

**RFP 20251 – Simulation Modeling  
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS  
March 6, 2023**

**Question #1**

**Corresponding Section:** D.6 Paragraph (b) – Attachment 8 – Appendix H

**Question:** In lieu of a Business Associate Agreement, would Data Use Agreements be acceptable for research organizations as research does not meeting the definition of a Business Associate (45 CFR 160.103)?

**DOH Response:** *No, a Business Associate Agreement is required. The form of Data Use Agreement currently used by the Department of Health includes a Business Associate Agreement.*

**Question #2**

**Corresponding Section:** 4.0 Scope of Work

**Question:** It is noted that “Contractors will be requested to provide responses that address all of the requirements of this RFP as part of its Technical Proposal.” Can you please confirm if we are to provide a project approach or project plan in response to each task in Section 4.0 and if so, what section of the Technical Proposal Narrative should that detail go in?

**DOH Response:** *The Bidder should include a project approach that addresses all of the inclusions in the technical proposal per the instructions provided in the RFP.*

**Question #3**

**Corresponding Section:** 4.1 Scope of Work

**Question:** It is noted that “Historically, the Department has allocated \$1.5 million over a five (5) year period for simulation modeling services.” This same statement appeared in the RFP in 2017. Is there any updated guidance on this allocation in more recent years? Please provide

**DOH Response:** *This continues to be the allocation for simulation modeling services moving forward.*

**Question #4**

**Corresponding Section:** 4.1.2 Scope of Work

**Question:** It is noted that the Contractor services include providing written analysis. Are written analysis expected to be internal to NYSDOH or published reports?

**DOH Response:** *Some analyses will be internal to NYSDOH and others may be made public.*

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**Question #5**

**Corresponding Section:** 4.1.4 Scope of Work

**Question:** Does NYSDOH expect to transmit member-level enrollment data to the Contractor, or would the Contractor remotely access the data?

**DOH Response:** *NYSDOH will transmit data to the Contractor.*

**Question #6**

**Corresponding Section:**

**Question:** Can you give examples of the type of additional policy studies that fall outside the scope of the studies listed in the RFP that your agency anticipate would be requested? Roughly how many hours would these additional studies require?

**DOH Response:** *DOH often requires the simulation modeling contractor to estimate the effects of spending state budget proposals or federal proposed legislations. As such, DOH does not currently have a list of those potential policy studies at this time.*

**Question #7**

**Corresponding Section:**

**Question:** Would an MBE firm bidding as a prime, jointly with a non-MWSBE firm, be exempt from the 30% MWBE requirement?

**DOH Response:** *If the MWBE is the prime contractor, they meet the whole “M” goal, but will still need a waiver from the “W” goal. If the MWBE is the subcontractor of the non-MWBE firm, then the prime contractor would need a waiver from the “W” and based upon their portion of the total cost bid with the “M”, they could meet or need a waiver from goals.*

**Question #8**

**Corresponding Section:**

**Question:** Please provide a breakdown of hours (assuming an average hourly rate) for reach of the following 4 main categories of tasks listed in RFP (i.e., 4.1.1-Modeling Impact of Federal and State Policy Changes on New York, 4.1.2- Simulation Modeling Post Open Enrollment Period, 4.1.3- Macroeconomic Impact of ACA Implementation on New York, 4.1.4- Member-level Health Plan Selection, Competition, and Stability in New York’s Health Insurance Market)?

**DOH Response:** *The Bidder should provide this information as it depends on their organizational structure, policies, and other key factors in what determines how they produce work.*

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**Question #9**

**Corresponding Section:**

**Question:** Is Urban Institute, as mentioned in the RFP, the present provider of the sought services in the RFP? If not, who is and how long has the company been delivering their services to NYS DOH? Additionally, do you have any problems or restrictions with your existing provider?

**DOH Response:** *Yes, the Urban Institute is the current contract holder.*

**Question #10**

**Corresponding Section:**

**Question:** Every year, roughly how many projects and project hours will be requested?

**DOH Response:** *The contractor should anticipate one update of modeling following the end of the annual open enrollment period. The number of other projects will depend on factors outside the control of the Department of Health, including the actions of the executive and legislative branches of the federal and State governments.*

**Question #11**

**Corresponding Section:**

**Question:** Please specify the data sources that the NYS DOH will make accessible for this project?

**DOH Response:** *NYS DOH will make available Medicaid and NY State of Health Marketplace eligibility, enrollment, and cost data. Other information may be provided depending on the analysis being requested.*

**Question #12**

**Corresponding Section:**

**Question:** We understand that providing vendor with access to essential data sources for this project may take time. Can you please share an estimate of the time necessary to get access?

**DOH Response:** *This depends on the vendor's model and how they integrate data. DOH prefers to send most data via encrypted excel worksheets.*

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**Question #13**

**Corresponding Section:**

**Question:** If a contractor provides QHP support for an issuer in New York, will the contractor be conflicted from proposing on the scope of work or can they submit a proposal as long as those working with the NY issuer are firewalled from the work (that is, the teams will be completely separate and not have access to the other work files)? a. Is the answer the same if the contractor provides Medicaid or Medicare support for a NY health plan?

**DOH Response:** *The conflict of interest is defined by the QHP the bidder works with. The conflict must be resolved with that QHP. In addition, the bidder must define the guardrails they have in place in order to eliminate the conflict, such as conflicting uses of information provided to the bidder.*

**Question #14**

**Corresponding Section:**

**Question:** For the simulation modeling, please confirm that micro simulation is not required? For example, would simulation modeling grouping the market into cohorts with similar expected behaviors be sufficient?

**DOH Response:** *Demographic detail, including income, age, race, and other relevant categories would be required as part of simulation modeling. Market level cohorts alone are insufficient for DOH's needs.*

**Question #15**

**Corresponding Section:**

**Question:** For the cost proposal, can there be a single hourly rate for the prime contractor and a different hourly rate for a subcontractor?

**DOH Response:** *The instructions require that a single hourly rate should be provided. If there is a subcontractor, that rate would be determined between the contractor and the subcontractor.*

**Question #16**

**Corresponding Section:**

**Question:** For the analysis will the contractor have access to data (whether from the state or from issuers) or is the expectation that any modeling will rely on publicly available data?

**DOH Response:** *This depends on the vendor's model and how they integrate data. DOH prefers to send most data via encrypted excel worksheets.*