

**Tobacco Control Program (TCP) Training Center**  
**RFP No. 0906121018**

**Questions and Answers**

*Responses to all questions received by the TCP by the deadline indicated in the RFP are included in this document. 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 RFP 0906121018 issued on August 3, 2009. In the event of any conflict between the RFP and these responses, the requirements or information contained in these responses will prevail.*

Clarification

Please note that Attachment 4a has been revised and is attached to this document. This form should be included as an attachment to your cost proposal; however, the estimated meeting costs for future planning should NOT be included in your bid. These projected costs are for future planning only.

Training

1. Regarding items listed on p. 6, #2 - Does this list of items refer to the first training program or all training programs? That is, is TCP expecting to receive these items for all the trainings to be conducted in the year at one time or 4 months prior to the first time each training will be delivered?

A. This question appears to refer to page 10, #2 of the RFP. The four-month timeline stated in the RFP is for each newly developed training. The vendor will provide the items listed on page 10 to the TCP a minimum of four months prior to the delivery of each scheduled training delivery. As noted elsewhere in the RFP many of the items listed will also need to be incorporated into a semi-annual training calendar (e.g. course title, description, objectives) and therefore may be needed more than four months prior to a training delivery.

2. Are the In-person walk-thru trainings (pilots), described on p. 11, included in the 45 days of training?

A. No, walk-thru or pilot trainings are not included in the 45 days of training for community program contractors.

3. On P. 11, regarding the submission of trainer and participant manuals to TCP - does TCP expect a formal, bound trainer and participant manual for every training topic or is there some flexibility?

A. As outlined on pages 10-11 in the RFP, the vendor will provide the TCP with a formal participant and trainer's manual and relevant handouts including copies of Power Point slides for each scheduled training. The materials do not need to be bound, they may be provided in folders or three ring binders. In all instances the materials will be provided electronically to the TCP.

4. Are trainers required to be hired at a specific FTE?

A. No. Trainers must have the appropriate skills and experience as described in the RFP. The vendor should propose a staffing pattern sufficient to implement their proposed plan.

5. For the purposes of budgeting for the Needs Assessment evaluation, how many TCP contractors are there in the state of NY?
  - A. There are approximately 110 community program contractors funded by the Tobacco Control Program statewide. This number should be used for purposes of this RFP.
6. Page 10, a. Training Development and Design, 1. states that, "Training topics a-f (above) are current trainings that are already developed.... Can you provide a trainer's manual, a participant's manual, and other related training materials for one of these topics as a sample?
  - A. Yes, examples of these materials are posted along with this document.
7. Page 10, a. Training Development and Design, 1. states, "Training in other subjects related to tobacco control and chronic disease prevention and adult health will be identified over the duration of the contract term." Who is responsible for the identification of additional training needs?
  - A. Additional training needs such as those mentioned on page 10 will be identified by Department of Health staff, input from the training vendor, training evaluation data and the mid-point needs assessment to be conducted by the vendor.
8. Page 10, a. Training Development and Design, 2. states, "The following timeline will be used for designing new trainings." Approximately how many new trainings are expected to be designed each year?
  - A. Historically, two to three new trainings have been developed each year. The actual number will depend on TCP priorities and the emerging training needs of the tobacco control workforce.
9. Page 11, b. Training Development and Design, 5, states "The training contractor will maintain a resource bank of consultants, and when needed, will purchase services from state or nationally recognized experts." Does the TCP currently maintain a list of consultants? Can the list be shared with us?
  - A. The TCP does not maintain such a list. It is a requirement of the RFP that the training contractor identify and maintain a resource bank of consultants as stated on page 11. TCP staff will work collaboratively with the vendor to identify consultants and national experts as the need arises.
10. Page 11, b. Training Delivery, In-Person Training, states there are "45 full days of in person training per year." Are meals and breaks to be provided for these training events? Will any of the 30 potential trainees be provided with travel reimbursement or overnight accommodations?
  - A. The vendor will not provide food or refreshment (except water) at training. The vendor is not responsible for reimbursing community program contractors for travel or overnight accommodations.
11. Page 11, b. Training Delivery, In-Person Training, states there are "45 full days of in person training per year." What is the preferred training length, i.e., full-day, half-day, or multi-day?
  - A. Training length will depend on the training being delivered. For purposes of the RFP, vendors should plan on: ten ½-day trainings, 34 one-day trainings, and 2 three-day trainings. For the purposes of this RFP vendors should plan on the following trainings being offered in the Albany area: 25 of the one-day trainings, 5 of the half-day trainings. The other trainings: 9 of the one-day trainings, 5 of the half-day trainings and 2 of the three-day trainings will be offered in various locations throughout NYS. As noted on page 15 of the RFP all full-day (or longer) trainings sessions require a minimum of two trainers. Trainings shorter than one day may be delivered by

one trainer.

12. Page 15, Number 11, third bullet, discusses posting and mailing a semi-annual training calendar. If there are interim calendar changes, would this require another print mailing, or will posting on a web site sufficient?

A. Any changes made to the semi-annual training calendar after the mailing to contractors may be made electronically on a web site and by alerting contractors to the change via a blast email.

13. How far in advance will the Contractor be able to secure meeting venues with a signed contract with the venue?
14. Will the Contractor be able to make deposits for a meeting venue in the future, for example, two years out?

A. There is no set timeframe for securing meeting venues. Dates are often set to respond to emerging priorities. In most cases, it would not be appropriate to make deposits for a meeting venue two years out. In all instances, the TCP will work with the vendor on a timeline for event planning, including securing meeting venues.

### Public Relations

15. On p. 15, the contractor is expected to design, maintain and monitor a system for substantiating facts used in PR materials. Does this apply to materials developed by the vendor only or materials developed by all other contractors as well?

A. This applies to materials developed by the vendor and materials from other sources that the vendor recommends for use by the TCP.

16. The vendor is expected to develop a public relations crisis management plan to be implemented with TCP contractors (p.15). Would TCP provide a sample situation in which such a plan would be implemented?

A. The vendor will be expected to work with the TCP for the rapid dissemination of information to contractors in the event of a public relations "crisis" or time of rapidly emerging new issues that need to be communicated quickly. An example would be the passage of a new tobacco control law (e.g., an increased tax, an amendment to the Clean Indoor Air Act, etc) or the opportunity to educate decision makers and the public about an emerging tobacco control issue (e.g., new tobacco products, new research, etc.).

17. On p. 15, bullet 9, is the applicant expected to develop press releases, kits, etc. or are we expected to assist programs with their development (e.g. develop templates and guidelines)?

A. Both. The FTE public relations staff person will be expected to assist TCP contractors with the development of press releases with corresponding press kits and other supporting materials. For purposes of this RFP, vendors should plan on the development of six press releases, corresponding press kits and other supporting materials per year.

18. When providing support at press events hosted by TCP contractors (p. 15) - will the contractor be expected to be on site at these events?

A. In most cases, the contractor will not be expected to be on site at press events. For purposes of this RFP, contractors should plan to attend one press event per year.

19. Can the FT Program Manager, with appropriate experience, be the FT public relations staff person as well (supported by other staff)? Is TCP expecting that the vendor will have, at a

minimum, 2 FT staff and a PT mid-level staff person or is there flexibility in the staffing, as long as the total FTEs are equivalent?

A. No, it is a requirement of the RFP that the vendor maintain one FTE program manager and one FTE public relations staff person. The program manager will provide oversight of the entire project including the work of the public relations staff person. The vendor should meet this requirement and propose a staffing pattern that will ensure the scope of work is met.

### Event Coordination

20. Page 13 refers to meeting planning and coordination for “modality meetings.” Could you define a modality meeting? What role will the successful vendor be expected to play at the modality meeting? Is it limited to meeting planning or does it include training?

A. A modality meeting is a meeting at which representatives of the community program contractors for an individual modality (Community Partnerships, Youth Program, Advocacy in Action, Cessation Centers or School Policy) meet with a defined agenda focused on activities of their particular program area (modality). The meeting agendas are set by TCP staff and the meetings are facilitated by TCP staff. In most instances the vendor is not expected to attend modality meetings unless there is a training-related agenda item. The vendor is always responsible for modality meeting planning and coordination as described on p.13 of the RFA (registration, securing the meeting location, etc.), and may also be directed to provide modality-specific training in conjunction with modality meetings. Such training would be outlined in the semi-annual training plan approved by the TCP. Please note: the RFP states that the vendor is responsible for compiling and distributing modality meeting minutes, this is an error. The vendor is not responsible for compiling and distributing meeting minutes.

21. Page 13, f. Event Coordination, Meeting Planning and Coordination, paragraph two states, “The two and a half day meeting will take place every eighteen months with the first meeting occurring in May 2012.” In Attachment 4, item f., states the first meeting will occur in May 2011. Please clarify the year.

A. It is anticipated that this meeting will take place in the Spring of 2011.

22. Page 13, f. Event Coordination, Meeting Planning and Coordination, paragraph one states, “...plan on modality meeting coordination for twenty, one-day modality meetings in Albany.” Would the general Albany area be considered, such as East Greenbush, Troy or Schenectady, in order to keep costs down?

A. Yes, meetings may take place in venues in the Albany area.

23. Pages 9 and 13. There is a discrepancy in the number of days of the modality meetings. Page 9 states in Paragraph two that “Modality managers convene all contractors within each modality four times each year for one- or two-day meetings or trainings.” Page 13 indicates there will be twenty, one-day modality meetings. Please clarify.

A. Modality meetings are scheduled for one day. However, the TCP encourages trainings to be developed around modality meetings (the day before or the day after) when possible to reduce travel costs for community programs and TCP staff. Twenty modality meetings will be held each year.

24. Pages 13 and 14, Event Coordination, Meeting Planning and Coordination, regarding conference flyers, booklets, and post-meeting reports. Will these materials require color printing?

A. The vast majority of materials developed as a result of this RFP will be in black and white. Some materials, such as those developed for multi-day, statewide meetings may be printed in color. Post meeting reports may be printed in black and white.

25. Page 14, Other Training, Meeting Planning and Coordination, Estimate of Meeting Costs for Future Planning, Meeting D for 800 Participants. Is it required that all participants be housed in the same hotel? Would a Winter Conference be considered to get better rates?

A. It is not required that all participants of a training be housed in the same hotel. However, the meeting site should be in close proximity to other hotels where participants may be lodged. A winter conference would be considered.

### Cost/Budget

26. Page 18 notes that if “no best value bid falls within the department’s budget, the department reserves the option to return to all vendors and secure a best and final offer.” Is there a specific budget range per year?

A. The TCP cannot include a budget amount in an RFP since it is a competitive procurement whereby the score is partially based on cost. During state fiscal year 2008-2009, the Tobacco Control Program’s total state appropriation was approximately \$80.4 million. The 2009-2010 draft budget for the Tobacco Control program was publicly presented to the Tobacco Use Prevention and Control Advisory Board at its January 2009 meeting. That draft budget is posted for your reference along with the Questions and Answers document. Since that proposed budget, the 2009-2010 enacted budget includes \$68 million for the Tobacco Control Program and funding for several initiatives was reduced by approximately 15 percent. As with other procurements, these dollar amounts are estimates and subject to change.

27. Under Meeting Planning & Coordination activities (p. 13) should the applicant budget for food/refreshments for any of the meetings/events?

A. For purposes of this RFP, the vendor will be expected to budget for food/refreshments for the following meetings: a) a multi-day, statewide meeting expected to take place in the Spring of 2011 (approximately 300 participants), and b) an annual TCP sustainability training (approximately 180 participants). Food/refreshments will not be provided for any other meetings, trainings or events.

28. For the Other Training Events (p. 14), are all the meeting types free events (no registration fee for attendees)? What items does TCP expect to be included in calculating the fixed cost for meeting coordination (e.g. facilities, planning and coordination, supplies, speaker fees/travel, etc)?

A. Meetings will be free events; the TCP does not charge a registration fee for meetings. The fixed cost for the events listed on page 14 of the RFP should be inclusive of all costs associated with meeting coordination such as staff time to plan and work the meeting, obtaining and paying for meeting location/facility, handling all aspects of meeting registration, designing a conference flyer and posting it on the training web site, ordering conference bags/notebooks and other materials (when applicable), printing meeting booklet and shipping to the meeting site, and providing a post meeting report that includes an analysis of participant satisfaction.

29. Should the information requested on page 14 of the RFP and on Attachment 4a be included as part of our bid in the cost proposal?

A. No. The information requested on page 14 and Attachment 4a is for future planning purposes only. Attachment 4a should be included as an attachment to the Cost Proposal, but should not

be included in the bid in response to the RFP. A revised Attachment 4a is attached to this document.

30. On pages 11 and 12, the RFP refers to in-person training and notes that reimbursement for travel and lodging will not exceed the stated standardized agency rate. Should participant travel and lodging be included in the budget submitted with the proposal or will attendees of trainings be expected to cover travel/lodging expenses? How many in-person trainings typically include overnight lodging?
31. Are travel reimbursements or overnight rooms for participants (not guest speakers) to be paid (at government per-diem rates) under this contract? For trainings only offered in two locations across the state, considerable travel distance is anticipated. Also for modality meetings or statewide multiday meetings?
32. Is travel reimbursement of overnight rooms for participants (not guest speakers) to be paid at the government per diem rate?

A. The vendor is not responsible for reimbursing community program contractors for travel or overnight accommodations. The TCP community program contractors will pay for travel and overnight accommodations out of their contract budgets.

33. The RFP does not indicate the Indirect Cost rate that should be used. Please provide the rate.

A. The Department of Health does not provide indirect cost rates for Requests for Proposals.

#### Miscellaneous

34. On page 16, the RFP states that, "The proposal should be clearly divided into three sections, one for each component, with headers for each section." What components is this referring to? There are 4 Sections in the proposal outline, if this is referring to these sections, is this a type-o?

A. In preparing the technical proposal, vendors should include the following:

- A Cover Sheet
- An Executive Summary
- A section on Organizational Experience and Capacity
- A section on Staffing
- A section of the Program Description

Each of these sections should be clearly marked with headers for each.

35. On p. 19 - b. Technical Evaluation formula - it seems that this formula should be inverted.

A. Correct. The scoring methodology was inverted. The technical score will be normalized using the following formula:  $\text{Vendor's Score} / \text{Highest Score} \times 80 = \text{Score}$ . This score will be added to the normalized Financial Score resulting in a Total Combined Score.

36. Page 24 notes that the contract begins on December 1, 2009, however, page 17 (under the Financial Proposal) states that the contract begins April 1, 2010. What is the appropriate start date for the contract?
37. Page 17, Number 2, states "A contract resulting from this bid is expected to be in effect for five years beginning April 1, 2010" Page 24, Number 8, a., states "The anticipated contract term is for 60 months; it is anticipated to start on December 1, 2009 and be in effect through November 30, 2014." What is the correct term for the contract?

A. The term of this contract is expected to be 5 years (60 months). It is expected that the contract resulting from this RFP will start on April 1, 2010 – March 31, 2015.

38. Is there a current provider of these services? If so, who is the provider, what has been the period of time of their service, and at what level were they funded?

A. The current contractor for training/event coordination only for the Tobacco Control Program is Cicatelli Associates, Inc. (<http://www.cicatelli.org/Expertise/sub9Tobacco.htm>) The five-year contract term for this contract will end on March 31, 2010. When the original contract was executed, the value of the five-year term of the contract was \$2,490,762. Please note that the Training Center RFP is a more comprehensive procurement and contains a different scope of work than the RFP that procured the current training contractor.

39. The RFP references a "training web site," what will this include?

A. The vendor will maintain a tobacco control section on the organization's web site. These user-friendly pages will include but not be limited to: an electronic version of the statewide training calendar, schedule of webinars, an overview of the tobacco training project, description of all training courses, state-of-the art on-line training registration and other useful links.

#### Administrative/Legal

40. Page 24 Ownership of Training, Resource Materials, Public Relations Content – We request that the word "enhanced" be deleted. Please confirm that the NYS DOH will not own pre-existing material.

A. The Department of Health will not own pre-existing materials. However, existing materials enhanced by DOH funds shall become the property of the New York State Department of Health.

41. Page 24-25, Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire. If we provide email correspondence from OSC, advising that the vendor is exempt from the requirement to submit the Vendor Responsibility Form, will that be sufficient to explain why we have not enclosed the completed form in our application?

A. Yes, correspondence from OSC indicating that your organization is exempt from submitting a Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire is sufficient.

42. The last sentence of this paragraph refers to the Vendor Responsibility Attestation as Attachment 9. It is included in the RFP as Attachment 8.

A. The Vendor Responsibility Attestation is Attachment 8.

43. Page 27, New York State Tax Law Section 5-a. As we are not a contractor under Section 5-a of the tax law, we do not fulfill all of the eligibility criteria that requires registration. We are, therefore, exempt from the law's definition of a contractor that must comply with Section 5-a, which includes completion and submission of forms ST-220-TD to NYS Taxation and Finance and ST-220-CA to NYS Dept. of Health. Is it acceptable if we submit form ST-220 instead?

A. Yes, if your organization is exempt from submitting a ST-220-TD, a ST-220 may be submitted instead.

44. Appendix D General Specifications

Paragraph C. We request that the section of this paragraph be revised to read "...the Department shall have the right to arrange for the completion of the work in such manner as the Department may deem advisable up to the amount of the bid".

Paragraph M4. We request that this paragraph be deleted as turn of the century issues should have already been addressed prior to this point in time.

Paragraph T2 Provisions Upon Default. We request that the second sentence be revised to read "...have been satisfactorily performed by the Contractor up to the date of the termination of this agreement, which such compensation shall not exceed the total cost incurred including non-cancellable commitments for the work which the Contractor was engaged in...."

Paragraph Z. Confidentiality Clauses.

Item 1. – We request that the words "and approved" in the second sentence be deleted.

Item 2. - We request that the words "written approval" be deleted in the first sentence and be replaced with "review". Our company policy is that we must have the right to publish articles in scholarly journals without sponsor approval.

A. Requests for changes in the NYS contract boilerplate language will not be considered at this point in the procurement process.

**Attachment 4 a**

**NYS Tobacco Control Training Center**

**Estimate of Meeting Costs for Future Planning\***

Please provide a flat rate for the following:

<b>Meeting Category</b>	<b>Rate</b>
Meeting A: A two-day meeting in Upstate NY with 30 participants	
Meeting B: A one-day meeting in Upstate NY with 200 participants	
Meeting C: A one-day meeting in Upstate NY with 100 participants	
Meeting D: A three-day meeting in Upstate NY with 800 participants	
Meeting E: A half-day meeting in Upstate NY with 75 participants	

\*This information will not be scored and should not be included as part of the bid.

This form should be attached to the Cost Proposal.