New York State Department of Health
Bureau of Supplemental Food Programs
WIC Training Center RFP # 15728
Question and Answer Document
October 23, 2014

1. Could you please confirm that the trainings listed on p.12 under "Classroom Modality" should be offered in year one and on an annual basis in subsequent years (2-5)? With the exception of the two trainings listed under classroom in year 1 and on-line in years 2-5, we are assuming all of these would be in-person, classroom trainings, correct?
   A. DOH reserves the right to change the delivery method utilized for each training; however, the first thirteen trainings listed on page 12 under "Classroom Modality" reflect the estimated annual in-person classroom training needs of the DOH throughout the term of the contract. Classroom trainings are face-to-face events in classroom-type settings with instructor(s) teaching specified curriculum to groups of trainees.

2. Could you please define the elements of the "on-line computer based modalities"?
   We are interested in the level of interactivity* expected for the on-line programs and whether the intent is for them to change knowledge and/or behavior? The different levels will have a significant impact on cost for the program.
   *Levels of Interactivity:
   Level 1 – Passive: learner is receiver of information, simple interactions including navigational buttons, lots of text- and graphics-based content, simple audio, "talking PowerPoint", test questions;
   Level 2 – Limited Interaction: Learner makes simple responses to instructional cues, multiple choice exercises, pop-ups, and simple animations, scenario-based multiple choice, interactive animations;
   Level 3 – Complex Interaction: Learner makes multiple and varied responses to cues, text entry boxes, manipulation of graphic objects, scenario-based branching logic, progress is determined by decisions, high level illustration and animation
   A. DOH's intent is to change both knowledge and behavior with the training courses. Some courses will focus on primarily changing knowledge or behavior, while others will be a mixture of both. The on-line training modalities will be a mixture of the three levels of interactivity. DOH estimates that approximately 25% of the on-line computer based modalities will be Level 1, 50% will be Level 2 and 25% will be Level 3.

3. On page 30 it states that in the event of a tie, additional factors will be considered, including references. Could you please indicate if these should be reference letters from funders, WIC agencies or both? Is there a limit on the number of references to be provided?
   A. In the event of a tie, we will request reference letters from each of the vendors. These references will be to confirm the bidder's ability to perform the services requested in the RFP. We will limit the number to 5.

4. Is there a page limit for the technical proposal and attachments?
   A. No, there is no set limit, but bidder should provide the information in the least amount of pages necessary.

5. If we have no expectations to sub-contract with any businesses for the services to be provided, (if any sub-contracts are awarded, they would only be with individual consultants), what are the expectations on the part of the State with regard to the MWBE plan?
   A. The State has associated a MWBE goal of 20% (10% MBE and 10% WBE) with this procurement. All bidders are required to prepare and submit Form 1 – Utilization Plan describing how they plan to meet the stated goals. If a bidder indicates on Form 1 that their utilization is less than the stated goal, the bidder must complete Form 2 - Utilization Waiver Request to request a waiver from the stated goals. The waiver must justify why the bidder could not meet the goal and include documentation of good faith efforts taken to meet the goals of this procurement.

6. (Attachment 6) Under "other services" is the curriculum/online computer based training modification (200 hours) intended for existing curricula and/or computer-based programs?
   A. These hours are intended for existing curricula and on-line computer based revisions, in accordance with Section D.9, page 21 of the RFP.

7. (p.13) How is the general training for clerks/CPAs that is to be converted to 6 hour on-line programs different from the current 5-day WICSIS program?
   A. DOH anticipates that the on-line training will focus on the policies, policy supplements, and procedures that clerks and CPAs must understand in order to complete their respective tasks within WICSIS (and the successor system).

8. (Attachment 6) Under "other services" - What is the difference between Annual Workforce Needs & Competency Evaluation (happens annually) and Annual Workforce Needs & Competency Re-Evaluation which happens annually starting in Year 2?
   A. The Workforce Needs & Competency Re-Evaluation in years 2 – 5 will be a follow-up assessment of the staff category chosen for assessment in the prior year. The re-evaluation will examine staff progress in enhancing skills and competencies that were identified as deficiencies in the prior year's assessment.

9. For the full time project manager, dietician, and information technology staff - will DOH provide desk space at a DOH office?
   A. No, not at this time. However, DOH reserves the right to reconsider this in the future.

10. Does DOH have a preferred platform for synchronous computer-based training?
    A. No, DOH does not have a preferred platform. The selected contractor shall choose a platform that is compatible with local agency and state staff computers, which utilize a Windows based operating system. Internet Explorer (IE) 8 or higher is preferred, with Adobe Reader add-on. For web based applications, compliance with NYS Enterprise IT Policy NYS-P08-005 is also required.

11. Does DOH have a preferred platform for asynchronous computer-based training?
    A. See response to Question #10.

12. Does DOH have a preferred platform for webinar training identified?
    A. See response to Question #10.

13. For all online training methodologies, does the selected platform have to be one supported by NYS OITS? IF so what are these platforms?
    A.   No. The contractor will select and support the platform. However, the State currently uses WebEx.

14. If there are outstanding questions regarding preferred platforms for online training can the cost proposal include a notation that DOH will pay actual cost for software (CBT) and/or webinar services preferred by DOH since these cannot be accurately included in the training delivery cost absent specific formats and/or platforms?
    A.   No. The selected contractor will choose the platform, ensuring that it is compatible with local agency and state staff computers (see answer #10 above). The selected contractor will be responsible for paying for all software costs.

15. Does DOH have a preferred methodology for the annual workforce needs and competency evaluation? Can this be administered via an online system?
    A.   No, DOH does not have a preferred methodology for administering the annual workforce needs and competency evaluation. Yes, it can be administered via an on-line system.

16. Can DOH regional office locations be utilized to host training?
    A.   DOH regional office locations will not be utilized to host training.

17. Trainee registration - will the contractor be required to utilize the NYS SLMS for state staff? Other staff?
    A.   No. All staff (both state and local agency) will utilize the platform chosen by the contractor for course registration.

18. Does DOH have a preferred LMS identified for the project website and training management?
    A.   No. It is up to the selected contractor to choose a LMS that will meet DOH's needs as described in the RFP (Section D.7).

19. Will the dedicated website for managing training delivery services be hosted on NYS DOH or OITS servers or is it the responsibility of the contractor to provide hosting services?
    A.   It will be the responsibility of the contractor to provide hosting services.

20. Training delivery at no cost to attendees/registrants - does this include travel expenses, lodging, and meals, i.e. should the proposal include anticipated expenses for these trainee costs? If not for standard classroom training then for the conferences only?
    A.   All travel expenses for attendees, to include lodging and meals, will be the attendees' responsibility to pay. There should be no registration fees or any other fees charged by the contractor to attendees to attend a training or workshop.

21. Is there an estimate of what portion of the classroom training material that needs to be converted to online training materials? Is there a specific list of titles?
    A.   The table on page 13 identifies the courses that will be converted to on-line trainings in year 1. However, delivery methods of the training may change from one modality to another throughout the term of the contract.

22. If not is it the intent of DOH to have all training materials in the current library converted to online delivery format?
    A. No, at this time, it is not DOH's intent to have all trainings converted to on-line training. Use of new training technologies may impact estimated or future projections.

23. Requirements indicate that a website must be up and running 60 days after signing of the contract. Is this for a fully functional website with an integrated LMS or an online presence with other functionality to follow as DOH approves an LMS, and other systems and applications?
    A. The website must be functional within 60 days of contract approval by the NYS Office of the State Comptroller (OSC). DOH expects the website to be fully functional.

24. Will DOH compile a list of possible MWBE vendors that are possibly interested in becoming a sub-contractor and share that with possible primary contractors? If so what us the process to be included as part of that list?
    A. The State maintains a directory of certified MWBE firms. Vendors can search the directory based upon business description of commodity code to locate potential certified MWBEs for partnering.

       The web address is: http://esd.ny.gov/MWBE/directorySearch.html

25. Does DOH anticipate that the MWBE percent of contract target will be increased based on recent announcements for the governor's office?
    DOH does not anticipate a change at this time.

26. Please explain this statement on page 25, Section E 1(d): "Preference will be given to managers who are experienced at overseeing large and complex training programs."
    A. DOH is looking for a Project Manager with relevant experience managing adult education training programs of a size and scope similar to that described in this RFP (approximately 1,700 total staff, located all over NYS, who will be trained via a variety of training modalities).

27. The RFP states that the contractor must have a training website functional within 60 days of notice of contract approval. Within what timeframe will the contractor be expected to begin offering some of the classroom trainings, as listed on page 12?
    A. DOH expects that the successful contractor will begin to offer classroom trainings also within 60 days of notice of contract approval.

28. Please explain the Estimated Total Units (Classroom Training Days) figures in the chart on page 12.
    A. The Estimated Total Units is the expected total number of classroom training days per year for each training course listed. For example, the course called Breastfeeding: It's What We Do is a one day training. We estimate four classroom training days, meaning it will be offered four times per year. As another example, the course called Participant Centered Group Facilitation is a two day training that will be offered three times for a total of six classroom training days.