

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS



Career Development in Children: Identifying Critical Success Conditions and Strategies

October 2019

Deadlines

Request for Proposals released: October 2, 2019

Intent to Submit: October 28, 2019

(submit name and contact info to riz@ceric.ca)

Proposal Deadline: November 21, 2019

Award of Contract: February 11, 2020

Project Initiation: March 10, 2020

1. Introduction

Identifying what factors lead young people into sustainable, fulfilling employment and to productive and happy lives is complex. We can posit that if a young person is thriving between K – 6, they are more likely to thrive throughout their education. However, what strategies and interventions are likely to be effective practice with children in terms of preparing them for later life success? What is the longer-term impact of such strategies and interventions on children as they mature and move through later grades (i.e., grades 10, 11, 12), and subsequent transitions into their post-secondary education? What foundational elements does one need to thrive through childhood and on into all phases of life and career planning?

CERIC is issuing this Request for Proposal (RFP). The purpose of this national initiative is to validate the fine work teachers are doing to introduce, nurture, and develop the foundational skills that help their students, in grades 4 – 6, to thrive. In particular, CERIC seeks to showcase this work to highlight what strategies and interventions are currently employed by educators. Such strategies and interventions require closer examination of the potential impact on children’s future career development and potential to thrive.

2. Background

CERIC is a national charitable organization that advances education and research in career counselling and career development. CERIC works with a multi-sectoral group of career development communities including those individuals working within K – 12. Through CERIC funded projects such as Career Exploration with At-Risk Adolescents and Young Adults (Cahill and Furey), and Understanding Young Children’s Career Development as a Developmental/ Relational Process, It is clear that introducing career concepts within the early years of education, whether formally through designed

programs or informally through play based learning, can have a long lasting and impactful presence in a person's life. But in the absence of the formal infusion of career into elementary and secondary curricula, what options are available within the education structure to ensure that children can sustainably develop the tools they will need much later in life as they make education and career choices, and maneuver a world of work we cannot yet imagine?

Teachers are the lynchpin, engaging with students at every age and stage, yet often are under resourced, and most often distant or removed from current career development concepts and constructs. Teachers engage in various learning and playing activities that introduce or develop what one may call foundational skills (e.g., healthy habits, social and emotional skills, self-confidence, empathy, team work, critical thinking, self-awareness, emotional regulation) that are not usually undertaken through a career development lens or construct. Yet later on, in later grades, both teacher and student are expected to connect the dots to help students make sound educational, vocational, and career and life planning choices.

Building on Dr. Cahill and Dr. Fury's work which focused on K – 3, CERIC envisages this proposed study will tease out these foundational elements in grades 4 – 6, distilling some of the concepts surfaced and examining findings through a career development lens. We feel that these foundational elements (e.g., imagination, creativity, self-efficacy, confidence, etc.), are really important contributing factors in career conversations and explorations. While there is ample research done around emotional regulation, etc. we are interested in the intersection of these with career development.

CERIC's interest in this project is three-fold:

- To understand the landscape of what is happening in elementary education across Canada related to introducing/building career related foundational skills
 - Conduct a literature review
 - Provide a snapshot of what is happening in elementary education in Canada including current curriculum, how career development is incorporated into learning, etc.
 - Develop a catalogue of career related foundational skills
- To use a mixed methods approach to explore the impact of these conditions and strategies on career development foundational skills
 - Explore the attitudes of teachers and administrators related to the notion of "career"
 - Situate current teacher practice programs/initiatives within the contexts of environmental, developmental and experiential/accessibility domains

- Identify and examine critical success factors (conditions and strategies) and explore the impact of these factors on career related foundational skills
- Include a diversity of perspectives (including indigenous communities, immigrant communities, francophone communities, special needs educators, rural and remote communities)
- To develop a teacher's aid tool kit that validates teacher practice
 - Through stories, highlight impressive teacher practice programs/initiatives across the country that are working in developing foundational skills in grades 4 – 6 children and the criteria used to evaluate
 - Incorporate industry perspectives on the importance of developing foundational skills
 - Interlace with sample exercises that can enhance implementing various environmental, developmental and experiential/accessibility practices

3. Purpose/Intent

The purpose of this RFP is to invite interested researchers to submit a detailed proposal that will enable CERIC to select the research/consultant team that it determines is best suited to complete the project according to the enclosed criteria.

4. Scope of Work

Each proposal will include details of the methodology to be used:

- Methodology for providing a snapshot of what is happening in elementary education in Canada including current curriculum, how career development is incorporated into learning, etc.
- Methodology for exploring the attitudes of teachers and administrators related to the notion of “career”
- Techniques for identifying and examining critical success conditions and strategies and examine the impact of these factors on career related foundational skills
- Approach for gathering stories to highlight impressive teacher practice programs/initiatives across the country that are working in developing foundational skills in grades 4 – 6 children and the criteria used to evaluate
- Strategies to gather and incorporate wider community and environmental perspectives on the importance of developing foundational skills

Specify approach to interlace with sample exercises that can enhance implementing various environmental, developmental and experiential/accessibility practices.

5. Target Audience

The primary audience for this research are educators, as well as appropriate school administrators.

6. Deliverables

There are three main deliverables for the project:

- A Research Report completed by July 30, 2021
- Knowledge dissemination through: webinars for teachers/educators and faculties of education where the core audience may be English, French or bilingual; presentation at two conferences (e.g. elementary teachers' association, OSCA, etc.) in addition to a 50 minute Research Circle presentation at Cannexus in January 2022
- English manuscript in MS Word highlighting impressive teacher practice programs/initiatives across the country as well as exercises as outlined in the RFP submitted by September 30, 2021 (40-60 pages)

CERIC will own all copyrights to the deliverables.

CERIC will produce a set of workbooks (in English and French) based on the manuscript and make these available as ePDFs.

7. Budget and Duration

The range of funding available to conduct the research and provide the three deliverables above is \$80,000 - \$100,000.

Travel

Travel and registration costs to attend and present at Cannexus 2022 are to be included in the financial proposal.

Duration

Timelines will be negotiated with the successful applicant. Ideally, the research, report, presentation of findings and an English or French language, copy-edited manuscript can be completed in 18 – 24 months.

8. Eligibility Requirements

This RFP is open to all researchers, consultants or contractors residing in Canada. The successful candidate will have strong academic research credentials and preferably previous exposure and understanding of primary, intermediate and secondary education (K – 12).

Applicants are requested to submit an electronic copy (in Microsoft Word or PDF format) of their proposal which is no longer than 30 pages by the deadline above.

Your proposal should convey the following:

- Your understanding of the scope of work;
- The proposed approach including methodology (that is inclusive of diversity of perspectives and language);
- Your level of ethical awareness and capacity related to the subject matter and how you will treat any ethical issues which might arise from this project given your methodology;
- A work plan and timelines, identifying the level of effort required in relation to milestone/target dates;
- A detailed budget;
- If you are submitting on behalf of a team of researchers, the capacity of the team, which outlines the experience as well as delineates the roles and responsibilities of the team members; and,
- Possible challenges and opportunities envisaged in undertaking this work.

In addition to the 30 pages, the following elements are mandatory:

- An overview of your relevant academic and work experience;
- Your current curriculum vitae/resume, including relevant publications; and,

- A list of 3 references that can be contacted to discuss your relevant experience.

9. Inquiries

All inquiries, proposal submissions and other communications are to be directed to:

Riz Ibrahim, Executive Director

CERIC

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CERIC reserves the right not to move forward with this project.