

## Youth Action Program

**RFA # 0802260501**

### Questions and Answers

*All questions are stated as received in the TCP Bureau Mail Log by the deadline. The TCP is not responsible for any errors or misinterpretation of any questions received.*

*The responses to questions included herein are the official responses by the State to questions posted by potential bidders and are hereby incorporated into the RFA 0802260501 issued on July 2, 2008. In the event of any conflict between the RFA and these responses, the requirements or information contained in these responses will prevail.*

#### **Clarification**

**Attachment 3 of the RFA has been revised.  
Please refer to Question 21.**

**Section C, Staffing, of the RFA has been revised.  
Please refer to Question 26.**

1. P. 3 - It appears that up to 16 contracts with max of \$175,000 will be awarded - Is that whether or not we propose single or multiple counties to serve (correct assumption ??)

Answer: Funding for each contract will be determined by the scope of work being proposed, the quality and cost-effectiveness of the application content and the geographical areas the applicant proposes to serve. The geographical area (or catchment area) may be one county, several counties or specific areas within a county.

2. P. 27 , section two, statement of need, #1 - for "county(ies) - I assume we then prepare our RFA for one or more counties. If we prepare for multiple counties, do we then prepare separate applications?? Or will we develop one application to include multiple counties. However, over in #2 also on p 27, there is reference made to "catchment areas" - which currently means multiple counties (ie - monroe/livingston, wayne/ontario, or yates/seneca). So, do we propose an application covering single counties, multiple counties, or catchment area counties - just a bit confusing.

Answer: The catchment area or geographic area must be proposed by the applicant. Catchment areas are defined as geographical areas that may consist of one county, several counties or specific areas within a county. On page 27, applicants are instructed to describe the proposed geographic area to be served under the RFA. One application should be developed per catchment area.

3. Should the first year's budget be prorated since the first year will be for 11 months?

Answer: No, although the first period is for 23 months, it includes two terms: term 1 is for 11 months and term 2 is for 12 months. The maximum funding levels are set at \$175,000 per term.

4. Just to catch the flow here, will we get an answer to this inquiry? Or are all questions held on to until the question period expires on 7/16?? Then, to further clarify - between 7/16 and 8/13, will the RFA procedure, etc. be reworked and then re-posted again, based on questions like ours from the field?

Answer: Answers to all questions will be posted on the date specified in the RFA (August 13). The posted Questions and Answers document become part of the record and is, therefore, official.

5. The grant does not specify whether an agency may apply for a county outside either its "area" or "region" based upon the Regional Structure Map enclosed in the RFA. Are applicants who apply for a county (or counties) outside of either: the specified area or region, going to be considered for funding?

Answer: The TCP regional map was included for your information. The applicant will propose the geographical area (catchment area) it wishes to serve. This may include proposed catchment areas of any configuration and that "cross" the area/regional map provided as reference.

6. If more than one agency applies for the same county or counties (for example: Organization A applies for counties X, Y, and Z, and Organization B applies for counties A, B, and Z) and both score 70 or better and both meet all the criteria for funding, what happens to county Z, who would service the county?? Would one organization NOT be funded at all/ or completely? Would one organization be funded without county Z? How does this work?

Answer: Answer: Funding for each contract will be determined by the scope of work being proposed, the quality and cost-effectiveness of the application content and the geographical areas the applicant proposes to serve. The geographical area (or catchment area) may be one county or several counties. A score of 70 is a passing threshold. Only applications that score 70 or above will be considered for funding. The top 16 scoring applications will be funded. In cases where two or more applications propose to cover the same catchment area, the application with the highest score will be funded for that catchment area; the lower scoring application(s) will be awarded based on the unduplicated catchment area. Only one organization will be funded per catchment area.

7. With 16 total contracts to be awarded, does this mean that there may be counties or areas that do NOT get funded?

Answer: Yes.

8. Is the state looking to fund only 2 grants per area or 4 per region (as there are 16 grants, 4 regions, and 8 areas)?

Answer: The State will be judging each application on the criteria stated in the answer to question 1. There is no set formula for how many applications will be funded in a certain area or region.

9. Are letters of support or commitment encouraged/required? If letters are accepted, is there a limit on # submitted with the application? I was unable to locate any information re: such letters in the RFA.

Answer: Letters of support or commitment are not required for this RFA, but may be included as an attachment. Letters of support are not considered in the scoring process.

10. Section IV Program Plan page 28 I understand that we are to use the Evaluation Planning Matrix (Attachment 9) for at least 1 impact evaluation project. Is there a particular format for describing how the agency will meet the core deliverables, e.g., narrative description along with work plan table?

Answer: There is not a required format to answer this question, an organization/agency may decide how best to respond to this question keeping within the page limits specified in the RFA.

11. Section IV of the RFA (Program Plan): It asks for the applicant to, "describe a logical, achievable plan for organizing, implementing, and accomplishing all of the core project deliverables over a 5-year contract period." Can we utilize the Work plan document/format that the RC coordinators currently use to produce their work plans or should we write the Program Plan as a word document?

Answer: There is not a required format for this section of the RFA, applicants should decide how best to respond to this question keeping within the page limits of the RFA.

12. Can the application include tables? If so, should the minimum font be 12?

Answer: Tables may be included in the application. Minimum font size for a table should be no less than 10 point.

13. What is the time period for the average "base" funding of \$175,000? I.e., does this mean \$175,000 per year for the first two years or \$175,000 for both years (23 months)?

Answer: It is expected that up to 16 contracts will be awarded, each with a base funding not to exceed \$175,000 per term. Term 1 is for 11 months and term 2 is for 12 months. The maximum funding levels are set at \$175,000 per term.

14. Are potential applicants discouraged from submitting applications to more than one of the NYS RFAs?

Answer: Potential applicants may apply to any RFA for which they are eligible.

15. Can we apply for the grant through our agency, but use an outside agency as our fiscal agent? If so, which agency should be described in Section III of the application, the agency that will perform the work or the fiscal agent or both?

Answer: The organization that applies for the grant resulting from this RFA will be the contract holder. The contract holder is responsible for completing all activities described in the RFA.

16. On page 29 of the RFP for Youth Action (#0802260501), the instructions state: "Using the evaluation planning matrix (Attachment 9), describe how you will conduct program evaluation to measure the impact of selected activities and strategies and contribute to the achievement of Tobacco Control Program objectives and goals." My question is: Within the body of the application/proposal, are you looking for up to two pages of *narrative* in this spot, narrative that has been *derived* from our use of the evaluation planning matrix? Or are you looking for the actual completed evaluation planning *matrix itself* to be inserted into this spot in the proposal? In this latter interpretation, I would understand that the completed matrix would comprise the final two pages of the numbered pages allowed (i.e., pages 24 and 25). I so much appreciate your quick clarification of this point.

Answer: Applications should provide up to two pages of narrative describing the approach to the evaluation of the proposed project, specifically related to measuring the impact of selected activities and strategies and contributing to the achievement of tobacco control program objectives and goals. The completed evaluation planning matrix must also be included as an attachment (not included in the page count) and both the two-page narrative and the evaluation planning matrix will be used to score the section on evaluation.

17. In a related question: would it be allowable to use a font size that is slightly smaller than 12 points (for example 10 points) when completing the Evaluation Matrix (or similar table with column constraints), if doing so makes it easier for the reader to see complete thoughts and/or provides better understanding of the content in each column?

Answer: Minimum font size for a table should be no less than 10 point.

18. Appendix D of the RFA is a sample work plan. Do we have to follow this format or can we use the format that our Reality Check program currently uses?

Answer: An applicant may choose to use a format that they feel best meets the needs of the question being asked.

19. On page 23 of the RFA, it states the contract is five years with the initial period covering 23 months, the second period covering 24 months and the final period as a one year renewal. Should we submit one five year work plan? Should we have five separate plans, one for each year? Or should the work plan cover the initial 23 months with one, two or three subsequent work plans for the remaining years?

Answer: The RFA is requiring a program plan for the first 23 month period.

20. Will the RFA be made available in Word format so our organization may electronically fill in all necessary forms?

Answer: No. However, the forms in the Attachment section will be posted in Word format.

21. In the Program Plan section on page 28, it doesn't state anything about the need for the time line to be an attachment but on the application checklist (Attachment 3) it has a line asking if the time line and work plan are attached as appendix. Should the time line be included as part of the work plan?

Answer: Attachment 3 has been revised and is posted on the DOH website along with other attachments; the timeline is part of the 10 page program plan asked for on page 28, it should not be included as an appendix.

22. For the evaluation section discussed on page 29, does the two page limit include the evaluation matrix? The matrix isn't listed on the checklist (Attachment 3). Is it supposed to be an attachment to the application or included in the application and part of the page count?

Answer: The two page limit refers to the narrative described in the answer to question 17. The completed matrix must be completed and included as an attachment. (See the answer to question 16.)

23. Should the evaluation planning matrix be completed for each program year or just the first year of the project?

Answer: The evaluation planning matrix must be completed for the first term (11 months) of the project only.

24. Page 16 at the very top (under the Evaluation section starting on page 15) It states: "... programs will dedicate up to 5% of grant funds to program evaluation..." Is it the contractor's choice to decide what element to evaluate within Youth Action? What form of evaluation is TC seeking?

Answer: Contractors will propose which elements to evaluate in their application. Approved contractors will work with Tobacco Control Program Evaluation Specialists to develop the final evaluation projects to measure the impact of selected activities and strategies from their work plan to demonstrate progress towards stated outcomes. The form of the evaluation must focus on measuring the impact of contractor strategies and activities. Process evaluation may provide useful information but will not suffice as the evaluation project.

25. Page 16, Working with Youth, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence: "...applicants should propose the model..." Are models identified in the CDC Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs ? If not what is the source or reference for such models?

Answer: The paragraph this question refers to is how the applicant proposes to effectively engage and best work with youth. Agencies which apply will employ differing techniques, philosophies and approaches to successfully engage youth to meet the objectives of this RFA. Applicants should describe these approaches.

26. Page 19, under C Additional Requirements..., bullet 5, "...coordinators...minimum of a bachelors degree..." How do you apply for an exception for a competent existing staff member with an AS but in process seeking a BA degree, with years of youth action experience and also sitting (early September 08) for the Credentialed Prevention Specialist certification within the NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services.

Answer: This section of the RFA is revised to read: "A bachelor's degree or equivalent is strongly recommended but not required." Each application will be scored in the category of staffing patterns and qualifications.

27. Page 28, section VI – position within YAP titles. Internal hierarchy of the agency has Youth Action Program staff identified as "Program Coordinators" and their immediate supervisor is titled the Program Director. Does this individual agency distinction in titles OK if defined and outlined in the application?

Answer: Yes

28. Page 29, Section VII Budgets, last two paragraphs. 1- "Ineligible items...reduced to reflect the removal...", and 2 - "NYS funded indirect costs not to exceed 10% of direct costs....i.e., space, rent, etc..." Where specifically does it identify "eligible" items that assure an accurate and proper budget submission?

Answer: Page 29, Section VII, states that all costs must be related to the provision of services as described in the RFA, as well as be consistent with the scope of services, be reasonable and cost effective. Items not related to the provision of services will be deemed ineligible.

29. Indirect costs should also include the past item called “administrative” which entailed audits, liability insurance, etc and all the supportive needs that support the program delivery?

Answer: Yes.

30. Assuming new territory is accrued under the accepted application, will existing resources from previous TC YAP funded programs in that territory come with the new contract?

Answer: No.

31. Are letters of support accepted with this application? (V. A. Application (Content Sections I - III))

Answer: Letters of support or commitment are not required for this RFA, but may be included as an attachment. Letters of support are not considered in the scoring process and are not included in the page count.

32. Is a single agency (Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rensselaer County) allowed to apply for two programs?

Answer: It is not clear if the word “program” in this question is referring to applying for funding for multiple catchment areas (to be funded as a result of this RFA) or referring to applying for funding for other tobacco control program procurements (for example: community partnerships, cessation centers, etc.). Agencies may apply for funding for any of the procurements for which they are eligible. A listing of current solicitations may be found at: <http://www.nyhealth.gov/funding/>.

Agencies may apply for funding for more than one catchment area as a result of this RFA. Agencies that wish to submit applications for separate catchment areas may do so by submitting separate applications. For example, one application may propose to serve a 3-county catchment area and another application may propose to serve one county as a catchment area. Whatever configuration is proposed, each application must comply with the specifications set forth in the RFA.

33. What will happen in regards to the counties who are being dissolved into the 16 grants? Will the counties that become regional Reality Check's receive all the gear, work records, cat reports from those counties? How would that process work?

Answer: Applicants will propose the geographical area they propose to serve. It is not expected that every county or area of the state will be covered by the resulting contracts. These are new procurements and we do not anticipate forwarding any past equipment, gear or reports.

34. Is the catchment area for the application defined by the current TP boundary in which the fiscal agent does business or can the agent apply for the specific counties it feels it can optimally serve?

Answer: Applicants are not restricted to work within the boundaries of the fiscal agent's service area.

35. Are backup attachments needed of policies? If so, are they counted as additional pages?

Answer: Applicants may include policies in their application if they wish. Policies should be included as an attachment and not included in the page count.

36. What are the population guidelines used to determine funding amounts?

Answer: Funding for each contract will be determined by the scope of work being proposed, the quality and cost-effectiveness of the application content, the geographical area the applicant proposes to serve and the availability of funding.

37. Does the program propose salary guidelines for program coordinators? Are there current salary recommendations or requirements for program coordinators? If not, would salary recommendations or requirements become available for the program?

Answer: No. The State does not establish salary requirements for coordinators, but salaries should be commensurate with education, experience and scope of work.

38. These questions refer to Section 3: Project narrative, paragraph C3: Additional Requirements for Organizations Funded Under this RFA—Meetings and Trainings.

- a. Please clarify what the expectations are for attending these meetings?

Answer: This section lists the requirements for Youth Action Coordinators. Attendance at these meetings is required. Travel is required as part of the job of Youth Action Coordinator.

- b. Who is meant by fiscal agent?

Answer: A fiscal agent is usually the holder of the contract. In this RFA, fiscal agent is defined as the contract holder.

- c. What is the purpose of the quarterly regional meeting? If it focuses on fiscal questions, should agencies send a bookkeeper or finance manager? How long

are the meetings? Are meetings face to face? Where would they be held? If agency directors are required to attend, could agency directors phone in for a portion of meeting?

Answer: Regional meetings facilitate cross-modality collaboration, coordination and local planning. Regional meetings, usually held four times per year, are working meetings, where planning, problem solving, and information sharing occur. Agendas are sent out ahead of time so that appropriate staff (fiscal or otherwise) may attend. Meetings may be held via conference call (up to two meetings per year) or in person and are held at various venues within the particular region. If the meeting is face to face, it is usually a day-long meeting, if the meeting is by phone, it may be one to three hours long. As stated in the RFA, coordinators and fiscal agents (contract holder) are required to attend the meetings in person, in most instances one person representing the contract attends the meeting.