

Call for Consultants

Defining Multi-System High Utilization Using Colorado Administrative Data

The mission of the Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab (the Colorado Lab) is to improve services to Colorado residents by working with government and community partners to conduct research and translate it into action. The Colorado Lab is soliciting applications from researchers who are committed to government partnerships and are experienced in working with administrative data from state or local government agencies.

This *Call for Consultants* will build a team of researchers to create practice and research-informed metrics of high system utilization.

The term *high utilizers* refers to individuals who use public systems repeatedly, including but not limited to the emergency room, drug or alcohol rehabilitation, temporary public assistance programs, and prison. In partnership with state government, the Colorado Lab aims to connect these metrics across public systems to obtain a complete picture of multi-system high utilizers (MSHU) that can be used for future research as well as decision-making across state and local government.

Applicants must have expertise in one or more of the following domains or subdomains of public system utilization:

1. Public Assistance Programs
 - I. TANF
 - II. SNAP
 - III. WIC
2. Healthcare Utilization
 - I. Prescription drug use
 - II. Emergency department use
 - III. Mental health treatment
 - IV. Substance abuse treatment
3. Employment Services
 - I. Unemployment benefits
 - II. Workforce programs
4. Criminal Justice
 - I. Court involvement
 - II. Interactions with law enforcement officers
 - III. Incarceration
 - IV. Probation
 - V. Parole
 - VI. Transition services

5. Child Welfare/Youth Corrections
 - I. Out-of-home placement
 - II. Prevention services
 - III. Parenting programs (family preservation)
 - IV. Youth corrections and detention
6. Early Childhood Services
 - I. Childcare subsidies
 - II. Early intervention

Expectations for Consultants:

1. Attend in-person kick-off Colorado Lab multi-system high utilizer convening in August (date TBD).
2. Conduct a landscape analysis of existing domain-specific metric development.
3. Conduct a thorough examination of the state or local administrative data to:
 - (a) identify relevant data elements and
 - (b) propose practice and research-informed business rules for defining domain-specific high utilizer metrics.
4. Keep all documents and data on central, secure server at the University of Denver.
5. Attend virtual meetings with the Colorado Lab monthly (and as needed) to review deliverables. Some of these monthly meetings may include other research teams.
6. Advisory role in creation of multi-system high utilizer metrics and demonstrating their links to relevant outcomes.

7. Research Deliverables:

The deliverables are intended to be part of a sequential and iterative process. It is expected the applicant will meet with the Colorado Lab and state agency partners to review and discuss each deliverable as it is drafted.

- A. Data inventory that focuses on data quality and utility for research and analytics.¹
 - B. Recommendations for variables to include in agency high utilizer metric(s) and MSHU, including the feasibility of creating single program flag.
 - C. Business rules, statistical code, and associated codebook for all research-relevant variables in the domain area, including high utilizer metric(s).
 - D. A technical report articulating the rationale behind the preceding work with Colorado Lab support.
 - E. Contribution to communications materials around multi-system high utilizers and methodology that can be replicated in other states.
8. Final reports and presentations are branded as Colorado Lab products that are authored by your research team. Affiliations of research team members will be listed.

¹ As part of finalizing a project contract, we will negotiate the relevant data to focus the scope of the work.

Project Time Period: August 1, 2018 – Dec 31, 2018.

Funding: We recognize the amount of work and funding is contingent on the domain(s) being addressed, and the full scope of work will be determined during the initial stages of the contract. Therefore, a \$6,000 retainer will be offered to bill against.² The principal consultant may bill against this retainer at a rate of \$150 per hour.³ If additional staff support the principal consultant's work on this project, then an hourly rate must be submitted in advance for approval. Before the project reaches the \$4,000 mark, the principal consultant will be expected to submit a proposal with a fixed price for the balance of work.⁴ Travel to the in-person kick-off meeting will be separately cost-reimbursable.

Application Details:

1. **Eligibility:** Individuals who have demonstrated experience working with government partners and expertise in government administrative data. Priority will be given to researchers based in Colorado. University of Denver employees are eligible to apply but method of payment will be negotiated based on what is allowable under their DU employment contract.
2. **Application Materials** (submitted via [survey link](#)):
 - a) Select domains of public system utilization expertise (check list).
 - b) Describe your experience working with administrative data in Colorado (up to 500 words).
 - c) Describe your approach to this work, including additional team members if applicable (up to 500 words).
 - d) Provide contact information for two references who are current or former Colorado state or local government employees.
3. **Application Deadline:** For best consideration, submit by June 29, 2018.
4. **Review Process:**
 - a) Internal Colorado Lab review
 - b) State agency feedback
 - c) Virtual meeting with research applicant to discuss project
5. **Notification of Selection:** All applicants will be notified by July 9, 2018 as to whether or not they are invited to continue to the final step of the review process, which is a virtual meeting to discuss the project.

² We anticipate that consultants will commit a minimum of 40 hours to this project. In the event that does not occur, the balance of the retainer will return to the Colorado Lab.

³ No other costs are allowed in this initial consulting agreement (e.g., fringe benefits, indirect costs, travel, etc.).

⁴ This could be an additional consulting agreement or a subaward to your institution with no indirect costs allowed.