

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Issued By  
Minnesota Tele-Media Advisory Board  
October 10, 2018

### **Overview**

The Minnesota Tele-Media (MTM) Advisory Board has issued this Request for Proposals (RFP) for projects it could financially support that meet two broad categories. Proposals must be submitted by eligible entities as defined later in this RFP. The categories are:

Category 1 – Projects that provide high value educational technology services on a regional basis. Examples of such projects include educational technology training programs, innovative instructional delivery models, or innovative deployments of educational technology. Projects that involve what would be considered administrative technology services (e.g., security, finance systems) are not in scope.

Category 2 – Projects seeking funding to support resource development initiatives (RDIs) necessary to develop high value educational technology projects that would serve a regional partnership. For this category, it is not the intent of this RFP to fund the actual implementation of projects (e.g., equipment or project operations staff). Rather, proposals for RDIs will be considered that will only assist educational entities with organizing and implementing initiatives aimed at securing more comprehensive funding from other sources for their projects.

For purposes of this RFP, “Regional” is considered to be the area of southwestern and west central Minnesota served by MTM’s members (see below).

Examples of items that are eligible for funding consideration for each category of projects are listed below.

The MTM Advisory Board will make all decisions regarding the selection or non-selection of proposals for financial assistance. Submission of a proposal does not guarantee selection for funding.

### **What Is Minnesota Tele-Media?**

Minnesota Tele-Media (MTM) is a collaborative organization formed pursuant to the Joint Exercise of Powers Act (Minnesota Statutes Section 471.59). It exists to provide research, planning, funding assistance, implementation and organization of telecommunications services for the educational institutions in southwestern and west-central Minnesota, which the parties serve. Member institutions are the SWWC Service Cooperative, Minnesota West Community & Technical College, Ridgewater College and Southwest Minnesota State University. The SWWC Service Cooperative serves as the fiscal agent for the organization. The Southwest/West Central Higher Education Organization for Telecommunications and Technology (SHOT) provides staff support for Minnesota Tele-Media. SHOT is housed at Southwest Minnesota State University.

A six person Advisory Board governs the operations of Minnesota Tele-Media. The SWWC Service Cooperative appoints three Directors. The three member higher education institutions each appoint one Director.

### **What Entities are Eligible for Funding?**

In order to receive consideration for funding, an entity, or a group of entities, must be, or include, a member higher education institution of Minnesota Tele-Media or a State of Minnesota recognized independent school district that is either a member or an associate member of the SWWC Service Cooperative. Partnerships that involve both higher education institutions and independent school districts that are either a member of Minnesota Tele-Media or the SWWC Service Cooperative are strongly encouraged. Existing partnerships of member/associate member school districts that belong to the SWWC Service Cooperative or MTM higher education member institutions (e.g., Education Districts, telecommunications cooperatives) are also eligible. The SWWC Service

Cooperative and its divisions are also eligible for consideration. In the case of a partnership, a lead organization must be identified.

Entities that are not members of Minnesota Tele-Media or members of the SWWC Service Cooperative (e.g., vendors, other higher education institutions) may be a partner with eligible members in a project submitted for consideration.

### **What Level of Funding is Available?**

No minimum or maximum amounts for proposals. Rather, MTM will review the merit of each proposal at the time of submission in light of its available fiscal resources and the overall merit of the proposal in light of the criteria identified below. MTM reserves the right to fund proposals in part, or in whole.

### **What Activities are Eligible for Funding?**

It is not the intent of the MTM to severely limit items that can be funded in either project category as long as items for which funding is sought can be directly linked to the project's goals. However, the following guidelines are provided as examples of eligible items for each category.

#### Category 1

- Training expenses
- Equipment expenses
- Project operations staff (shall not supplant existing staff costs)
- Travel expenses
- Consultant costs
- Associated travel expenses
- Material costs

#### Category 2

- Consultant costs
- Associated travel expenses
- New short-term staffing costs (i.e., shall not supplant existing staff costs)
- Material costs (e.g., service subscriptions, print)
- Technology services expenses

### **Information Sharing**

The MTM Advisory Board, as a condition of providing funding, requires that all materials developed with grant funding, in addition to final project reports, be made available for review, modification and use by the member educational institutions in southwestern and west-central Minnesota, which the parties serve.

Questions regarding eligibility for funding of any specific initiative activities shall be directed to:

Dan Baun

Executive Director, SHOT/Minnesota Tele-Media

[dan.baun@smsu.edu](mailto:dan.baun@smsu.edu)

[507.537.6978](tel:507.537.6978)

### **What Criteria will be used to Evaluate Proposals?**

Criteria that will be utilized by the MTM Advisory Board to evaluate proposals for funding are:

1. Clear and Obtainable Project Goals: Proposed projects with clear and obtainable goals will receive higher consideration.
2. Scope of Project – Regional vs. Sub-Regional: Projects that have potential for region wide benefit will receive higher consideration.
3. Scope of Project – Multi-Sector vs. One Sector: Projects that have potential to benefit both higher education and K-12 education will receive higher consideration.

4. Scope of Project – Partnerships: Proposed projects that have broad partnerships and engagement among entities, particularly projects with involvement from K-12 and higher education, will receive higher consideration.
5. Scope of Benefit: How many students will benefit from this project? How many educational organizations will benefit from this project? How many faculty/teachers/staff will benefit from this project?
6. Scope of Expertise of Personnel: Proposed projects with a high level of expertise involved in the project will receive higher consideration.
7. Duration: Proposals for projects that are short-term in nature (i.e., two years or less) will receive higher consideration.
8. Evaluation Plan: Proposed projects with a defined evaluation plan that will help MTM determine project effectiveness, and whether or not similar initiatives deserve future funding, will receive higher consideration.
9. Budget: Proposed projects with a well-defined and reasonable budget will receive higher consideration.
10. Matching Funds: Proposed projects that provide evidence of matching funds that will be available to support the project for which funding is sought will receive higher consideration.
11. Potential Funding Source(s): *In the case of Category 2 projects only*, those RDIs with identified high potential funding source(s) for a project will receive higher consideration. Evidence of this potential must be provided.

#### **Proposals Format**

All responses submitted must follow the format of the templates provided. Templates, including a budget template, for each proposal category are attached. Responses that don't follow the format of the template(s) provided will not be considered. It is not MTM's intent to require RFP responders to invest significant level of resources in developing proposals. MTM will contact entities that submit proposals it deems worthy of funding consideration for more detail as needed.

#### **Proposals Deadline**

Proposals will not be accepted for consideration until December 14, 2018. Following that date, proposals will be reviewed and considered on a rolling basis until the MTM Advisory Board determines it will cease to accept proposals received pursuant to this RFP. In general, applicants should anticipate that MTM will need a minimum of 45 working days to review and take action on any proposal.

#### **Proposal Submission Information**

Proposals shall be submitted via e-mail to:

Dan Baun  
Executive Director, SHOT/Minnesota Tele-Media  
[dan.baun@smsu.edu](mailto:dan.baun@smsu.edu)

#### **Questions**

Questions regarding this RFP shall be directed to Dan Baun at [dan.baun@smsu.edu](mailto:dan.baun@smsu.edu) or at 507.537.6978.