertise in academic language, knowledge, capacity, and experience necessary to provide high quality training and to support high fidelity implementation on the scale of the evaluation.

#### C.1.1. Questions

A copy of this solicitation will be available online at <http://www.mdrc.org/news/announcement/seeking-providers-academic-language-interventions-participate-national-impact>

Questions regarding this RFP shall be sent to FCRR by email ([alicompetition@fcrr.org](mailto:alicompetition@fcrr.org)) no later than **5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on August 31, 2016**. Responses to technical questions will be provided online at MDRC's project website no later than September 9, 2016. It is the responsibility of offerors to check this site regularly to see if questions and answers have been appended to the solicitation. If you would like to receive an email notifying you when responses to questions have been posted, please send a request to the email address above. Submitting questions represents an opportunity for vendors to clarify information; however, there is no requirement to submit questions.

#### C.1.2. Intent to bid

For study team planning purposes, a notification of intent to bid letter emailed to [alicompetition@fcrr.org](mailto:alicompetition@fcrr.org) is requested by **5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on September 13, 2016**. Failure to submit an intent to bid letter will **not** disqualify offerors from consideration; however, submission of an intent to bid letter is strongly encouraged to allow the study team to

prepare for the proposal review.

*C.1.3. Proposal submission*

A printed copy of the written technical proposal and a printed copy of the business proposal, **as well as** electronic versions of the technical and business proposals, must be submitted no later than **5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on October 3, 2016**. Offers received after the deadline for proposal submission will not be considered.

The hard copies of the proposal (technical and business) must be mailed to the following address:

ALI Competition  
Florida Center for Reading Research  
2010 Levy Avenue, Suite 100  
Tallahassee, FL 32310  
(Phone: 850-778-5514)

The electronic copy of the proposal (technical and business) must be emailed to: [alicompetition@fcrr.org](mailto:alicompetition@fcrr.org). In addition, offerors are asked to email tracking information for the hard copy mailed to the address above.

The anticipated award date is December 30, 2016.

*C.1.4. Minimum requirements*

Only complete proposals received by **5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on October 3, 2016** will be reviewed. Proposals that do not include all of the requested technical and financial information will not be considered.

## C.2. Technical proposal review

Technical proposals that meet minimum requirements will be evaluated against the criteria specified in Exhibit 5. Each criterion will be weighted as indicated, for a total of 100 points.

### Exhibit 5. Technical Proposal Review Criteria

Criteria	Description	Points
<b>Quality of proposed intervention</b>	<p>Proposals will be evaluated on the quality of the core intervention components and implementation support plan, as discussed in Sections A.2.1 and A.2.2. Proposals will also be evaluated based on the extent to which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed content, frequency, duration, and intensity of the intervention have the potential to impact general academic language on proximal measures and distal reading comprehension on standardized norm-referenced measures. More points will be awarded to interventions that include generalizable academic language.</li> <li>• The intervention is suitable for (or adaptable for) use by general education teachers of EL and disadvantaged non-EL students in grades 4 and 5 and can be feasibly integrated into curriculum in most schools (e.g., reasonable amount of instructional time, technology requirements, curricular materials).</li> <li>• The initial training and ongoing implementation support activities provide teachers with adequate knowledge about academic language and the intervention's core components; are feasible within potential school constraints (e.g., teachers' schedules) and the project budget; and can be adequately monitored.</li> </ul>	40
<b>Strength of evidence of efficacy/effectiveness*</b>	<p>Proposals will be evaluated based on the extent to which the proposed intervention has demonstrated an impact on academic language or other relevant outcomes. More points will be awarded to studies that meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with or without reservations and to studies that have demonstrated impacts on academic language and reading outcomes that are applicable across disciplines. Proposals should discuss the populations and contexts included in the referenced studies. More points will be awarded to studies with populations and contexts similar to those expected in this project. When the study populations and contexts differ from those for this project, proposals should explain why the results are relevant and justify the implementation of the proposed intervention in this project.</p>	30
<b>Management approach, staffing plan, and staff qualifications</b>	<p>Proposals will be evaluated on the quality of the offeror's plan for how they will successfully execute the tasks described in the statement of work. There should be a plan for quality control and a well-developed staffing plan demonstrating that the proposed commitment of staff is adequate for the proposed work and that the offeror has sufficient staff or capability to obtain needed staff to provide consistent professional development in all districts on the required timeframe (see Section A.2.3 and A.2.5). Proposals will also be evaluated on the extent to which staff qualifications match staff responsibilities.</p>	15
<b>Institutional capability</b>	<p>Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of having provided similar professional development in school districts and corporate capacity to provide the proposed activities at the scale required by the evaluation.</p>	15

\*The study team will review previous study data against the What Works Clearinghouse standards and provide that information to the review panel to consider.

### **C.3. Proposal review process**

Proposals will undergo a three-stage review process. In the first stage, the study team will review proposals to ensure that they are complete and meet the stated requirements of the RFP with respect to budget and technical material.

In the second stage, based on the criteria shown in Exhibit 5, an expert review panel will review all complete proposals and recommend up to four proposals for final consideration.

The third stage will consist of written responses to questions and oral presentations by the finalists, after which the expert review panel will make a final recommendation. The in-person presentations will be held in Washington, DC and the study team will cover travel costs for up to two staff members from each finalist. The final selection of up to two providers will be made by the study team in consultation with IES and the expert review panel.

Costs will be evaluated for congruence with the quality of the proposed work, as long as the total budget is within the \$1 million per provider allocated for this scope of work. Strong proposals must have a realistic budget for each of the tasks, with a detailed budget justification.

Price will be a factor in selection; however, program quality will also be an important factor in the selection process. The study team will assess proposals for the best technical quality and pricing combination.

### **C.4. Budget and contract structure**

This evaluation is funded by the U.S. Department of Education under Contract No. ED-IES-15-C-0050 (the Prime Contract). The successful offeror(s) will be issued a subcontract by MDRC, which will be governed by the applicable Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) and the required terms and conditions of the Prime Contract. The terms and conditions of the Prime Contract are appended to this RFP. The contract will be structured as a fixed-price contract (with payments tied to deliverables). An advance payment will be tied to the execution of the subcontract with MDRC so that the successful offeror will have access to funds to begin work. The maximum funding available for the proposed work is \$1 million per provider.

### **C.5. Technical proposal requirements**

#### *C.5.1. General instructions*

The technical proposal (text plus all figures, charts, tables, and diagrams) is limited to 30 single-sided pages, not including the title page and table of contents. Technical proposals must be bound separately from business proposals. Specified appendices will not count as part of the 30 pages. All text must be double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font with standard character spacing; exhibits can use 10-point Times New Roman (or larger) font, but should remain clear and easy to read. Pages must be 8.5 by 11 inches, with a 1-inch margin along all four sides. Page numbers must be included. Any materials submitted outside of the 30-page limit (other than the exceptions noted) will not be reviewed.



### C.5.2. Content and organization of technical proposal

The technical proposal shall include the following content and be organized into the following sections:

- **Title page.** The title page must include (at a minimum) the name of the offeror; the name, title, and contact information of the proposal author(s); and contact information for a person with authority to negotiate for the offeror.
- **Table of contents.** The table of contents shall provide an easy means to locate each section of the proposal.
- **Introduction.** The introduction will briefly present the offeror's approach and understanding of the goals, processes, and products of the evaluation.
- **Description of academic language intervention.** This section shall describe in detail the proposed intervention, clearly indicating its content, intensity and duration, and structure (core intervention components and implementation supports described in section A.2).

*Logic model.* The offeror must support the rationale for the proposed intervention by providing an intervention-specific logic model and accompanying discussion that specifies the following:

- The implementation supports (initial and ongoing) and core intervention components of the proposed intervention, and how they connect to form a coherent program;
- The target participants (the types of participants the offeror developed the intervention to serve);
- The expected pathways/mediators through which the offeror hypothesizes proximal and distal student outcomes to occur;
- The specific mechanisms of change (how aspects of the proposed intervention, such as content, organization, length, and intensity, are hypothesized to improve proximal and distal student outcomes).
- The estimated amount of time and types of opportunities for students to engage in use of academic language in the classroom, particularly opportunities for oral discussion.
- Relevant research and evaluation studies that support the logic model.

*Relevance.* The offeror shall also address the relevance of the proposed intervention to the evaluation's logic model in Exhibit 1, as well as the populations and general education classroom setting of this evaluation and provide a rationale for differences and adaptations necessary to meet the requirements of this evaluation.

*Prior Implementation.* This section shall discuss whether and how all components of the intervention have been previously implemented together. This discussion should include a description of which school staff members were involved and in what roles

*Supporting Materials.* In addition, the following materials about the academic language intervention shall be included in Appendix A:

- A 1-2 page summary description of the intervention suitable for sharing with districts

and schools during site recruitment for the evaluation that is intended to provide key information about the intervention in a way that might encourage interest from potential study participants.

- A scope and sequence of the proposed intervention and an example lesson.
- A tool used to measure implementation fidelity specific to the academic language intervention and information about thresholds for adequate implementation. The study team will integrate some or all aspects of the tool for use in the evaluation. In the proposal, offerors shall describe the following qualities of their implementation fidelity measure: Format (e.g., time interval observation by coach, teacher self-report checklist), frequency of data collection (e.g., monthly, once per unit), specific foci or targets of the measures, established goal or criteria for appropriate implementation, whether and when it has been used previously to study implementation fidelity, and report the training activities for using the fidelity tool and previous interrater reliability. Offerors shall provide a copy of their implementation fidelity tool that:
  - Captures how classroom teachers deliver intervention-specific instructional elements;
  - Is in the form of a classroom observation or can be converted to a classroom observation;
  - Can be administered by an independent observer or can be converted for use by an independent observer; and
  - Can be administered within the timeframe of a typical class (i.e., 50 minutes) or can be converted to be administered within that timeframe.
- Offerors may also include in Appendix A their own measurement of other mediators or short term outcomes that are critical to the provider’s logic model, have already been developed (or require minimal pilot testing), and are typically part of program implementation. Examples of such measures may include:
  - A test of teachers’ knowledge of the academic language intervention or the needs of students with academic language difficulties;
  - Teachers’ ratings of their attitudes or beliefs regarding the intervention, instructing academic language in general, or attitude towards EL students and disadvantaged non-EL students;
  - Students’ performance on embedded unit quizzes or other formative assessment of students’ direct mastery of the curriculum - the format of these assessments may involve reading, writing, listening, and/or speaking; or
  - Measures of climate, particularly regarding EL and disadvantaged non-EL students.
- **Evidence of efficacy/effectiveness.** In this section, the offeror shall include the citations for previous research on efficacy and/or effectiveness of the proposed intervention and references to What Works Clearinghouse reports (if available). To determine whether a study has been

reviewed by the WWC and has a rating already, check the WWC Database of Reviewed Studies (<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/ReviewedStudies.aspx>) and provide the study rating in your proposal. If direct research on the proposed intervention has been published in reports that are not publicly available, offerors shall include in Appendix B copies of those reports they wish to be used to evaluate the evidence of efficacy/effectiveness. Offerors shall ensure that these unpublished reports contain the information that the study team will need to evaluate the unpublished work, as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Reporting Guide for Study Authors ([https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/reference\\_resources/wwc\\_gsa\\_v1.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/reference_resources/wwc_gsa_v1.pdf)).

- **Statement of work.** In this section, the offeror shall provide a detailed discussion of how each task outlined in Section B.1 of this RFP will be completed. The offeror shall expand on how it will complete each of the tasks, including a discussion of procedural issues related to completing each task. The description of activities should be supported by examples of materials in Appendix A as necessary to demonstrate the quality of the activities and materials. The section on statement of work shall also describe how the implementation support shall be implemented consistently and with fidelity across school districts. The plans for supporting implementation must also describe the information that the provider shall use to monitor training components, determine if training goals have been met, and, if not, what activities shall be used to remedy the relevant problems. Specifically, the offeror shall discuss how participant attendance and engagement in training sessions will be maximized, and how non-attendance will be handled.
- **Management approach, staffing plan, and staff qualifications.**
  - **Management approach.** In this section, offerors must describe how they will successfully execute the tasks described in the statement of work. This section shall detail the offeror's overall management plan, as well as lines of authority, coordination, and communication within the offeror organization, and between the offeror organization and the study team and the schools. This section also shall include a project management chart showing the timelines for all tasks and subtasks, with start and completion dates for each task, as well as intermediate dates for any precursor steps and draft deliverables.
  - **Staffing plan.** In this section, offerors must demonstrate that they have (or can obtain) sufficient qualified staff to manage and deliver the trainings and supports proposed on the required timeline (initial training must take place within three weeks of the start of the school year in each participating district). All existing key personnel, including staff and consultants, must be identified by name, title, and position in the project's management structure in an organizational chart. Key personnel include all existing trainers, as well as management staff. Offerors must also include a chart of proposed staff time commitment to this project and other existing projects. The staffing plan must also describe any staff not currently employed by the offeror but needed for study implementation, including the numbers to be hired and expected roles. The offeror shall describe how they plan to hire and prepare any new trainers or other staff in a timely manner to meet study needs. If staff must be newly hired to support the program, the offeror shall include costs associated with hiring and training of new staff for the study

within the proposed budget.

- **Staff qualifications.** This section must contain brief descriptions of the qualifications of key personnel, including key trainers and staff providing direct support to schools. The staff must have demonstrated ability to meet deadlines and conduct high quality training. The resumes of existing key personnel, including trainers and staff providing direct support to schools shall be included in Appendix C. Resumes of proposed key staff are limited to three pages each. Resumes must include staff members' prior experience relevant to their proposed role for this project. This section shall also describe minimum qualifications for any trainers, coaches, and/or management staff not currently employed by the offeror but needed for study implementation.
- **Institutional capability.** The statement of the offeror's capabilities and experience must demonstrate the offeror's experience with academic language, intervention work in schools, professional development, and work with EL students and disadvantaged non-EL students. The offeror shall include a list of previous research in Appendix B and a list of current or recent districts in which they have provided professional development or implemented an intervention (within the last three years) in Appendix D. This list must describe completed work, the duration and scope of the work, and the dates the work was completed. In addition, the offeror shall include contact information (name, title, email, telephone number) for three recent clients the study team may contact to discuss the professional development in Appendix D.

#### **Appendices:**

- **Appendix A.** 1-2 page summary of intervention; examples of products/materials, such as curricula or assignments, associated with implementation of the proposed intervention; tool for measuring implementation fidelity.
- **Appendix B.** Previous research on the proposed intervention and/or professional development activities
- **Appendix C.** Resumes of key staff, trainers, and staff providing direct support to schools, as well as job posting or minimum qualifications documents as needed.
- **Appendix D.** List of districts or schools in which the offeror has worked within the last three years and contact information for three recent clients. For each district listed, offerors should include the number of schools and teachers with whom they have worked in the district.

## **C.6. Business proposal requirements**

### *C.6.1 General Instructions*

This project is funded by the U.S. Department of Education through a contract with MDRC. The academic language intervention implementation supports by the selected provider will be funded through a subcontract with MDRC (please see list of specific supports included in section A.2.2. Implementation Supports, and the full Statement of Work included in section B.1. Statement of Work). The contract will be structured as a fixed-price contract (with

payments tied to MDRC's acceptance of deliverables). The maximum funding available for the subcontract is \$1,000,000.

The executed subcontract between MDRC and the provider, which MDRC assumes will cover Period I of the project (December 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017), will represent the first deliverable and thus lead to the first payment of funds to the provider. Funds for Period 2 of the project (October 1, 2017 – September 30, 2018) are anticipated to become available in 2017 before the start of the period.

The provider's business proposal shall be consistent with the technical proposal with respect to the number of districts and schools estimated to participate in the study. The study team estimates developers will serve fourth and/or fifth graders in up to 36 schools across 9 to 12 districts. The provider shall propose to support intervention implementation for:

Study districts: 12

Schools: 36

Grades per school: 2 (grades 4 and 5)

Teachers per grade: 4 (8 total per school)

Students per class: 20 (160 per school)

The provider is advised that in addition to an anticipated 8 teachers per school, one to two other school staff members (e.g., administrators) in each school it works with may also participate to some degree in supporting the implementation of the academic language intervention. The provider shall account for this possibility in developing its budget. For example, the provider should consider the potential need for additional sets of training and curricular materials for these staff members, and their potential participation in training activities.

### *C.6.2 Content and Organization of Business Proposal*

The provider's business proposal **must** include the following information:

- **Organization's legal name and address; business point(s) of contact; TIN number, DUNS number (if applicable), and any applicable small or disadvantaged business status(es) as defined by the US Small Business Administration; certification of current SAMS/CCR registration<sup>9</sup> (if applicable) and certification of cost pricing information as consistent with FAR.<sup>10</sup>**
- **An itemized statement of the total costs, also broken out by task, subtask, and by year, that will be incurred in preparing of and delivering the implementation supports as described in this RFP.** The total costs shall include all of the tasks and deliverables described in this RFP as

<sup>9</sup> SAMS/CCR refers to the System for Award Management/Central Contractor Registration. Please visit <http://www.sam.gov> for more information.

<sup>10</sup> The FAR refers to the Federal Acquisition Regulations. Please visit <https://www.acquisition.gov/?q=browsefar> for more information.

the responsibility of selected providers in A.4.2., including: development, printing, and shipping costs for all materials and products used as part of ALI implementation, compensation and expenses for coaches, facilitators, or other staff needed to support the implementation of the intervention, as well as the cost of air and ground transportation, lodging, and meals for all participants attending initial trainings. The budget shall **not** include the costs of teacher honoraria, substitute teacher payments, or training facilities. See sample itemized budget template in Attachment A and Cost per Unit template in Attachment B. These budget templates can be found online with the solicitation: <http://www.mdrc.org/news/announcement/seeking-providers-academic-language-interventions-participate-national-impact>

- **Payment schedule.** Providers must provide a payment schedule based on the deliverables listed in Section B.1. Statement of Work (see payment schedule template in Attachment C, also available online.)
- **A small business subcontracting plan consistent with FAR requirements.** If the provider itself is a small business no small subcontracting plan is required. If the provider is not a small business and expects to further subcontract any of the work required for the provider to perform all of the required tasks and deliver all of the required deliverables then the provider must submit a small business subcontracting plan. If no subcontracting is contemplated under the provider's offer, a statement to that effect shall suffice for the subcontracting plan. The definition of "small business" for this purpose as well as the required form and substance of the subcontracting plan can be found in FAR Parts 52.219-8 Utilization of Small Business Concerns and 52.219-9 Small Business Subcontracting Plan at [www.acquisition.gov](http://www.acquisition.gov).

Providers are requested to organize their cost estimations according to the major cost line items indicated below.

1. **Direct Labor.** Please provide project personnel salaries and wages only (include expenses for consultants under Other Direct Costs). For all personnel, provide the title, salary, and amount of time in hours that each person shall devote to the project. The rates to be supplied in the price proposal must not be loaded rates or average rates.
2. **Fringe Benefits.** Please provide estimated fringe benefit costs according to your most recent audited financial statements or Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA). Include a copy of your most current NICRA. If you do not have a negotiated rate agreement, the rates proposed will need to be justified and negotiated.
3. **Other Direct Costs (ODCs).** Indicate all significant direct costs not covered above. Examples are printing and reproduction, materials and supplies, facilities and equipment, consultants, outside services, postage and delivery, communications, and travel. These costs must be broken down in sufficient detail to analyze by instance and unit. If consultants are proposed, include on separate lines all consultant fees. Provide the name, rate, and level of effort (LOE) for each proposed consultant, if known. If unknown, indicate TBA in the budget and provide the estimated rate and LOE.
4. **Indirect Costs.** Apply all applicable indirect costs according to your recovery practice. Please indicate whether you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement or NICRA approved by the

federal government. If you do not have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by a federal agency, please provide audited balance sheets and profit and loss statements for the last two complete years, and the current year-to-date statements (or lesser period of time if your organization is newly formed).

5. **Budget Narrative.** Provide a detailed budget narrative of all costs proposed. The narrative must be in sufficient detail to explain how all costs were derived.
6. **Fee.** Providers wishing to include fee must indicate the total proposed percentage and provide a justification or rationale that is consistent with prior business practices.

MDRC reserves the right to request additional pricing information on all costs proposed and other documentation prior to issuing any award, such as a certificate of insurance, recent contract reference information, documentation of existing commitments, evidence of adequate business integrity, and personnel policies and procedures. Flowdowns from the prime contract with ED are included as Attachment D to this RFP.

#### *C.6.3 Business Proposal Review Criteria:*

Costs will be evaluated for congruence with the quality of the proposed work. Strong proposals will have a realistic budget for each of the tasks, with a detailed budget justification.

Price will be a factor in selection; however, quality factors are more important than price. MDRC will determine whether the difference in quality is worth the difference in price.

For the technical proposal review criteria, see *Exhibit 5*.

## References

- Bailey, A. L. & Heritage, M. (2008). *Formative assessment for literacy, grades K-6: Building reading and academic language skills across the curriculum*: Corwin Press.
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- Foorman, B. R., Koon, S., Petscher, Y., Mitchell, A., & Truckenmiller, A. (2015). Examining general and specific factors in the dimensionality of oral language and reading in 4th–10th grades. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 107(3), 884.
- Guerrero, M. D. (2004). Acquiring Academic English in One Year An Unlikely Proposition for English Language Learners. *Urban Education* 39, 2: 172-199.
- Hakuta, K., Butler, Y. G., & Witt, D. (2000). How long does it take English learners to attain proficiency? The University of California Linguistic Minority Research Institute. Policy report 2000-1. *Adolescence* 40: 503-512.
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- Uccelli, P., Galloway, E. P., Barr, C. D., Meneses, A., & Dobbs, C. L. (2015). Beyond vocabulary: Exploring cross-disciplinary academic-language proficiency and its association with reading comprehension. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 50(3), 337-356.





### Attachment B – Cost per Unit Template

Cost per School		Total Cost
	x 36 schools	

Cost per Teacher		Total Cost per School
	X 8 teachers	

### Attachment C – Payment Schedule

Period 1 (Tasks 1a – 4a)				
Task	Milestone or Deliverables: Period I	Anticipated Due Date	Cost	Total Cost for Task
N/A	Limited advance following full execution of this agreement	December 2016	\$50,000 (negotiable)	
<b>Task 1. Project management</b>	1a. Input on kickoff meeting agenda	2 weeks prior to meeting		
	1a. Kickoff meeting summary	Within 2 weeks of meeting		
	1b. Call agenda	Biweekly; 1 day prior to calls		
	1b. Call summary	Biweekly; within 3 days of calls		
	1c. Monthly progress reports	Monthly; 16 <sup>th</sup> day of the month		
<b>Task 2. Finalize Intervention materials</b>	2a. Modified intervention description	No later than 5 days prior to the kickoff meeting		
	2b. Modified intervention specific logic model	Within 4 weeks of kickoff meeting		
	2b. Final intervention-specific logic model	April 2017		
	2b. Modified intervention fidelity measure	Within 4 weeks of kickoff meeting		
	2b. Final intervention fidelity measure	April 2017		
	2c. Draft intervention materials	January 2017		
	2c. Final intervention materials	June 2017		
<b>Task 3. Implementation Support Plan</b>	3a. Draft initial training plan	March 2017		
	3a. Final initial training plan	May 2017		
	3b. Draft ongoing implementation support plan	April 2017		

	3b. Final ongoing implementation support plan	June 2017		
<b>Task 4. Provide Ongoing Implementation Support</b>	4a. Initial training materials and resources	At least 1 week prior to initial training		
	4a. Initial training survey completion	September 2017		
	4a. Attendance logs (for initial trainings not attended by study team)	September 2017		
<b>TOTAL Period 1 (Tasks 1a – 4a) Costs:</b>				
<b>Period 2 (Task 4b)</b>				
	<b>Milestone or Deliverables: Period 2</b>	<b>Anticipated Due Date</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Total Cost for Task</b>
<b>Task 4. Provide Ongoing Implementation Support</b>	4b. Ongoing support materials and resources	TBD with study team for each intervention		
	4b. Attendance logs (for substantial trainings not attended by study team)	TBD with study team for each intervention		
	4b. Ongoing support survey completion following substantial training events	TBD with study team for each intervention		
	4b. Monthly ongoing support survey completion	First week of the month Oct 2017- June 2018		
<b>TOTAL Period 2 (Task 4b) Costs:</b>				
<b>TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET Period 1 (Tasks 1a – 4a) + Period 2 (Task 4b):</b>				

## Attachment D – Federal Requirements

The Federal Acquisition Regulations referred to below can be found online at <https://www.acquisition.gov/?q=/browse/far/52> and the Department of Education Regulations can be found online at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2002-title48-vol7/pdf/CFR-2002-title48-vol7-part3452-subpart3452-2.pdf>

### **Federal Acquisition Regulations**

52.246-4	Inspection of Services—Fixed Price	AUG 1996
52.246-5	Inspection of Services—Cost Reimbursement	APR 1984
52.203-6	Restrictions on Subcontractor Sales to the Government	SEP 2006
52.203-7	Anti-Kickback Procedures	MAY 2014
52.203-8	Cancellation, Rescission, and Recovery of Funds for Illegal or Improper Activity	MAY 2014
52.203-10	Price or Fee Adjustment for Illegal or Improper Activity	MAY 2014
52.203-12	Limitation on Payments to Influence Certain Federal Transactions	OCT 2010
52.203-13	Contractor Code of Business Ethics and Conduct	APR 2010
52.203-17	Contractor Employee Whistleblower Rights and Requirement to Inform Employees of Whistleblower Rights	APR 2014
52.209-6	Protecting the Government Interest When Subcontracting with Contractors Debarred, Suspended, or Proposed for Debarment	AUG 2013
52.215-2	Audit and Records—Negotiation	OCT 2010
52.215-13	Subcontractor Certified Cost or Pricing Data--Modifications	OCT 2010
52.216-7	Allowable Cost and Payment	JULY 2013
52.222-35	Equal Opportunity for Veterans	JUL 2014
52.222-37	Employment Reports on Veterans	JUL 2014
52.222-50	Combating Trafficking in Persons	MAR 2015
52.222-54	Employment Eligibility Verification	AUG 2012
52.224-1	Privacy Act Notification	APR 1984
52.224-2	Privacy Act	APR 1984
52.225-13	Restrictions on Certain Foreign Purchases	JUN 2008
52.227-1	Authorization and Consent	DEC 2007
52.230-2	Cost Accounting Standards	MAY 2014
52.230-3	Disclosure and Consistency of Cost Accounting Practices	MAY 2014
52.232-20	Limitation of Cost	APR 1984
52.243-1 (I)	Changes—Fixed Price (Alternate I - APR 1984)	AUG 1987
52.243-2 (I)	Changes—Cost Reimbursement (Alternate I - APR 1984)	AUG 1987
52.244-6	Subcontracts for Commercial Items	MAR 2015
52.222-40	Notification of Employee Rights Under the National Labor Relations Act	DEC 2010
52.242-3	Penalties for Unallowable Costs	MAY 2014

### **Department of Education Regulations**

3452.208-72	Paperwork Reduction Act.	MAY 2011
3452.209-71	Conflict of Interest.	MAY 2011

3452.224-70	Release of Information Under the Freedom of Information Act.	MAY 2011
3452.224-71	Notice About Research Activities Involving Human Subjects.	MAY 2011
3452.224-72	Research Activities Involving Human Subjects.	MAY 2011
3452.239-72	Department Security Requirements.	MAY 2011