



## NCPI Evaluation: Term of Reference April 2020

**Objective:** To present the scope of work for a call for proposals regarding the evaluation of Núcleo Ciência Pela Infância (NCPI), which will be carried out by an external consulting company.

### 1 - Background

Núcleo Ciência Pela Infância (NCPI) is a collaborative initiative that produces, translates and disseminates early childhood development (ECD) science-based knowledge and strategies to inform and influence effective public policies, programs and services, with a focus on impact at scale for Brazilian children facing adversity. In addition to the detail and background provided below, the [NCPI website](#) provides more information regarding the initiative's efforts.

NCPI was founded in 2011 through the collaborative leadership of five partner organizations: Fundação Maria Cecília Souto Vidigal (FMCSV), the Medical School at University of São Paulo (FMUSP), Insper, Center on the Developing Child at Harvard (HCDC), and the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard (DRCLAS). In 2018, NCPI gained two additional partner organizations, Bernard van Leer Foundation (BVL) and Porticus. Sabará Hospital Infantil participated in the initiative from 2015-2017.

Since founding, NCPI has completed two phases (Phase I from 2011-2014; Phase II from 2015-June 2018), and is in the execution of its third phase, which was planned to encompass 2018-2021. In the early stages of Phase III, NCPI reframed the coalition's principal strategies, building on concepts and approaches from the prior phases. The current NCPI strategies are utilized in a transversal manner amongst the working fronts of the initiative and are listed below:

- **Capacity Building:** build and leverage the capacity of leaders, mobilizing them to create and qualify public policies and practices
- **Science and Innovation:** produce scientific knowledge, support and test solutions that can achieve impact at scale
- **Communication and Dissemination:** develop a communication strategy that informs and engages key stakeholders
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** monitor, systematize knowledge and learnings, leverage synergies among workstreams, and evaluate NCPI as well as its contribution to the system.

### 2 - Workstreams

The strategies presented have stimulated and guided the development of five working fronts. Below is a brief overview of NCPI's workstreams.

- *The Scientific Committee* is an interdisciplinary group of 20 Brazilian researchers from various fields - medicine, economics, health, biological sciences, psychology and education – who collaborate with a common objective to analyze and disseminate scientific content on topics that may impact policies and practices for early child

development. A series of five working papers have been produced and published that summarize research regarding core ECD concepts.

- *CPAC*- Building on ongoing science translation efforts, a subset of Committee members developed and submitted a collective, large-scale research proposal for FAPESP in 2019 and are currently awaiting approval. The proposed research study would include the creation of a Center for Applied and Collaborative Research (CPAC) for early childhood development. Due to bureaucratic challenges with the funding agency, this project has experienced delays but is expected to receive approval shortly. CPAC represents one the largest strategy changes new to Phase III, by shifting focus from merely scientific translation, to production as well.
- *The International Symposium for Early Childhood Development* is an event that spotlights experts and leaders from various fields to present on relevant themes in applying the science of ECD to practice and policy, generally over the course of two days. Thus far, eight editions have taken place in numerous locations within Brazil, including São Paulo, Recife and Fortaleza, each with an increasing number of participants in-person and online. The first six editions included both ECD professionals and policymakers, with a shift in 2017 and 2019 to targeting leaders in the public sector to attend the in-person event. The past two editions have increasingly strengthened the online network of “satellite symposiums,” expanding access for researchers and practitioners.
- *The Executive Leadership Program (ELP)* is a program targeting senior policymakers, public and private managers, third sector and civil society leaders, to sensitize them to the science and importance of ECD. Particularly, participants delve into the key ingredients of how to develop and qualify effective ECD policies and initiatives. The program involves a week-long, intensive session at Harvard, followed by three months of small-group action plan development. The program ends at a two-day session at Insper, where action plans are presented and given feedback. Occurring annually since 2012, the program has included more than 579 participants over eight international editions and has successfully sparked the implementation of government-sponsored ECD programs nationwide, as well as the establishment of the legal framework Marco Legal da Primeira Infância.
- *The iLab Primeira Infância* is a social innovation laboratory that creates and tests promising solutions with potential to impact the lives of children in vulnerable situations. iLab applies a specific framework of fast-cycle iteration, to continuously learn about the demands and needs of the target population and how to adapt the intervention to heighten effectiveness. The iLab portfolio has hosted two cycles of project selection and onboarding, each with a cohort of four teams: the first occurred from 2016- 2018 and second began in 2019 (projected end in 2021). The current iLab portfolio supports six projects focusing on questions regarding parenting and early childhood education in several Brazilian states. Four of these projects are from the

most recent cohort and are undergoing initial piloting phases. Two projects are from the first cohort and received extended support to conduct more advanced evaluations after having completed initial piloting in 2018.

- *NCPI's Communication efforts* involve numerous strategies to effectively disseminate key ECD concepts, in a manner that is easily understood and applied, framing the language and approach utilized in the other workstreams. During Phase I and II, a series of communication efforts were produced in partnership with the Frameworks Institute to determine how to most effectually translate ECD science to lay audiences in Brazil, coining key terminology and metaphors of core concepts. In the first year of Phase III, the NCPI communication plan was elaborated with the purpose of creating guidelines that support communication actions of the initiative itself. Recent efforts have included the implementation of the communication plan and strengthening of the NCPI brand, via social media presence, website updates and the production of other communication materials.

### **3 - Initiative Governance and Management Structures**

The current NCPI governance structure entails a Council, Executive Committee, and Extraordinary Committees, whose roles are delineated below. The project-specific actions are managed via workstreams that include staff of different partner institutions and the NCPI team (workstream teams). The NCPI staff team is composed of four analysts (project, communication and finance). The governance and management structure is discussed periodically by partners and it was most recently revised in November of 2019.

- **NCPI Council:** is comprised of senior executives from each of the organizational partners. The NCPI Council meets one to two times annually and is responsible for the overall strategy and oversight of the initiative, partnership development, and fundraising, in the medium and long term.
- **Executive Committee:** is composed of the NCPI team and one to two members of each partner institution, meeting once a month to monitor the six work fronts (Administrative, Communication, ELP, iLab, Scientific Committee and Symposium) and ensuring execution as planned. The Executive Committee is responsible for the planning, strategic decision making and supervision of the workstreams in general.
- **Extraordinary Committees:** are temporary committees to determine specific, time-sensitive decisions within a particular workstream. These committees include representatives from organizations actively involved in the execution of the particular workstream, and are held on an as-needed basis.

### **4 - Monitoring and Evaluation**

The NCPI initiative was intentionally developed to allow for adaptation and flexibility, with each front of the initiative detailing its own workstream and independent responsibilities. On a project level, each team among the working fronts has created short-term action plans with internal evaluations on a semi-regular basis, which are implemented and managed by local

teams. Teams are responsible for monitoring and evaluating ongoing projects and meet regularly to coordinate and review existing and/or future project plans.

On a systemic level, NCPI has been divided into phases of three years, and is in the middle of the execution of the third phase. The period before the planning of the next phase requires a space for reflection and monitoring. Thus, the evaluation process is important to present the results of the phase and bring inputs for the next cycle. Phase I and II received an external evaluation from contracted consultants that systematized key activities and brought insights regarding governance, strategies and results.

Phase III planning and its annual follow-up meeting (held in 2019) included an extensive process of reviewing governance structures and the roles of partner organizations in the initiative. These actions are in the implementation phase, and for this reason, these themes will not be part of the Phase III evaluation effort.

#### **4.1 – Context**

Science has increasingly illustrated the critical and foundational role that the early years play in shaping later life outcomes in all aspects of an individual's life. Disparities in access to supportive, healthy development and education in early childhood have proven to be one of the fundamental contributors to later life inequities. As a highly unequal country, with dramatic disparities in quality of life measures like health and education, Brazil remains particularly poised to benefit from effective early childhood initiatives.

#### **4.2 - Uses of the Evaluation**

Beneficiaries of this assessment will include NCPI partner organizations: Center on the Developing Child, David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies (both from Harvard University), the Medical School at University of São Paulo, Bernard van Leer Foundation, Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation, Porticus and Insper.

NCPI partners understand that this assessment will serve as a systematization of the NCPI's learnings, results and impact to create a clear narrative of what the initiative represents and will also contribute to the following points:

- Course-correct activities within workstreams, when applicable and possible;
- Identify gaps, opportunities and possible improvements for NCPI in Phase IV (new users, strategies, needs)
- Plan NCPI next steps, make decisions regarding investments and capturing of financial resources

#### **4.3 - Objectives for the Evaluation**

The principal goal of this study is to conduct an impact evaluation that:

- Understands whether NCPI remains relevant in the Brazil's current ECD ecosystem and identifies unfulfilled spaces or opportunities in which NCPI could respond to in the future.

- Understands the outcomes and results of each workstream in order to qualify the offering, products and methods. These results ought to include, but are not limited to, summaries of the number of beneficiaries/ participants in each workstream and incorporation of existing programmatic evaluations, using quantitative indicators whenever possible.
- Understands the collective impact of the initiatives, with a systemic view.

The scope of this evaluation ought to focus on Phase III, although considerations and observations from prior phases will likely be necessary for a thorough evaluation. Some results that have arisen during Phase III, may be the culmination of efforts from prior phases. NCPI's impact is considered cumulative in nature and thus any results or outcomes viewed in Phase III ought to be considered in conjunction to prior efforts and learnings in the collaborative initiative.

#### 4.4 - Evaluation Questions

Questions to be addressed by the assessment:

- *Alignment/response to ECD Brazilian landscape:* Has NCPI remained attentive and responsive to the needs, challenges and opportunities within the ECD sociopolitical environment as they have arisen?
- *Product relevance and utility:* To what extent do NCPI offerings (products, content, methodologies and tools) increase our target population's (i.e. public policy makers and practitioners) understanding, knowledge, and perception of ECD? What components of NCPI's offerings are utilized and applied in practice and in what capacity?
  - *Example of products include iLab workshops, ELP course material, ELP technical panel, working papers, Symposium content, etc.*
- *Outcomes and results:* To what extent has our target population implemented and/or incorporated the knowledge, tools and resources offered by NCPI into effective actions? Which programs, policies or initiatives have resulted or been qualified as a result of NCPI's strategies and what has been the impact of these initiatives?
  - *Note regarding initiatives' impact: within specific cases (examples- state or municipal governments, organizations, etc.) where programs/policies were implemented after engaging with NCPI offerings, examine the potential advances and/or benefits at the population level with quantifiable indicators. Do these initiatives generate positive impact- supported through data, figures and numbers- for families and young children?*
- *Impact at ECD ecosystem level:* To what degree have NCPI's initiatives encouraged the exchange of information and experiences among our target population and has this fomented a stronger ECD community? How has the bolstering of such a community impacted individual members and the ECD ecosystem?

#### 4.5 – Assessment method

The assessment methodology, process and estimated timetable is expected to be clarified and specified within the proposal. Below we suggest an initial framework so the consultants can estimate the cost and deadline feasibility.

<i>Description</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
<b>Preparatory Phase</b>		
Development of TOR	FMCSV/NCPI Partners	May 20, 2020
Discussion of proposal with NCPI partners	FMCSV/NCPI Partners	June 11, 2020
Final Proposal	FMCSV/NCPI Partners	June 18, 2020
Development of the assessment work plan with evaluation instruments/methodology	FMCSV/NCPI Partners/ Consultants	June 2020
List of key personnel to assess	FMCSV/NCPI Partners/ Consultants	June, 2020
<b>Initial Diagnosis</b>	<b>Consultants</b>	<b>June 2020</b>
Desk review of existing documents	Consultants	June and July 2020
Remote interviews with key NCPI representatives	Consultants	June and July 2020
<b>Assessment and data collection</b>	<b>Consultants</b>	<b>August – October 2020</b>
<b>Partial Report</b>	<b>Consultants</b>	<b>November 2020</b>
Preparation of the first delivery report (including draft presentation)	Consultants	November 2020
Integration of feedback into partial report	Consultants	November 2020
Second round of data collection	Consultants	November 2020 – May 2021
<b>Final Report</b>	<b>Consultants</b>	<b>June 2021</b>
Preparation of the final delivery report (including draft presentation)	Consultants	June 2021
Integration of feedback into final reporting and submission	Consultants	June 2021
<b>Dissemination</b>	<b>NCPI Partners</b>	<b>July 2021</b>
Dissemination of final report to all partners and stakeholders	Consultants/NCPI Partners	July 2021
Presentation of key findings at final project conference	Consultants	July 2021

The NCPI evaluation process should involve the various stakeholders of the initiative, including the founding and financing institutions, technical partners and also the participants of key programs. Initially, the consultants will be responsible for developing a detailed methodology that must contemplate metrics and approaches, both quantitative and qualitative, within the evaluation plan. Consultants will be given relevant literature and materials, predominately in the form of Activities Reports for Phases I, and II, as well as the NCPI Assessment. The preliminary review of existing information sources will provide an important foundation for understanding the implementation phases of NCPI.

The consultants will develop the data collection methodology, but NCPI partners expect the inclusion of in-depth, semi-structured interviews and/or focus groups as well as quantitative analysis of workstreams (i.e. number of participants, evaluations of products/programs, etc.). Interviews may be conducted online. Interviews of stakeholders will require fluency in Portuguese and English, in order to adequately address all relevant aspects of the assessment questions. Consultants will also be expected to perform a technical analysis of documents/products generated by phase III to incorporate relevant numbers/scores into the evaluation report. In addition, it is essential that evaluators conduct a metrics and/or quantitative analysis of impact in cases of program implementation, which elucidate local advances and results after participant engagement with NCPI. This analysis ought to examine how results or impacts at the community level may have resulted in light of knowledge and technical support from NCPI, and if so, in what capacity.

The consultant will conduct interviews and/or focus groups that include representatives from the following groups:

- Members of organizations participating in NCPI governance
- Participants of workstreams: ELP, iLab, Symposium and Scientific Committee / CPAC
- Representatives from all workstreams/ project leaders

A list of deliverables expected for the job includes:

- Partial reports in English
- Final reports that include the items registered in this term of reference in English and Portuguese

The consultants may expand on data collection methodologies as deemed relevant. The data collected will be analyzed by the evaluation team, to compile a complete report of NCPI's impact and gaps. In addition to the final report, evaluators will create a one to two-page summary of "key insights" that can easily be referenced by the target audience, to use as a guide or tool when incorporating key learnings into future Phase IV planning.

#### **5 - List of documents to be consulted**

NCPI Activities Report Phase I  
NCPI Activities Report Phase II  
List of interviews and script for Phase II Activity Report  
NCPI Assessment and list of interviewees  
Governance Meeting 2019 Report  
NCPI Logic Model  
NCPI internal outcomes reports (for each workstream)

#### **6 - Proposal format**

The document is expected to contain:

- Presentation of the consulting;
- Description of assessments carried out by the consultants with similar characteristics;
- Curriculum of the team involved and brief description of correlated previous work.

- Description of the methodological approach to meet the requirements presented in this term;
- Detailed description of the scope of work and expected products;
- Detailed schedule for work development;
- CNPJ and corporate name of the organization (CPF, RG and complete name of the individuals);
- Inscrição Estadual and Cadastro de Contribuinte Mobiliário (when applicable);
- Description, quantity, unit value and total deliveries included in the service;
- Total gross amount including and itemizing any applicable taxes;
- Payment method and deadlines;
- Contact details (Name, phone and email).

In order to compete for this term, the consulting firm must be registered in Brazil.

### **7 - Payment**

Payment will be divided into installments, linked to the delivery of the following products:

- 40% on signing the contract;
- 20% on delivery of the first partial report;
- 40% in the approval of the final report in English and Portuguese.

All payments will be made solely and exclusively to banks and accounts based in Brazil, which are registered in the name of the competing consulting firm.

### **8 - Criteria for selection**

The selection criteria are listed below:

- The fluency of evaluators and interviewers in English – written and conversational (eliminatory requirement);
- Understanding the scope, quality and assertiveness of the proposal;
- Technical research proposal and work methodology;
- Resumé of all involved, including interviewers;
- Relevance of previous work;
- Execution costs and deadlines;
- For the execution of the services, a multidisciplinary team of professionals should be utilized, with different capabilities and expertise in monitoring and evaluation, preferably with specialists for both quantitative as well as qualitative methodologies.

**The proposal deadline is 5<sup>th</sup> June 2020 and ought to be emailed to [ckirby@fmcsv.org.br](mailto:ckirby@fmcsv.org.br) and [mjulia@fmcsv.org.br](mailto:mjulia@fmcsv.org.br).**