

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:  
Data Science Team Training Program (DSTT) 2023**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS:**

---

---

Part I. Overview Information  
Part II. Full Text of Announcement

- Section I. Funding Opportunity Description
  - 1. Statement of Purpose
  - 2. Background
  - 3. Objectives
  - 4. Deliverables
  - 5. Timeline
- Section II. Award Mechanism
  - 1. Mechanism(s) of Support
  - 2. Funds Available
- Section III. Eligibility Information
  - 1. Eligible Applicants
- Section IV. Application and Submission Information
  - 1. Content and Form of Application Submission
  - 2. Submission Dates and Times
    - a. Submission, Review, and Anticipated Start Dates
    - b. Submitting an Application
- Section V. Application Review Information
  - 1. Application Rubric
  - 2. Review and Selection Process
- Section VI. Award Administration Information
  - 1. Award Notices
  - 2. Recipient Rights and Responsibilities
  - 3. CSTE Responsibilities
  - 4. For More Information

---

---

**PART I: OVERVIEW INFORMATION**

---

---

**Issuing Organization:** Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) at [www.cste.org](http://www.cste.org)

**Participating Organizations:** CSTE and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) – Cooperative Agreement number {NU38OT000297-04-00.}.

---

---

## PART II: FULL TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT

---

---

### **Section I. Funding Opportunity Description** **Statement of Purpose**

Consultants will provide subject matter expertise for teams participating in a data science upskilling program for current public health professionals. The training program will be delivered in a virtual setting. These consultants will henceforth be referred to as “project coaches”. This announcement is to recruit multiple project coaches for the third year of the Data Science Team Training (DSTT) program. There will be approximately 20 teams from state, local, tribal, and territorial (STLT) health departments participating in the program. CSTE is open to proposals from individual consultants and firms willing to provide this service.

#### **Background**

CSTE, in collaboration with and funded by CDC, administers a team-based on-the job data science training program to build data science capacity at STLT public health agencies, known as the Data Science Team Training program (DSTT). More information about this program can be found on the [website](#). This program is now recruiting for its third year. Interdisciplinary teams of 3-5 members from health departments (which can include individuals from outside the organization such as academic, clinical, or private sector partners) work collaboratively on a [HYPERLINK "https://www.cdc.gov/surveillance/surveillance-data-strategies/data-IT-transformation.html"](https://www.cdc.gov/surveillance/surveillance-data-strategies/data-IT-transformation.html) data modernization initiative project focused on building data science capacity. Possible areas of data science upskilling include computation, statistics, data visualization, and machine learning. The program includes team-directed learning through online coursework on the Coursera platform, work with project coaches, and conclude with presentations by the teams. Twenty teams will be selected. Previous team projects included: updating data systems, implementing electronic case reporting, creating dashboards for a variety of data reporting needs, and spatiotemporal modeling of the spread of COVID-19. CSTE will conduct the program’s Orientation webinar in January 2023.

project focused on building data science capacity. Possible areas of data science upskilling include computation, statistics, data visualization, and machine learning. The program includes team-directed learning through online coursework on the Coursera platform, work with project coaches, and concludes with presentations by the teams. Approximately twenty teams will be selected. Previous team projects included: updating data systems, implementing electronic case reporting, creating dashboards for a variety of data reporting needs, and spatiotemporal modeling of the spread of COVID-19. CSTE will conduct the program’s Orientation webinar in January 2023.

The role of project coaches will be to provide high-level guidance to teams and facilitate peer-to-peer learning for all learners. CSTE will match coaches with teams based on shared interest and expertise.

Each coach will work with a set number of teams to be determined based on consultants' bandwidth but usually 2-6 teams per coach. This opportunity is also open for firms that have the staffing capacity to support all 20 teams. The coaches will meet virtually with each of their assigned teams monthly and provide detailed feedback to CSTE. Teams are seeking guidance on a variety of data science topics, including but not limited to: making data-informed decisions, change management, cloud-based analytics, geocoding, building dashboards and other visualizations, developing interoperable data systems, using non-traditional data sources (Google trends, social media data), and applying machine learning to leverage data. Project coaches provide value to teams through regular check-ins, project scoping and project management, and providing an outside perspective to work through roadblocks. Coaches will be matched with teams based on team project focus and coach expertise. While CSTE will strive to match teams with coaches based on mutual interest and experience, projects are subject to change and an exact match is not guaranteed. Ideal coach applicants will be flexible.

In addition to working with their assigned teams, coaches will work together with other coaches to plan and facilitate monthly workshops for learners. Each monthly workshop should be learning objective-based with opportunities for active learning through discussion, skill-building exercises or project sharing. These workshops should introduce relevant data science content and include time for learners to engage with one another. Teams work in state and local public health across the country, so peer-to-peer learning takes place in a virtual environment via Zoom meetings and an online networking platform.

Coaches will work in an advisory role and are not expected to provide day-to-day technical assistance, conduct data analysis, or deliver course content. Project coaches will establish communication norms with their assigned teams. Ideal candidates will have data science and/or informatics expertise, facilitation skills, project management skills, and knowledge of local and state public health. Coaches should expect to spend about 5 hours per week in this role distributed across working directly with teams (meetings, calls, emails) and collaborating with other coaches to plan monthly workshops as well as contribute to the online community of practice.

### **Objectives**

From January-December 2023, the consultant will provide data science subject matter expertise and coaching to the DSTT participants related to their health department projects and facilitate a community of practice for all participants.

### **Deliverables**

To meet the above stated objectives, consultants will:

- Review background material provided by CSTE.
- Work with a set number of teams per coach, though this opportunity is open for firms that have the staffing capacity to support all 20 teams.
- Meet monthly with their assigned teams to review progress and provide advice on next steps for the team's project progress.
- Be available to their team via email or planned calls.

- Work with other coaches to develop monthly workshops including any related pre-reading or resources to foster peer-to-peer learning.
- Contribute to and participate in virtual community of practice.
- Provide detailed monthly updates to CSTE on their contact with assigned teams and participate in evaluation activities as requested.

**Timeline**

Timeline*	
October 5, 2022	RFP Posted
October 28, 2022 (11:59 PM EST)	Application Due Date
December 2, 2022	Notification of Award
December-January 2022	Assignment to teams
January 2023	Kick off call with CSTE
January 2023	Hold initial meetings with assigned teams
Feb 2023-Dec 2023	Hold monthly office hours, plan monthly workshops, post within the community of practice, consult with assigned teams, submit detailed monthly reports to CSTE, and participate in evaluation activities

*\*The remainder of the specific project dates will be determined by the awarded applicant to align with agreed upon work plans and project activities. Exact timeline subject to change. CSTE reserves the right to ask for references to be provided.*

**Section II. Award Mechanism**

***Mechanism(s) of Support***

CSTE will manage matters related to financial support for this project.

***Funds Available***

Up to \$60,000 is available for coaching services for all twenty teams. The final award amount per consultant coach will depend on the number of awards and assigned number of teams.

**Section III. Eligibility Information**

***Eligible Applicants***

Eligible applicants are non-federal public health professionals (including, but not limited to, those from institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, communication firms, public health agencies, or private consultants). Individual and organizational applications are eligible. Previous experience with public health informatics, epidemiology, or laboratory programs is preferred.

***Special Considerations***

Applicants who are employed or work on behalf of state, local, tribal or territorial (STLT) health agencies are required to submit an outside activity form or secondary employment request (actual form may vary) that has been approved by their employer with their application.

**Section IV. Application and Submission Information*****Content and Form of Application Submission***

The application should be no longer than 12 pages, and should be written using a 12-point, double-spaced, un-reduced, Times New Roman font, on 8.5x11 inch paged paper with one-inch margins. Additional pages or appendices that are not required may not be reviewed. Please include the headings below in the order listed and address all the issues included under each heading.

1. Contact Information (½ page maximum)
2. Experience (4 pg maximum)
3. Work Plan (5 pg maximum)
4. Budget and Justification (2 ½ pg maximum)
  - a. Applicants should include in the budget how many teams they are willing to take on
5. Applicant CV or resumes (not included in page count)

For further assistance, technical questions, or inquiries about the application, contact (Kacy Chrestman, [kchrestman@cste.org](mailto:kchrestman@cste.org) (470-816-6966)). Representatives from CSTE will be available to speak to potential applicants to discuss technical or administrative questions. All questions and answers will be made available to all potential applicants upon request.

***Submission Dates and Times*****Submission, Review, and Anticipated Start Dates:**

- Application Submission Notification Date: within 5 days of submission
- Award Notification Date: within 30 days of application due date
- Anticipated Start Date: within two weeks of notification

**Submitting an Application:**

***All applications are due by 11:59 pm ET, 10/28/22.***

Application materials should be sent to Kacy Chrestman ([kchrestman@cste.org](mailto:kchrestman@cste.org)). Notification of successful receipt of the application will be sent to the applicant upon request. Electronic applications are encouraged, however, CSTE will accept applications mailed to CSTE National Office at the following address:

Kacy Chrestman, CHES  
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists  
2635 Century Parkway NE, Suite 700  
Atlanta, GA 30345

*Mailed applications must still arrive by the stated deadline.*

**Section V. Application Review Information*****Application Rubric***

Define rubric that matches project scope and application submission requirements on 100 point scale.

1. Ability of the applicant to meet the objectives of the project described in Section I, above, satisfactorily (25%)
  - a. Prior experience
  - b. Qualifications
  - c. Describes areas of coaching expertise
2. Applicant's understanding of the project deliverables (25%)
  - a. Providing guidance to teams
  - b. Collaborating with other coaches to plan peer learning opportunities
3. Proposed work plan (30%)
  - a. Addresses plan to collaborate with other coaches on monthly webinars and community of practice
  - b. Incorporates strategies to address adult learning and team-based learning
  - c. Feasibility
    - i. Includes approaches for engaging in project coaching in the virtual environment
    - ii. Project coaching services include calls, email communication, sharing documents and should incorporate flexibility to accommodate trainee needs
  - d. Ability to meet the timeline
  - e. Quality of submitted proposal
4. Extent to which the budget is justified (15%)
  - a. Addresses number of teams the coach or firm is able to support
  - b. Estimated cost aligns with funds available
5. Completeness of the application (5%)

### ***Review and Selection Process***

Eligible applications that are complete will be evaluated for scientific and technical merit by CSTE in accordance with the review criteria stated above. A review panel of CSTE National Office staff, CSTE Steering Committee members, and subject matter experts may score the applications. Funding awards will be made based upon the quality of the submitted proposal and the ability of the applicant to meet the criteria stated above.

### **Section VI. Award Admission Information**

#### ***Award Notices***

All applicants will be notified via email no later than **December 2, 2022**.

#### ***Award Recipient Responsibilities***

The award recipient will have primary responsibility for the following:

- 1) Accomplishing the objectives and completing the deliverables listed in this announcement
- 2) Providing detailed written progress reports and invoices to CSTE as required in the contract agreement

- 3) Communicating through multiple avenues on a regular basis for feedback and discussion (e.g., conference calls, emails, etc.)
- 4) Actively engaging partners and stakeholders, including other coaches funded through this announcement to support DSTT program.

***CSTE Responsibilities***

CSTE will have the primary responsibility for the following:

- 1) Serving as the awardee's principal point of contact between participants, CDC, and other stakeholders
- 2) Facilitating work and providing avenues for communication between awardee and stakeholders
- 3) Monitoring the terms of the agreement
- 4) Funding according to the terms of the contract agreement

***For More Information***

For more information, contact:

Kacy Chrestman  
Program Analyst  
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists  
2635 Century Parkway NE, Suite 700  
Atlanta, GA 30345  
kchrestman@cste.org  
(470)816-6966