



New Hampshire

Department of Education

New Hampshire Department of Education
Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation
21 South Fruit Street Suite 20
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

February 24, 2022

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP VR-2022-2.1

Vocational Rehabilitation

Summer Transition Programming

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SECTION 1 – Overview and Schedule

A. Executive Summary

The NH Department of Education, Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, is seeking proposals from qualified entities to develop, market, and provide summer Pre-Employment Transition Programming to groups of eligible and potentially eligible Students with Disabilities, aged 14-21 years, statewide during the summer of 2022. The goal of the request is to create innovative and interactive programming for students with disabilities regardless of the significance of their disability. Programming would include opportunities for job exploration, employment preparation, and work experiences using such techniques as short-term internships, job shadowing, and hands-on learning activities. These programs should occur in integrated, and accessible locations and can include options for outdoor or overnight activities that foster teamwork, unique ways of learning and building confidence.

The proposal shall contain several options for the programming during the summer months. The programs must focus on providing one or more of the five Pre-Employment Transition Services:

- Job Exploration Counseling;
- Workplace Readiness Training;
- Work-based Learning Experiences;
- Counseling on Post-Secondary Education or Training, and
- Self-advocacy and Peer Mentoring.

It is the intent of the Department to award multiple contracts effective upon Governor & Council approval to ensure all areas of the State are served. Another priority of the Department is to have proposals consider long-term planning for summer transition programming. Programs can be designed as a Learn Everywhere Program that is approved by the State Board of Education or a Work Base Learning Experience. The bureau reserves the right to renew successful programming for future cohorts.

[Learn Everywhere | Department of Education \(nh.gov\)](#)

B. Schedule

EVENT	DATE	LOCAL TIME
RFP Released to Proposers	2/24/22	
Proposer Inquiry Period Ends	3/8/22	4:30 PM
Final Agency Responses to Proposer Inquiries	3/11/22	4:30 PM
Proposers Submit Proposals	3/25/22	4:30 PM
Review and Scoring of Proposals	3/31/22	
Estimated Notification of Selection and Begin Contract Negotiations	4/4/22	
Estimated Date of Approval of Final Contract/Work Begins (Governor & Executive Council Approval)	May 2022	

SECTION 2 –Agency Overview

The New Hampshire Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation assists eligible New Hampshire citizens with disabilities to secure suitable employment and financial and personal independence by providing appropriate individualized rehabilitation services necessary. At least 15% of the Bureau’s federal funds must be set-aside to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services to Students with Disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation services.

Vocational Rehabilitation is a joint State/Federal program that seeks to empower people to make informed choices, build viable careers, and live more independently in the community.

SECTION 3 – Proposed Scope of Work

The Bureau is seeking proposals to develop and implement innovative programs across the state during the summer 2022 using best practices to provide opportunities for students with disabilities in all regions of the state to participate and receive Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS).

Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with regional Vocational Rehabilitation offices including their local Student Transition Specialist (STS), the Bureau of Career and Technical Education (CTE), the Bureau of Special Education Support, Local Educational Agencies, apprenticeship programs, area agencies, and community-based partners, or other workforce partners to meet local and regional needs. Programs can incorporate any number of the items below with the goal to expose students to as many opportunities as needed. As part of their programming, applicants are encouraged to propose events to populations that have traditionally been underserved as outlined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended by title IV of WIOA.

All programming must be fully accessible, and all accommodations needed by participants must be provided.

The Bureau’s goal is to receive robust proposals from entities that include a plan to provide multiple options for students to be highly engaged over the summer break. Options are to be provided statewide and can include but are not limited to:

- Programming to consist of cohorts of students with students with similar goals to encourage social connections and peer support using tools such as AWATO to connect with employers for job shadows, job tours, internships, and paid work experiences.
- Half and full day workshops or events (that includes an outreach plan with partners listed above)
- Multi-day sessions such as a camp or institute

Applicants are encouraged to consider developing opportunities that include exposure to:

- Sector based employment and/or the working in the trades
- Activities that help students to develop daily living and soft skills through hands on experiences
- Post-secondary options including campus tours, meetings with disability services, or other options for students after high school such as non-traditional careers
- Work experiences and career exploration in a variety of interests
- Long term planning which includes developing a credit bearing Learn Everywhere Program approved by State Board of Education

Proposals should include a clear and realistic program work plan that demonstrates outreach to participants and their local Student Transition Specialist (STS), the Bureau of Career and Technical Education (CTE), the Bureau of Special Education Support, Local Educational Agencies, apprenticeship programs, area agencies, and community-based partners, or other workforce partners to meet local and regional needs with estimated timelines for all service development and implementation activities for the Pre-ETS authorized activities included for the transition service being proposed.

The proposals must contain curriculum including the goal of the program, a detailed marketing and outreach plan, area(s) served, estimated percent of service type to be provided at each event/activity, and an estimated number of students to participate.

Proposals must include a description of the measures to be used to track and evaluate whether the proposed goal and objectives are met for the proposed program. Proposals should provide a plan for evaluation which will need to address the two critical questions below and use a variety of evidence to illustrate the results in terms of participant learning and practical outcomes of the program:

- a. What are the desired outcomes of your program?
- b. How will you measure the outcomes?

Sessions should be offered at locations that are accessible to students and parents and would encourage attendance. The sessions are to mostly occur in person in accordance with applicable local health protocols. Limited options can be made available for students and parents who wish to attend remotely. Proposals should clearly outline the goal of the proposed activity, the number of students with disabilities to be provided services, the proposed service area, and the projected time period of the proposed services.

Targeted Population

Student with a Disability – Is an eligible participant of New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation; is enrolled in a secondary or post-secondary educational program and is aged 14 to 21.

Potentially Eligible Student with a Disability – Is a student with a disability who is enrolled in a secondary or post-secondary educational program and is aged 14 to 21 and has not been found eligible or ineligible for NHVR services.

Other students with disabilities who are not served under an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 Accommodation Plan can also be included in the Summer Transition Programs.

Prior to service provision, documentation ensuring that the individual has a disability will need to be acquired. This documentation can be an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), 504 Plan, Social Security Disability Documentation, disability documentation from qualified facilities or practitioners familiar with diagnosing or treating the impairment(s) in question, especially practitioners or facilities that are currently treating the applicant. This would include records from qualified medical personnel, mental health or developmental disability programs, substance use disorder treatment clinics, and individually licensed practitioners operating within their legal scopes of practice, or a signature from a school official certifying that the student has a disability.

Services to be Provided

Pre-ETS are designed to give students general information in the following five areas as they prepare for life after high school:

- 1. Job Exploration Counseling:** Examples of eligible activities include job shadowing, workplace site visits, interest and/or career inventories, exploration of relevant career fields and potential jobs, and learning about career opportunities.
- 2. Work-based Learning Experiences:** Examples of eligible activities include paid or unpaid work experiences, paid or unpaid internships, career mentorship, volunteer opportunities, and summer employment provided in an integrated setting.
- 3. Workplace Readiness Training:** Work readiness skills are sometimes called soft skills, employability skills, or job readiness skills. Possible topics include teamwork, active listening, cooperation, and professionalism. Methods of delivery could include role-playing and simulation activities to encourage experiential learning.
- 4. Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs:** These services may include information on course offerings, career options, types of academic and occupational training needed to succeed in the workplace, and postsecondary opportunities associated with a career field or pathways. It may also include advising students and family members on academic curricula, college application and admissions processes, completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and resources that may be used to support individual student success in education and training, to include disability support services. Other activities could include campus tours and making connections with Disability Services staff on campuses.

5. Instruction in Self-Advocacy: Possible activities include training on assertiveness, problem-solving, how to identify positive supports, disclosure of a disability to an employer, and how to request accommodations. This may also include peer mentoring.

Reporting

The contractor will need to ensure, prior to each event and or activity, that students either are current Vocational Rehabilitation participants or could be potentially eligible for services. Potentially eligible students and their parents or guardians will need to have a completed registration form consisting of limited information prior to attending program events or activities. Proof of disability must accompany the registration form. Sample registration form in Attachment C.

Data of attendees from each event must be provided by contractor to a representative of the Bureau within (10) ten business days of the event.

Monthly report of unduplicated students served per event, due on the 15th of the following month.

It is the goal to receive at least one student success story per program, which is a one-page description of any noteworthy student success such as positive feedback from employers, unique career exploration opportunities, demonstration of applied self-advocacy, and student community connections during the program or event.

Estimated percentage of each type of Pre-Employment Transition Service provided during each event or activity, which is required to be used for federal reporting.

Pre and Post survey developed in partnership with the Department highlighting results from attendants and their parents/guardians to capture the participant's growth during the program in relation to the program's outcome plan

Any documentation in electronic format completed during the event for the Bureau's case record to assist in future employment planning with the individual. For example, career assessments, resumes, evaluations, etc.

SECTION 4 – Bidder Requirements

4.1 The bidder shall have extensive experience and expert knowledge in the field of transition, pre-employment transition services, and students with disabilities.

4.2 Applicants must demonstrate they are able to deliver community-based, culturally competent services in environments accessible to individuals with physical, mental, and sensory impairments.

4.3 The bidder shall provide at least two (2) examples of projects that were performed of comparable scope. NHVR will only consider bids from bidders that demonstrate in their proposals that they have background knowledge and experience in providing on-site events to individuals with disabilities.

4.4 If awarded the contract, bidders will need to register with the New Hampshire Secretary of State's office and be in good standing. They must also carry comprehensive general liability insurance against all claims of bodily injury, death, or property damage of at least \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate.

4.5 Any individual providing direct or unaccompanied services to an individual will need to undergo a background check at the expense of the contractor pursuant to NH state law RSA 189:13 a School Employee and Designated School Volunteer Criminal History Records Check.

SECTION 5 – Process for Submitting a Proposal

A. Proposal Submission, Deadline, and Location Instructions

Proposals submitted in response to this RFP must be received by NHVR, no later than the time and date specified in the Schedule section herein. Proposals may be submitted via email to:

Christine Langille-Lewis at
Christine.a.langille-lewis@doe.nh.gov

Proposals must be clearly marked as follows:

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

RESPONSE TO RFP VR 2022-2.1

Vocational Rehabilitation Summer Transition Programming

Late submissions will not be accepted and will be returned to the Proposer unopened. Delivery of the Proposals shall be at the Proposer's expense. The time of receipt shall be considered when a Proposal has been officially documented by the Agency, in accordance with its established policies, as having been received at the location designated above. The Agency accepts no responsibility for mislabeled mail or mail that is not delivered or is undeliverable for whatever reason. Any damage that may occur due to shipping shall be the Proposer's responsibility.

All Proposals submitted in response to this RFP must consist of at least:

- Four (4) copies of the Proposal, including all required attachments.

B. Proposal Inquiries

All inquiries concerning this RFP, including but not limited to, requests for clarifications, questions, and any changes to the RFP, shall be submitted via email to the following RFP designated Point of Contact:

Susan Roma
Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 20
Concord, NH 03301
Susan.S.Roma@doe.nh.gov

Inquiries must be received by the Agency's RFP Point of Contact no later than the conclusion of the Proposer Inquiry Period (see Schedule of Events section, herein). Inquiries received later than the conclusion of the Proposer Inquiry Period shall not be considered properly submitted and may not be considered.

The Agency intends to issue official responses to properly submitted inquiries on or before the date specified in the Schedule section, herein; however, this date is subject to change at the Agency's discretion. The Agency may consolidate and/or paraphrase questions for sufficiency and clarity. The Agency may, at its discretion, amend this RFP on its own initiative or in response to issues raised by inquiries, as it deems appropriate. All questions and responses will be posted on the New Hampshire Department of Education website (www.education.nh.gov). Oral statements, representations, clarifications, or modifications concerning the RFP shall not be binding upon the Agency. Official responses by the Agency will be made only in writing by the process described above.

C. Restriction of Contact with Agency Employees

From the date of release of this RFP until an award is made and announced regarding the selection of a Proposer, all communication with personnel employed by or under contract with the Agency regarding this RFP is forbidden unless first approved by the RFP Point of Contact listed in the Proposal Inquiries section, herein. Agency employees have been directed not to hold conferences and/or discussions concerning this RFP with any potential contractor during the selection process, unless otherwise authorized by the RFP Point of Contact. Proposers may be disqualified for violating this restriction on communications.

D. Validity of Proposal

Proposals must be valid for one hundred and eighty (180) days following the deadline for submission of Proposals in Schedule of Events, or until the Effective Date of any resulting Contract, whichever is later.

SECTION 6 - Content and Requirements for a Proposal

Proposals shall follow the following format and provide the required information set forth below:

1. Cover Letter of interest and general description of recommended approaches, scope of work, processes, and deliverables for the project.
2. Glossary of Common Terms, to include any technical terms and acronyms
3. Company Profile/Background, overview of the company including:
 - a. Number of years in business
 - b. Number of employees
 - c. Location(s)
 - d. Expertise
4. Key Personnel
5. References (minimum 3)
6. Project Summary
7. Implementation Plan including tentative schedule, region(s) to be served, estimated amount to be served, and the data reporting plan
8. Budget Proposal including
 - a. Personnel Costs
 - b. Student Wages/Stipends if applicable
 - c. Location hosting costs
 - d. Student travel costs
 - e. Other Costs

Project Summary Guidelines

Proposers must include a Project Summary, not to exceed 5 pages (Arial 10 Font), describing the Proposer's project design and approach for meeting the goals and deliverables outlined above. The Project Summary should include:

- Prior experience showing work with similar entities delivering the required services
- Company security protocols for file transportation, storage, data management, and security
- Prior experience working with students with a variety of disabilities
- Coordination of Services with other State partners
- Plan and timeline for achieving goals and deliverables outlined above
- Staffing/Project Personnel
- Clear communication and marketing plan for the project including outreach to parents and students with clearly defined deliverables and milestones

SECTION 7 – Evaluation of Proposals

A. Criteria for Evaluation and Scoring

Each responsive Proposal will be evaluated and considered with regard to the following criteria:
State of New Hampshire Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation
Summer Transition Programming

If the Agency, determines to make an award, the Agency will issue an “intent to negotiate” notice to a Proposer based on these evaluations. Should the Agency be unable to reach agreement with the selected Proposer during Contract discussions, the Agency may then undertake Contract discussions with the second preferred Proposer and so on, or the Agency may reject all proposals, cancel this RFP, or solicit new Proposals under a new acquisition process.

The Agency will use a scoring scale of 100 points. All proposals scoring about 75 will be evaluated for potential funding based on the amount of proposal received.

TECHNICAL SCORING	POINTS
APPROACH - Statement outlining the overall approach to be employed by the bidder	10
PROJECT SUMMARY	30
RESOURCE LEVERAGING & PARTNERS	10
ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITIES - Description of the bidder’s organizational capabilities to deliver the services, including a brief description of their company, a history of their firms and/or personal experience in implementing similar projects, including at least once example if a completed project of comparable scope. A description of related experience in the field, and comprehensive résumés for all staff who will work on this project and three references along with your proposal. The bidder must ensure to address all requirements in Section 4.	25
BUDGET PROPOSAL- The budget will explain how all costs listed in the budget are necessary, reasonable, and allocable to deliver the outcomes specified in the proposal. All expenditures should be clearly connected to an activity related to the services to be provided. Please note that food cannot be directly included unless directly related to curriculum delivery. Any Student Travel expenses need to be clearly identified as a different source of funding will be utilized.	25
TOTAL POTENTIAL TECHNICAL POINTS AWARDED	100

B. PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCESS

Each proposal will be evaluated and considered with regard to the solution and services proposed, qualifications of the contractor and any subcontractors, experience and qualifications of proposed candidates, cost and the total quality of the proposed solution.

Each proposal will be reviewed and rated by an evaluation team. The Department shall be under no obligation to contact bidders for clarification of their proposals, but it shall reserve the right to do so at any time prior to the award of the contract(s). All proposals received by the deadline will be evaluated based section 7. A Criteria for Evaluation and Scoring section outlined in this RFP.

If the State, determines to make an award, the State will issue an Intent to Award Notice to a contractor based on these evaluations. Should the State be unable to reach agreement with the selected bidder during contract discussions, the State may then undertake contract discussions

with the second preferred bidder and so on. Such discussions may continue at the sole option of the State, until an agreement is reached, or all proposals are rejected.

Any resulting contract from this RFP will be a non-exclusive contract. The State reserves the right, at its discretion, to retain other contractors to provide any of the services or deliverables identified under this procurement or make an award by item, part or portion of an item, group of items, or total proposal.

C. Final Technical Scoring of Proposals

Following oral interviews in necessary, demonstrations, reference checks (if applicable/appropriate) and/or review of written clarifications of Proposals requested by the Agency, the evaluation team will determine a final score for each Technical Proposal.

D. No Best and Final Offer

The Proposal should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms which the Proposer can offer. There will be no best and final offer procedure. The Proposer should be prepared to accept this RFP for incorporation into a contract resulting from this RFP. Contract negotiations may incorporate some or all of the Proposal.

E. Rights of the Agency in Accepting and Evaluating Proposals

The Agency reserves the right to:

- Make independent investigations in evaluating Proposals;
- Request additional information to clarify elements of a Proposal;
- Waive minor or immaterial deviations from the RFP requirements, if determined to be in the best interest of the State;
- Omit any planned evaluation step if, in the Agency's view, the step is not needed;
- At its sole discretion, reject any and all Proposals at any time; and
- Open contract discussions with the second highest scoring Proposer and so on, if the Agency is unable to reach an agreement on Contract terms with the higher scoring Proposer(s).

SECTION 8 – Terms and Conditions Related to the RFP Process

A. RFP Addendum

The Agency reserves the right to amend this RFP at its discretion, prior to the Proposal submission deadline. In the event of an addendum/addenda to this RFP, the Agency, at its sole discretion, may extend the Proposal submission deadline, as it deems appropriate.

B. Non-Collusion

The Proposer's signature on a Proposal submitted in response to this RFP guarantees that the prices, terms and conditions, and Work quoted have been established without collusion with other Proposers and without effort to preclude the Agency from obtaining the best possible competitive Proposal.

C. Property of the Agency

All material received in response to this RFP shall become the property of the State and will not be returned to the Proposer. Upon Contract award, the State reserves the right to use any information presented in any Proposal.

D. Confidentiality of a Proposal

Unless necessary for the approval of a Contract, the substance of a Proposal must remain confidential until the Effective Date of any Contract resulting from this RFP. A Proposer's disclosure or distribution of Proposals other than to the Agency will be grounds for disqualification.

E. Public Disclosure

Pursuant to RSA 21-G:37, all responses to this RFP shall be considered confidential until the award of a Contract. At the time of receipt of Proposals, the Agency will post the number of responses received with no further information. No later than five (5) business days prior to submission of a Contract to the Governor & Executive Council pursuant to this RFP, the Agency will post the name and rank or score of each Proposer. In the event that the Contract does not require Governor & Executive Council approval, the Agency shall disclose the rank or score of the Proposals at least 5 business days before final approval of the Contract.

The content of each Proposer's Proposal shall become public information upon the award of any resulting Contract. Any information submitted as part of a response to this Request for Proposal (RFP) may be subject to public disclosure under RSA 91-A. In addition, in accordance with RSA 9-F:1, any Contract entered into as a result of this RFP will be made accessible to the public online via the website Transparent NH (<http://www.nh.gov/transparentnh/>). Accordingly, business financial information and proprietary information such as trade secrets, business and financials models and forecasts, and proprietary formulas may be exempt from public disclosure under RSA 91-A:5, IV.

If you believe any information being submitted in response to this Request for Proposal, Bid or Information should be kept confidential as financial or proprietary information; you must specifically identify that information in a letter to the agency, and must mark/stamp each page of the materials that you claim must be exempt from disclosure as "CONFIDENTIAL". A designation by the Proposer of information it believes exempt does not have the effect of making such information exempt. The Agency will determine the information it believes is properly exempted

from disclosure.

Marking of the entire Proposal or entire sections of the Proposal (e.g. pricing) as confidential will neither be accepted nor honored. Notwithstanding any provision of this RFP to the contrary, Proposer pricing will be subject to disclosure upon approval of the Contract. The Agency will endeavor to maintain the confidentiality of portions of the Proposal that are clearly and properly marked confidential.

If a request is made to the Agency to view portions of a Proposal that the Proposer has properly and clearly marked confidential, the Agency will notify the Proposer of the request and of the date the Agency plans to release the records. By submitting a Proposal, Proposers agree that unless the Proposer obtains a court order, at its sole expense, enjoining the release of the requested information, the Agency may release the requested information on the date specified in the Agency's notice without any liability to the Proposers.

F. Non-Commitment

Notwithstanding any other provision of this RFP, this RFP does not commit the Agency to award a Contract. The Agency reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to reject any and all Proposals, or any portions thereof, at any time; to cancel this RFP; and to solicit new Proposals under a new acquisition process.

G. Proposal Preparation Cost

By submitting a Proposal, a Proposer agrees that in no event shall the Agency be either responsible for or held liable for any costs incurred by a Proposer in the preparation of or in connection with the Proposal, or for Work performed prior to the Effective Date of a resulting Contract.

H. Ethical Requirements

From the time this RFP is published until a contract is awarded, no bidder shall offer or give, directly or indirectly, any gift, expense reimbursement, or honorarium, as defined by RSA 15-B, to any elected official, public official, public employee, constitutional official, or family member of any such official or employee who will or has selected, evaluated, or awarded an RFP, or similar submission. Any bidder that violates RSA 21-G:38 shall be subject to prosecution for an offense under RSA 640:2. Any bidder who has been convicted of an offense based on conduct in violation of this section, which has not been annulled, or who is subject to a pending criminal charge for such an offense, shall be disqualified from bidding on the RFP, or similar request for submission and every such bidder shall be disqualified from bidding on any RFP or similar request for submission issued by any state agency. A bidder that was disqualified under this section because of a pending criminal charge which is subsequently dismissed, results in an acquittal, or is annulled, may notify the department of administrative services, which shall note that information on the list maintained on the State's internal intranet system, except in the case of annulment, the information, shall be

deleted from the list.

I. Challenges on Form or Process of the RFP

Any challenges regarding the validity or legality of the form and procedures of this RFP, including but not limited to the evaluation and scoring of Proposals, shall be brought to the attention of the Agency at least ten(10) business days prior to the Proposal Submission Deadline. By submitting a Proposal, the Proposer is deemed to have waived any challenges to the form or procedures set forth in this RFP.

SECTION 9 – Contract Terms and Award

A. Non-Exclusive Contract

Any resulting Contract from this RFP will be a non-exclusive Contract. The State reserves the right, at its discretion, to retain other contractors to provide any of the Services or Deliverables identified under this procurement or make an award by item, part or portion of an item, group of items, or total Proposal.

B. Award

If the State decides to award a Contract as a result of this RFP process, any award is contingent upon approval of the Contract by the Governor and Executive Council of the State of New Hampshire and upon continued appropriation of funding for the Contract.

C. Standard Contract Terms

The Agency will require the successful Proposer to execute a Firm Fixed Price/Not to Exceed Contract using the Standard Terms and Conditions of the State of New Hampshire which is attached as Appendix A.

The Agency may consider modifications of this form during negotiations. To the extent that a Proposer believes that exceptions to the standard form contract will be necessary for the Proposer to enter into the Agreement, the Proposer should note those issues during the Proposer Inquiry Period. The Agency will review requested exceptions and accept, reject or note that it is open to negotiation of the proposed exception at its sole discretion. If the Agency accepts a Proposer's exception the Agency will, at the conclusion of the inquiry period, provide notice to all potential proposers of the exceptions which have been accepted and indicate that exception is available to all potential proposers. Any exceptions to the standard form contract that are not raised during the proposer inquiry period are waived. In no event is a Proposer to submit its own standard contract terms and conditions as a replacement for the State's terms in response to this solicitation.

Enclosures:

Attachment A: P-37 Contract Form

Attachment B: ALT W-9 Vendor Application

Attachment C: Sample Registration Form