

**Response to Written Questions
Regarding the Re-released Request for Proposals for
Training Services for the Bureau of Supplemental Food Programs (BSFP)
RFP No. 0710300335**

PROPOSAL COMPONENT

1. Question:

With regard to the task “Print, copy or reproduce materials,” please clarify why the rate per 50 posters has an estimated annual quantity of 25. Is the Bureau asking for 50 copies of 25 posters? Also, does the BSFP have any particular specifications for the posters in terms of size, material, number of colors, etc.?

Response:

The BSFP is seeking a price for printing, copying, or reproducing materials. The price is for 50 copies of 25 different, discreet posters (For example: all 25 posters are 4-color—10 are 8-1/2” x 11”size and 15 are poster size). Quantities are determined in lots of 50.

CONTRACT

1. Question:

Since hiring the most effective candidates could be a lengthy process, when is a new contract expected to be awarded? And, what is the lead time for the contract to start?

Response:

The new contract is expected to be awarded by January 15, 2009. This will allow the new Contractor approximately 55 business days to prepare for the anticipated start of the contract – April 1, 2009.

2. Question:

What criteria will be used to determine whether the contract for the Training Center will be extended for the maximum five-year contract period?

Response:

We will be evaluating the training services contract to be sure that all contract deliverables are met in a manner satisfactory to the BSFP. The BSFP intends to enter into a two-year contract, from April 1, 2009 – March 31, 2011. The contract may be extended for three additional one-year terms, at the sole discretion of the DOH, for a maximum contract period of five years.

3. Question:

Can all training activities for a particular region be subcontracted by the agency submitting the proposal? If so, are there specific requirements/restrictions for subcontracts?

Response:

Yes. All training activities for a particular region may be subcontracted by the Contractor provided all of the following criteria are met:

- *Any subcontract or assignment must receive the prior written approval of the New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH).*
- *The planned use of any and all subcontractors must be clearly explained in the proposal.*
- *The Contractor must ensure that all subcontractors abide by all terms and conditions of the contract.*
- *Prior approval is also required for any cost or term amendment to approved subcontracts.*
- *Subcontractor must be a responsive and responsible vendor.*

The Contractor is ultimately responsible for the contract and must ensure that all deliverables are met.

STAFFING

1. Question:

Are there minimum or maximum limits on the number of RD's, IBCLC's, CPA Trainers and Clerk Trainers the contractor can hire?

Response:

No. There are no minimum or maximum numbers of RD's, IBCLC's, CPA trainers or clerk trainers the Contractor can hire. The proposer must provide a staffing plan to meet the needs of their proposal and the minimum requirements of the RFP.

TRAINING

1. Question:

With regard to the revised project period (April 1, 2009 – March 31, 2011), we are projecting to commence training in New York City within 30 days of grant award and in Albany during the summer months. Based on our training experience, we have found that staff will not sign-up for trainings during July and August and consequently rarely schedule trainings at that time. Please clarify the Bureau's expectations about initiating training during the summer.

Response:

The BSFP expects that trainings will be held throughout the year, including the summer months. We expect that the Contractor will deliver trainings shortly after the contract is awarded.

- 2. Question:**
Can NYSDOH provide technical details on its current and expected satellite and teleconferencing capacity? What systems and protocols?

Response:

The BSFP, in conjunction with the training contractor, determines the approximate number of and topics for teleconferencing each contract year. The proposer must determine systems and protocols for this modality.

- 3. Question:**
Since on-line training can include different modalities - e.g. LMS, Webcasts, PDF Files - with different prices and/or monthly fees, can NYSDOH define specifically what it expects online training to consist of?

Response:

The BSFP intends to utilize a variety of training modalities to maximize training opportunities for all staff as outlined in the RFP. The proposer must consider the costs of each modality in the RFP.

- 4. Question:**
Can NYSDOH provide details on the expected frequency and type of updates of the breastfeedingpartners.org website?

Response:

The website contractor provides quarterly updates as requested by BSFP staff. The updates to the website include, but are not limited to, screen revisions, functionality, system maintenance and enhancements. There is a daily update component which is maintained by the IBCLC staff member. These updates include current activities within the WIC Program, responses to site inquiries, and development of links to other breastfeeding resources.

- 5. Question:**
What are the criteria for determining a training unit has been completed satisfactorily?

Response:

All training curricula must be pre-approved by the BSFP before being given to trainees. Criteria will be established to determine if the curricula meets standards expected of the BSFP. A training unit will be considered completed satisfactorily when all of the necessary requirements have been met to the satisfaction of the BSFP. In addition to required feedback forms completed by trainees, the Contractor is expected to monitor training needs and develop methods for meeting them.

- 6. Question:**
What supporting documents will be needed to certify that a particular training has been delivered?

Response:

The Contractor will be required to submit an invoice or a standard State Voucher in order to be reimbursed for a contract deliverable (see section E. Administrative, 7. Payment). It is up to the Contractor to maintain supporting documentation, which may include training dates, number of attendees, course curriculum, evaluation sheets, sign-in sheets and all relevant paperwork associated with regard to the training. The Contractor should consider what may be needed in an audit situation.

- 7. Question:**
NYSDOH refers to podcasts, DVDs, Webcasts and Webinars as ways to deliver trainings. As each modality has a different price, can NYSDOH define the number and frequency of trainings using each modality it expects the contractor to provide (pg 17 section d section 3).

Response:

Refer to section C. Detailed Specifications, a. Modalities for the minimum and maximum class sizes and C. Detailed Specifications, b. Topics for the estimated length of trainings.

- 8. Question:**
Does NYSDOH require both training locations be dedicated solely for the purpose of BSFP training?

Response:

The permanent location in the Capital Region must be dedicated solely for the purpose of BSFP training as well as act as the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for the Bureau of Information Technology Services (BITS) of the DON in the event of a disaster. BSFP training must receive precedence at Metropolitan Region location; however, the Metropolitan Region location may be used for another purpose if no training is scheduled.

- 9. Question:**
Must all trainings occur within contiguous space or could different types of trainings be held in separate locations?

Response:

It is the intention of the BSFP to have two permanent locations that offer a full complement of training services in both locations. Trainings held at separate locations from the two permanent training locations must be consistent with the Administration of Training Programs as outlined on C. Detailed Specifications, 4. Administration of Training Programs, a. Identify Locations.

10. Question

With regard to the Expert-led Classroom Trainings, can the Bureau please clarify or provide some examples of the format(s) that will be determined based on statewide need.

Response:

An Expert-led Classroom training will be a face-to-face event held in a classroom setting, conducted by an identified expert who provides information on a specified subject (e.g., Certified Lactation Consultant training). Format may include, but is not limited to, PowerPoint, workbook, standard classroom teaching methodology, textbooks, etc. The expert would be responsible for submitting a curriculum which the BSFP would pre-approve. Trainings such as these are likely to be provided in each region for a specified timeframe in each.

11. Question:

With regard to Expert-led Conferences – Please clarify whether these conferences need to be face-to-face or can they be done using a distance learning technology, such as webinar? If face-to-face, is the assumption that the conference is a full day? Is it the expectation that a conference has multiple components, such as keynote speaker, expert panels, break-out sessions, etc.? Also, please clarify whether the projected unit cost should include the experts fee, space, materials, etc.?

Response:

Expert-led Conferences are generally utilized in a teleconference format. An expert is hired to train staff on a specified subject matter. All costs associated with hiring the expert must be considered in your response to the RFP. The projected unit cost should include expert fees, space and materials.

12. Question:

What percent of “no-shows” exists at the current training center?

Response:

Historically, “no-show rates” have not been tracked. A waiting list is maintained for most training so that when a cancellation occurs, a substitution can be made.

TECHNOLOGY

1. Question:

Could the WIC Training Center share a server with already established WIC and/or WIC Vendor Management programs?

Response:

The BSFP will provide the server for both permanent training sites.

FISCAL

1. Question:

Will the State also directly fund technology costs, such as for computers and teleconferencing equipment, or are these costs to be factored into the first two years' unit costs?

Response:

The State will fund costs associated with WICSIS (e.g., WICSIS computers, printers, telecom, hardware, software and servers) only. Any other technology costs need to be considered in your response to this RFP.

These costs will not be negotiated separately and should be factored into your response to the RFP. The BSFP intends to enter into a two-year contract, from April 1, 2009 – March 31, 2011. The contract may be extended for three additional one-year terms, at the sole discretion of the DOH, for a maximum contract period of five years.

2. Question:

Do the component costs, e.g., space, phone, utilities, maintenance, insurance, personnel, consultant fees, fringe benefit rate, overhead rate, equipment, supplies, etc., also need to be described – as in a line item budget?

Response:

No. This is a deliverable-based contract with reimbursement specific to trainings delivered.

3. Question:

Will NYSDOH cover the costs of internal cabling for WIC-SIS and server network set up?

Response:

The cost of internal cabling for WICSIS, as with all costs associated with infrastructure readiness, must be factored into the response to the RFP. Server network set-up is the responsibility of the BSFP.

4. Question:

Can NYSDOH provide counts of equipment it plans on providing to the training center so we can plan for space needs; e.g. how many check printers, network switches and regular printers etc.

Response:

The BSFP will provide adequate equipment based on the response to this RFP. The BSFP will work with the successful Contractor to determine appropriate quantities of equipment needed for training purposes.

5. Question:

What are the costs associated with WICSIS that the State indicates it will fund?

Response:

The State will fund costs associated with WICSIS (e.g., WICSIS computers, printers, telecom, hardware, software and servers).

6. Question:

Should the contractor include costs for telephone system wiring in the cost per pupil day?

Response:

Yes. The proposer must consider costs for the telephone system wiring in the cost per pupil day.

7. Question:

With regard to the On-site Local Agency Training – Please clarify if the per diem per trainer is an all inclusive amount (i.e., travel, overnight, etc.).

Response:

Yes, the proposer must consider all associated costs when responding to this RFP.

8. Question:

How will it be paid if a participant attends less than 100 percent of the training (i.e., 2 of 4 days, 3 of 5 days)?

Response:

The Contractor will be reimbursed on a per pupil-day attendance rate. If a trainee attends for part of a day, the Contractor will be reimbursed the per pupil-day rate.

9. Question:

With regard to Expert-led Classroom Trainings – Please clarify whether the estimated annual quantity of 140 is the number of days of training that the expert will deliver. Also, is the unit cost (not to exceed rate) the cost of the expert or the total cost to deliver the training (i.e., what should be included in a premium per day)?

Response:

Yes, the estimated annual quantity is the number of days of trainings the expert will deliver. The premium per day should reflect the cost of the expert. The Contractor will be reimbursed the per pupil-day rate for each trainee that attends the training in addition to the expert premium.

10. Question:

What will be the process for billing on completed training units?

Response:

The Contractor will be required to submit an invoice or a standard State Voucher in order to be reimbursed for a contract deliverable (see section E. Administrative, 7. Payment).

11. Question:

The Cost-Proposal Instructions (page 57 of the RFP) state that “estimated annual quantities may not be changed” and that “costs must be proposed based on units and estimated annual quantities provided for each item.” Can an applicant propose a training design or plan within the Technical Proposal that deviates from the estimated annual quantities with sufficient justification or rationale for offering fewer trainings while still covering all required training topics? We assumed that we did have flexibility based on the instructions on page 11 of the RFP to provide at least the same number of trainings that have been offered in the past. Our Cost Proposal, however, will reflect the estimated annual quantities stated on pages 58 and 59 as instructed.

Response:

No, the proposer cannot deviate from the requirements specified in this RFP.

12. Question:

How is it expected to provide costs for training sessions that may vary since there would be a definite cost differential based on the minimum and maximum stated?

Response:

The proposer must consider these factors when determining rates.

13. Question:

How would the training center account for any change in fringe benefits if costs need to be the same for years one and two?

Response:

The proposer must consider these factors when determining rates.

14. Question:

How long will it take for the first payment to arrive if there is no cash advance for this project?

Response:

The Contractor will be required to submit an invoice or a standard State Voucher in order to be reimbursed for a contract deliverable (see section E. Administrative, 7. Payment). The normal processing time for payment once the invoice or standard State Voucher is received by the BSFP is 30 days.