

Call for Expressions of interest– CPD Accreditation

15 October 2013

1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide information to parties to make an expression of interest to undertake the continuing professional development (CPD) accreditation function for the optometry profession on behalf of the Optometry Board of Australia.

2. Background

2.1 Optometry Board of Australia

The Optometry Board of Australia (the Board) regulates the 4,635 registered optometrists in Australia.

The functions of the Board include:

- registering optometrists and students
- developing standards, codes and guidelines for the optometry profession
- handling notifications, investigations and disciplinary hearings
- assessing overseas trained practitioners who wish to practise in Australia, and
- approving accreditation standards and accredited courses of study.

The Board has established a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Accreditation Committee to advise the Board on matters with respect to the administration of the CPD program for optometrists.

The terms of reference and current membership of this committee are published under the 'About' tab on the Board's website.

2.2 Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) works in partnership with the Board and was established in July 2010 to improve the quality and safety of Australia's health services through a national registration and accreditation scheme for health professionals.

AHPRA has an office in each State and Territory responsible for the majority of operational matters and a National Office in Melbourne. AHPRA reports to a Ministerial Council and is governed by an Agency Management Committee appointed by the Ministerial Council. AHPRA supports the operations of the national boards for each profession covered by the scheme, and the State and Territory boards and committees established by the national boards.

The services provided by AHPRA to the National Boards employ best practice approaches to regulation and cover registration functions, the management of a national public register of health practitioners, the receipt of complaints on behalf of the Boards and, subject to decisions by States and Territories, responsibility to the Boards for the highest standards of professional investigations and disciplinary prosecutions.

AHPRA will manage this expression of interest process on behalf of the Board. The Board will decide on the entity to undertake the CPD accreditation function for a 3 year term.

2.3 Accreditation Functions under the National Law

There are no requirements under the National Law that relate specifically to the accreditation of continuing professional development (CPD) activities. The Board is required to develop and describe the requirements in a CPD registration standard under section 38 of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each State and Territory (National Law).

The CPD 'accreditation' functions listed in this document should not be linked to or interpreted as aligned to the statutory requirements for accreditation functions listed in sections 42 and 43 of the National Law, which relate to the programs of study and the assessment of overseas trained practitioners for the purpose of registration and undertaken for the profession by the Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand (OCANZ).

3. Procurement Scope

3.1 Specification

The Board is seeking expressions of interest from interested and capable parties to undertake CPD accreditation functions as follows for the optometry profession on behalf of the Optometry Board of Australia (the Board).

3.2 Current CPD Accreditation Process

The implementation of the National Scheme saw the requirements for CPD move from professional association based requirements to those required by the National Law and described in the mandatory CPD registration standard developed by the Optometry Board of Australia.

The Board's CPD registration standard and associated guidelines allow for completion of CPD requirements by undertaking both accredited and non-accredited CPD activities.

All relevant Board publications are published under *Continuing professional development* under the *Registration standard* tab of the Board's website. This includes:

- *Continuing professional development registration standard*
- *Guidelines on continuing professional development for endorsed and non-endorsed optometrists*, and
- *Continuing professional development provider manual*.

All activities – regardless of accreditation status - are expected to meet the criteria for CPD activity and accreditation described in the Board's CPD guidelines.

Non-accredited CPD Activities

Optometrists are required to self-assess any activities they undertake.

Accredited Activities

There are currently two ways to assess accredited activities:

1. Organisations that the Board considers meet the criteria listed in Appendix C of the Board's CPD guidelines are listed as an 'approved CPD provider' in appendix B of that document. Activities provided by these organisations are recognised as meeting the criteria for CPD activity accreditation. No further assessment is required.
2. organisations, which are not approved providers, wishing to provide accredited CPD activities are required to submit the activity for assessment to the national office of Optometrists Association Australia (OAA). This includes the allocation of CPD points against the criteria listed in the Board's CPD guidelines.

The current process only accredits, using the published guidelines, activities and approved providers prior to the delivery of CPD.

The Board is asking that the successful bidder also develops and implements an additional audit component as a part of the quality cycle to verify that the delivery of the CPD activities meets the agreed objectives.

3.3 Value of accrediting CPD

The provision of accredited CPD provides the Board with some assurance of the delivery of high quality professional development, thus maintaining and enhancing the competency of the profession over time.

Accredited CPD also provides a significant benefit for registered optometrists by ensuring that events that they attend will meet the standards required by the Board. This provides an added advantage to AHPRA in streamlining any subsequent practitioner audit of compliance with the CPD standard.

In the interest of providing flexibility to the profession, the Board's registration standard allows optometrists to meet the standard by participating in non-accredited CPD.

3.4 Board considerations in reviewing the assignment of the CPD accreditation function

Drivers

The following drivers prompted the Board's review of the assignment of the CPD accreditation function:

- meeting the need for an objective accreditation process that is free from actual or perceived conflict and bias
- embedding the quality framework developed by the Board as described in the revised CPD guidelines, and
- acknowledging the ever-expanding workload involved in the accreditation of CPD activities for the optometry profession.

Objectives

The key objective to be achieved by reviewing the assignment of CPD accreditation function is the implementation of a sustainable and stable CPD accreditation process that has perceived and actual independence, impartiality, rigour and integrity and promotes access to accredited CPD activities for the optometry profession.

Guiding principles

The following guiding principles have been considered in the development of the evaluation criteria listed in this document:

- accreditation of CPD should be free of actual or perceived bias or conflict of interest
- accreditation is undertaken in a transparent, accountable, efficient, effective and fair way and is based on a user-pays/cost recovery model, so that no registrant fees fund the accreditation function directly
- the Board's registration standard allows for CPD requirements to be met by both accredited and non-accredited CPD
- that practitioners are able to rely on accredited CPD to meet the Board's registration standard, and
- that there be consultation and communication with the profession on the accreditation of the CPD providers and activities.

Expected benefits

It is anticipated that the review of the assignment of the CPD accreditation function will realise a range of benefits.

Expression of interest

These benefits include the following:

- stability in the provision of quality CPD activities for the profession over time
- perceived and actual impartiality in the accreditation of CPD activities and or providers, and
- an accreditation process that allows for the monitoring of quality and compliance over time.

Assumptions

The following assumptions have informed the review of the assignment of the CPD accreditation function:

- the workload associated with the accreditation of CPD activities will continue to increase over the foreseeable future
- costs for the accreditation of CPD activities do not require ongoing funding by the Board from registrant fees (and may be based on a cost-recovery/ user-pays model) an audit process for providers and activities within the accreditation framework needs to be developed and implemented
- an audit process for providers and activities within the accreditation framework needs to be developed and implemented
- there needs to be equity in costs and requirements for all providers of CPD, including the accreditation of approved providers and for providers of activities currently accredited by the OAA, and
- the management and accreditation process for CPD should reflect the diversity of activities (not just academic learning) and content as reflected in the Board's CPD standard and guidelines.

3.5 Continuing professional development accreditation functions

Each of the CPD accreditation functions listed below will need to be addressed in any submission.

The Board's preference is for one or more entities to undertake all of the listed functions for a three year term.

Function	Status
1. To monitor existing approved CPD providers as described in Appendix A of <i>Guidelines on continuing professional development for endorsed and non-endorsed optometrists</i>	New function
2. To assess applications from providers seeking approved provider status	New function
3. To accredit CPD activities provided by non-approved providers	Existing function
4. To develop and implement an audit process (to be approved by the Board) for CPD activities provided by approved and non-approved providers	New function
5. To advise on the effectiveness of the Board's CPD accreditation guidelines for quality and workability	New function

4. Briefing

The Board will be available on Monday 11 November from 12:00 to 13:00 to provide a verbal briefing to potential bidders. These sessions will be open to all potential bidders and will be held at the National AHPRA office in Melbourne (preferred) or via teleconference. Private briefings are not available.

AHPRA and the Board are not responsible for any costs incurred by potential bidders in attending such a briefing.

As per item 3 of the terms and conditions of this document, AHPRA and the Board shall not be bound by verbal explanations or instructions given prior to acceptance of a proposal.

5. Evaluation of submissions

5.1 Timetable

Key timelines for this proposal are indicated below. These dates are advised as a guide only to projected timelines. AHPRA and the Board will make every effort to maintain this schedule, but reserves the right to vary dates.

Date EOI released	16 October 2013
Briefing / Information session	Monday 11 November 2013 12:00 to 13:00
Closing date for requests for further information	15 November 2013
Closing date for submission of expressions of interest	29 November 2013
Short listing completed by	13 December 2013
Interviews (if required)	Early February 2014
Board decision	27 February 2014
Commencement of accreditation function	Flexible depending on appointment requirements
Term of appointment	3 years

5.2 Evaluation criteria

The successful bidder/s will require a background relevant to the task and a demonstrated capacity to successfully provide the required functions. All bidders will be evaluated against the evaluation criteria specified below.

The following criteria are weighted on a scale of 3,2,1 with '3' being the highest weighting.

Evaluation criteria	Weighting
1. Demonstrates an understanding of the application of accreditation processes and principles to CPD activities and providers.	3
2. Demonstrates an understanding of the Board's CPD requirements including the criteria for CPD accreditation and criteria for approved CPD provider status as described in the Board's CPD registration standard and guidelines and CPD provider manual.	3
3. Demonstrates that appropriately qualified and skilled staff, with adequate resources, will be available to undertake the CPD accreditation functions for the optometry profession.	3
4. Describes a strategy to ensure that any issue or matter which is, may be perceived to be, or may lead to a conflict of interest will be avoided or appropriately managed.	3
5. Has demonstrated experience in undertaking accreditation functions.	2
6. Describes any cost-recovery and user-pays model; this will be transparent and easily understood by providers and costs will be reasonable.	2
7. Is available to undertake CPD accreditation functions for the anticipated three year term.	1
8. Describes a communication strategy to communicate with the profession including approved and non-approved providers of CPD activities on matters relating to all CPD accreditation functions.	1

5.3 Evaluation and scoring

Submissions will be evaluated against the criteria listed above, using the following scale:

Evaluation	Score
Exceeds all aspects of the evaluation criterion	4
Exceeds some aspects of evaluation criterion (and meets all other aspects of the evaluation criterion)	3
Meets the selection criterion	2
Fails some aspects of the selection criterion	1
Fails all aspects of the selection criterion	0

An initial evaluation may be used to shortlist proposals. Following short listing, one or more bidders may be interviewed to provide clarification or further information. Shortlisted bidders may be invited, as part of the evaluation process, to submit a Best and Final Statement in relation to all or certain aspects of their respective submissions.

All bidders will be advised of the final outcome of the selection process.

The successful bidder/s will sign a confidentiality agreement.

The successful bidder/s will undertake the CPD accreditation function on behalf of the Board for a three year term.

The bidder/s will be named in the Board's *Guidelines for continuing professional development for endorsed and non-endorsed optometrists* and *Continuing professional development provider manual*.

6. Cost modelling

The Board expects that this function will not require any establishment or ongoing funding by the Board from registrant fees. Any costs incurred in the performance of the CPD accreditation function need to be either met by the organisation or be based on a cost-recovery/ user-pays model.

For each of the CPD accreditation functions listed at section 3.6 of this document, submissions should provide a summary of any proposed cost recovery (see *Response schedule*). Narrative should accompany this summary. This narrative is expected to describe a detailed cost-recovery arrangement including other costs, such as communication, venue, travel, catering, other expenses – please detail (if applicable).

7. Terms and conditions

The expression of interest process will be managed in accordance with the terms and conditions set out below.

1. **General.** Bidders should familiarise themselves with this document and ensure that their submission conforms with the requirements set out in it. Bidders are deemed to have examined statutory requirements and satisfied themselves that they are not participating in any anti-competitive, collusive, deceptive or misleading practices in making a submission.
2. **Acceptance.** Non complying submissions may be rejected. AHPRA may decide not to accept any submission.
3. **Explanations.** AHPRA shall not be bound by verbal explanations or instructions given prior to acceptance of a proposal.
4. **Financial Assessments.** AHPRA reserves the right to engage a third party to carry out assessments of bidders' financial, technical, planning and other resource capability.
5. **Legal Entity.** Bidders must provide proof of their legal status.

6. *Taxation Requirements.* AHPRA prefers to deal with suppliers who have an Australian Business Number (ABN), unless there is clear evidence that the relevant supply is not assessable for income tax purposes (i.e. hobby or recreational interest).
7. *Additional Information.* If additional information to that contained in this document is required by AHPRA when bids are being considered, written information and/or interviews may be requested to obtain such information at no cost to AHPRA. AHPRA may also provide additional information or clarification.
8. *Process.* AHPRA reserves the right to withdraw from the expression of interest process described in this document for whatever reason, prior to the signing of any agreement/contract with any party for the delivery of goods or services described in this document, and/or to alter the process.
9. *Negotiation.* AHPRA reserves the right to negotiate with shortlisted bidders after the expression of interest closing time and to allow any bidder to alter its submission.
10. *Part Submissions.* AHPRA reserves the right to accept submissions in relation to some and not all of the scope of activity described, or appoint one, more than one or no organisation on the basis of the submissions received.
11. *Conflicts of Interest.* Bidders must declare to AHPRA any matter or issue which is, may be perceived to be or may lead to a conflict of interest regarding their proposal or participation in the supply of the goods or services described. Bidders must describe a strategy so that any conflict of interest will be avoided.
12. *Confidentiality.* All bids and any accompanying documents become the property of AHPRA. Ownership of all information, reports or data provided by AHPRA to bidders resides in AHPRA. The bidder shall not, without the written approval of the CEO of AHPRA, use the information or reports other than in the development of the submission or the delivery of the goods or services. Such information, in whatever form provided by AHPRA or converted by the bidder, must be destroyed in a secure fashion following advice of the outcome of the expression of interest process or at completion of the provision of the goods or services.
13. *Notification of Probity Breach Required.* Should any bidder consider that the expression of interest process has failed to accord it fair right to be considered as a successful bidder or that it has been prejudiced by any breach of these Terms and Conditions or other relevant principle affecting the bids or their evaluation, the bidder must provide immediate notice of the alleged failure or breach to the Contact Person. Notification must set out the issues in dispute, the impact on the bidder's interests, any relevant background information and the outcome desired.
14. *Lobbying.* Any attempt by any bidder to exert influence on the outcome of the assessment process by lobbying, directly or indirectly, AHPRA staff or Board members will be grounds for disqualification of the bid from further consideration.
15. *Cost modeling.* All costs modeled in a submission must be represented in Australian dollars. Price variations over the period of the contract must be advised. Bidders must state the factor and reasons for any variation.

8. Queries

Queries can be directed to:

Contact Name	Executive Officer, Optometry Board of Australia
Email Address	CPD_Optometry@ahpra.gov.au

All requests for clarification or for additional information must be lodged by the nominated date (refer to the process timetable above) to allow sufficient time for response and information to be provided to all parties making a submission. AHPRA reserves the right to not respond to such requests, irrespective of when such requests are received.

9. Submission of expression of interest

All submissions must be made by completing and signing the attached Response Schedule, which is to be submitted as follows:

Email Address	katrina.xanthos@ahpra.gov.au
Subject line of message	CPD Accreditation Function – Expression of Interest
Submissions must be received at the above Email Address by	COB 27 November 2013

Response Schedule

Background Information

1. Bidder Details

Full Legal Name of the Bidder	
Trading Name	
Entity Status (eg: Partnership, Company etc)	
ACN number	
Registration for GST	(Yes or No)
Australian Business Number (ABN)	
Place of Incorporation	
Postal Address	
Principal office	
Contact Person	
Position/Title	
Telephone No	
Mobile No	
Facsimile No	
E-mail address	

2. Qualifications and Experience of Key Project Staff

Name	
Title/Office Held	
Employee or Consultant	
Qualifications	
Length of Relationship with Company	
Previous Experience	
Role/functions to be performed	

[Repeat Table as Required]

3. Financial Capability

Bidders are required to demonstrate that they have the financial capacity to provide all the requirements specified in this EOI. Accordingly, please provide the following information. If the answer to any of the following questions is yes, provide an explanation.	
(a) Are there any significant events, matters or circumstances which have arisen since the	

<p>Bidders are required to demonstrate that they have the financial capacity to provide all the requirements specified in this EOI. Accordingly, please provide the following information. If the answer to any of the following questions is yes, provide an explanation.</p>	
<p>end of the last financial year which may significantly affect the operations of the Bidder?</p>	
<p>(b) Are there any mergers/acquisitions either recent (within the past 12 months) or which are imminent?</p>	
<p>(c) Are there any proceedings, either actual or threatened, against the Bidder, its parent or associated entities or any director of the Bidder, its parent or associated entities or have there been any such proceedings within the past five years? If so, what (if any) remedial action has been taken in respect of such proceedings?</p>	
<p>(d) Are there any bankruptcy actions against a director of the Bidder, its parent or associated entities, or has there been within the past five years?</p>	
<p>(e) Are there any de-registration actions against the Bidder, its parent or associated entities on foot, or have there been any within the past five years?</p>	
<p>(f) Are there any insolvency proceedings, actual or threatened (including voluntary administration, application to wind up, or other like action) against the Bidder, its parent or associated entities on foot, or have there been any within the past five years?</p>	
<p>(g) Is the Bidder, its parent or associated entities currently in default of any agreement, contract, order or award that would or would be likely to adversely affect the financial capacity of the Bidder to provide the Goods and/or Services contemplated by this RFT?</p>	
<p>(h) Are there any other factors which could adversely impact on the financial ability of the Bidder to successfully perform the obligations contemplated by this EOI?</p>	
<p>(i) Is the Bidder solvent and able to meet its debts as and when they fall due in the normal course of business?</p>	
<p>In addition to the information required above, bidders are required to undertake to provide to AHPRA upon request all such information as AHPRA reasonably requires to satisfy itself that the Bidder is financially viable and has the financial capability to provide the goods and/or services for which they are bidding and to otherwise meet their obligations under the proposed contract.</p>	
<p>Provide your signature as your undertaking to comply with this request.</p>	

Bidders are required to demonstrate that they have the financial capacity to provide all the requirements specified in this EOI. Accordingly, please provide the following information.
If the answer to any of the following questions is yes, provide an explanation.

Will you provide valid tax invoices?	(Yes or No)
--------------------------------------	-------------

4. Insurance (please provide details as relevant to your submission)

Proof of insurance cover:	Provider	Policy Number	Expiry Date	Limit of Liability
• Public liability				
• Professional indemnity				
• Others as relevant				
• Relevant exclusions:	(Provide separately summary of any <i>relevant</i> exclusions to the above, and their potential impact on this contract)			

5. Referees (please provide at least two)

	Referee 1	Referee 2
Company Name		
Postal Address		
Contact Person		
Position/Title		
Telephone Number		
Email Address		
Nature of professional relationship		
Length of professional relationship		

Proposal

1. Overview

Describe how you intend to meet the CPD accreditation functions including details of how the project will be implemented, managed and monitored. The extent to which a practical and workable approach is developed is a key consideration.

Please structure this information against each of the evaluation criteria for this project, as follows:

Evaluation Criteria	Bidder's Response to each Criterion
1	
2	

3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	

2. Summary of cost modelling

Deliverables	Year 1 (\$)	Year 2 (\$)	Year 3 (\$)
For each of the CPD accreditation functions listed at section 3.6 of this document submissions should provide a summary of cost recovery (see Response Schedule). Narrative should accompany this summary. This narrative is expected to describe a detailed cost-recovery including other costs, e.g. communication, venue, travel, catering, other expenses – please detail (if applicable).			
Application for new approved provider status			
Annual monitoring of approved provider status			
Accreditation of individual CPD activities Narrative should reflect consideration of cost recovery differences for those providers who provide activities on a regular basis or infrequent basis.			
Development and implementation of an audit process (as approved by the Board) for CPD activities provided by approved and non-approved providers			
Total Price : (A\$ and GST inclusive)			

3. Acceptance of Terms and Conditions

IMPORTANT: An authorised officer of the Bidder must signify acceptance of the Terms and Conditions of this submission.

If the response is submitted by post, the authorised officer's signature as indicated in this part signifies acceptance of all Terms and Conditions.

If the submission is submitted by e-mail, you must type the words "I ACCEPT" in the signature space to signify your acceptance of all Terms and Conditions.

4. Acceptance of Conditions and Endorsement

Signature of Authorised Officer	(sign here or type your acceptance)
Name of Authorised Officer	
Title/Office Held	
Date	