

Applicant Strength and Weakness Summary for Proposals for State Fiscal Years 16 & 17

Applicant: Nevada Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG)

Average Proposal Score: 72

Requested Amount: \$49,032

Program Area: *Work Force Development*

Executive Summary (Required) *From application

The Nevada Problem Gambling Treatment Strategic Plan includes a workforce development goal to "offer training, education programs, and networking opportunities designed to develop provider competencies and foster a supportive and collegial workforce made up of sufficient numbers".

The mission of the Nevada Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) aligns with this workforce development goal through our longstanding commitment to "advocate for quality treatment of problem gambling in the State of Nevada". In FY14-15 NCPG was the State's single grantee funded to provide problem gambling workforce development services to support this goal.

For FY16-17, NCPG proposes to continue to provide professional education services, as follows:

Develop and host the 10th and 11th Annual Nevada State Conference on Problem Gambling.

Every year since 2007, this statewide professional education event has been relied upon by Nevada Certified Problem Gambling Counselors and Interns as the most affordable and accessible opportunity for obtaining the required CEUs to maintain their certification under the Nevada Board of Examiners for Alcohol, Drug and Gambling Counselors. This 2-day event also serves as the primary education and networking opportunity for all professional and community stakeholders concerned about the impact of problem gambling in Nevada.

Reviewers Strengths:

- The need for Problem Gambling counselors and interns to have access to an in-state conference offering required CEUs is clearly stated. Approach to conference development is strong in that it takes into account participant needs and solicits presenters nationally. Audience is broader than just Problem Gambling professionals (increasing awareness among other, related disciplines).
- In the preceding section of the application, it is noted that the minimum target for corporate donations is \$20,000. This grant would subsidize the first 100 Nevada registrants (they pay \$40; the grant pays \$490.32); the applicant has pledged to subsidize any additional Nevada registrants in the same manner and already has 130 registered for the 2015 conference (if all are Nevada residents, that represents a \$14,710 investment). Because this is a fee-for-service award, the State is not in danger of exceeding the \$490.32 subsidy for Nevada participants
- Applicant has significant experience coordinating a state Problem Gambling conference. Organization is an accredited educator. Two of three staff has significant experience in this field.
- Applicant proposing significant cost sharing to sponsor the event.

Reviewers Weaknesses:

- The Cost of the conference seems to be much higher than comparable conferences in other states (In most cases the States Portion in other states is in the \$20,000 range).
- It is not clear how the \$40 administrative fee will generate an additional \$4,000 in revenue. Insufficient information is provided about the content of the participant evaluation. Application is focused solely on a statewide conference; no additional methods of education are proposed.
- Missed opportunity to provide more detailed information about the past sources of the corporate donations, the average donation per corporation, and why these corporations support the conference.
- Insufficient background information is provided about a new staff member.
- The critical weakness within the proposal is the applicant's narrow focus on workforce development activities. The RFA states; "*This RFA has been developed to find a grantee to provide a variety of workforce development activities.*" The proposal's narrow focus to only offering one workforce development service, albeit a large one, is not in the full spirit of the RFA.
- The budget was confusing in that the narrative states the NCPG is requesting reimbursement as fee for service @ \$490.32 per attendee yet the spreadsheet provided an expense based budget.
- I am not clear on how the state pays \$490.32 per Nevada resident for the conference and the fee for out of state attendees is \$150.00.
- The only income listed on the budget is the grant, corporate sponsors, and the 40.00 fee. What about out of state attendees?
- Organization seems to have high turnover in support staff positions, the director is the only staff member that was part of the project last year

Comments and Questions:

- How will the \$500 in travel assistance for 15 attendees be distributed? First come, first serve?
- To the applicant's credit, the applicant stated a commitment to offer other workforce development services (alert counselors to training opportunities) at no cost to the grant. Thus, while the grant only funds one activity, the applicant will provide others.

Applicant Strength and Weakness Summary for Proposals for State Fiscal Years 16 & 17

Applicant: Board of Regents, Nevada System of Higher Education, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Average Proposal Score: 64

Requested Amount: \$46,309

Program Area: *Work Force Development*

Executive Summary (From Application)

The aim of the proposed project is to develop training for problem gambling counseling in an integrated mental health clinical training facility. The Partnership for Research, Assessment, Counseling, Therapy and Innovative Clinical Education (the PRACTICE) is a community mental health training clinic at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV). Its mission is to provide sliding scale, low-cost, quality mental health assessment and therapy services to UNLV and greater Las Vegas community.

Within the PRACTICE, clinical graduate students receive high quality, one-to-one supervision from faculty experts across a range of disciplines. The PRACTICE is requesting funding for a graduate assistantship (GA) and limited faculty support to build a training component for students in the delivery of problem gambling treatment services.

The GA position will provide the PRACTICE with the initial manpower to leverage existing resources in developing the training initiative. The student will benefit from being fully integrated in a technologically advanced training site, with interdisciplinary clinical faculty who provide supervision and broad expertise in the mental health domain. The individual who subsumes this position will be responsible for incorporating problem gambling treatment within the mandate of the PRACTICE; educating student clinicians about problem gambling treatment; providing outreach education to the broader UNLV community, and developing and delivering problem gambling course material to undergraduate students. The GA will provide treatment to problem gambling clients on a sliding scale and work collaboratively with the co-ordinator of the Human Services program to gain knowledge and expertise in providing quality undergraduate education in the problem gambling area.

In kind contributions from UNLV include administrative costs, office and supplies, and access to the newest training technology in mental and behavioral healthcare. In response to the need for an educated and clinically competent workforce for disordered gambling, this project aims to create an ongoing training component through the PRACTICE at UNLV, where student clinicians will learn to treat problem gambling and associated co-occurring disorders.

Reviewers Strengths:

- Integration of a Problem Gambling track in an established university mental health clinic would be a desirable step in workforce development. The project would create a curriculum that should outlast the grant. A bonus would be that treatment services are included in the project. Evaluation methods are satisfactory.

- Staff is qualified in mental health field, in general, and clinic supervisor has experience with Problem Gambling services. The PRACTICE clinic and the Human Services Program are well-established at UNLV.
- Applicant offers an approach to develop a well designed training program for entry level problem gambling counselors. In addition to expert clinical training, the applicant offers methods to increase problem gambling interest and knowledge across UNLV programs reaching a broader UNLV student body.
- All elements submitted. Expenses appear within customary range. Project piggybacks on existing program/services, which allows the proposed project to be feasible from a budgetary perspective.
- Oscar Sida's experience and role in the proposed project are viewed as a great strength to the proposal. Dr. Paul is also viewed as a strong asset to the proposal.

Reviewers Weaknesses:

- Data to support need is incomplete and questionable. It is not clear whether we are producing 1.7 mental health counselors per 100,000 people or whether that is the standard need. Either way, there is no comparison or measurement. If it is the former, then what is the need? If it is the latter, then how many are we producing? Furthermore, mental health is much broader than Problem Gambling so this data is ultimately not useful. Applicant also states that only 0.18% of those who need state-funded Problem Gambling treatment services are receiving them. This is likely based more on availability of funding than availability of workforce. The focus of the proposal is too narrow. No projected outputs are provided to determine the number of students who would be involved, but regardless of the number, it would only reach a finite pool of potential Problem Gambling counselors at UNLV. Nothing in the proposal indicates that even one student would graduate as a Certified Problem Gambling Counselor or as a certified intern. The project offers no statewide service and would provide no support to providers already working in the field who need continuing education.
- It is not possible to determine cost per student or cost per treatment recipient because no output projections are provided. The budget is heavy on administrative costs. The graduate student would directly benefit from \$29,340 (63%) of the requested funding. Administrative costs (including clinic supervisor, clinic director and indirect) come to \$16,969 (37%). If you add the \$15,088 the university is willing to absorb in additional indirect costs, the administrative portion of the project increases to \$32,057 (changing the percentages to 48% graduate student, 52% administrative costs).
- Clinic supervisor is not yet certified as a Problem Gambling counselor so has no experience supervising Problem Gambling interns.
- The critical weakness within the proposal is the applicant's narrow focus on workforce development activities. The RFA states; "*This RFA has been developed to find a grantee to provide a variety of workforce development activities*" with the stated objective to "*offer training, education programs, and networking opportunities designed to develop provider competencies and foster a supportive and collegial workforce made up of sufficient numbers.*" The proposal fails to offer workforce development services for the existing problem gambling service workforce, for persons not affiliated with UNLV, or for the wider Nevada workforce of mental health and addiction service providers.
- The largest budget expense is to support a graduate assistant yet the proposal fails to define the time the graduate assistant will provide to the grant activities (unclear what "1" means in the "quantity" budget

narrative column). Furthermore, the proposal does not well account for how the graduate assistant's time will be utilized over the course of the grant period.

- Under past experience, no mention of how long the organization has provided problem gambling treatment services or how many clients each year present with gambling problems or any past history of an integrated gambling treatment program. Further, no mention of past or existing student training on problem gambling.
- No mention of graduate assistant within this section even though that person will be a key staff person on the project. Understanding one has likely not been recruited not selected, the qualifications should have been provided for selection process (e.g., first year student, second year, from what program?). This is also the place where the role of the graduate assistant should have been more clearly explained.

Comments and Questions:

- The concept to fund a graduate assistantship and garner faculty support to build a clinical training track to specialize in treating problem gamblers is laudable. Nevada needs more clinicians trained in problem gambling, not so much to fill an existing need among DHHS funded gambling treatment providers, but to expand greater awareness and competency among the broader mental health and addictions workforce. If more than one workforce development grant was offered and complimentary grants were awarded to meet other statewide needs, then the proposed project would be a valued addition to Nevada's efforts to address problem gambling.