RFA #20400 / Grants Gateway # DOH01-SRAE01-2024

New York State Department of Health

Center for Community Health/Division of Family Health/
Bureau of Perinatal, Reproductive and Sexual Health

Sexual Risk Avoidance Education Program

Questions and Responses 10/26/2023

1. **Question: I am trying to view the attachments on this RFA in the grants gateway, but it is not letting me start an application to see it. I am logged in as a "Grantee". Can you help with this?**

   Response: Per § IV.B. of the RFA, "questions of a technical nature" should be directed to **Grants Gateway Team Email:** grantsgateway@its.ny.gov Phone: (518) 474-5595 Hours: Monday thru Friday 8am to 4p.m (Application Completion, Policy, Prequalification and Registration questions).

2. **Question: We are interested in submitting a proposal for the RFI sent out yesterday for the Sexual Risk Avoidance Education Program RFA# 20400 Grants Gateway# DOH01-SRAE01-2024. Our agency has multiple program areas, and we wish to know if one agency may submit multiple but different proposal ideas to this same RPF.**

   Response: Per § II.B., "Applicants may request an annual award amount up to $275,000 for a single application…Applicants who wish to serve more than one region through the Sexual Risk Avoidance Education initiative must submit a separate application for each region they wish to provide services in. Failure to submit a separate application for each region may result in disqualification." One application per region will be accepted per Applicant.

3. **Questions: In reviewing the proposal requirements for the Sexual Risk Avoidance Education Program, I was hoping to find the NYS Adolescent Sexual Health Needs Index (ASHNI) in the pre-submission uploads but was unable to locate it. Would you kindly provide me with additional guidance?**

   Response: Per § VI, "Please note that all Attachments to this RFA are accessed under the "Pre-Submission Uploads" section of the Grants Gateway online application and are not included in the RFA document. In order to access the online application and other required documents such as the Attachments, a prospective Applicant must be registered and logged into the NYS Grants Gateway in the user role of either a "Grantee" or a "Grantee Contract Signatory"."

   Additionally, Per § IV.B. of the RFA, "questions of a technical nature" should be directed to Grants Gateway Team Email: grantsgateway@its.ny.gov Phone: (518) 474-5595 Hours: Monday thru Friday 8am to 4p.m (Application Completion, Policy, Prequalification and Registration questions).

4. **Question: Based on the eligibility criteria for the current RFA, we were wondering if [our agency] would be an eligible recipient for this grant opportunity.**

   Response: Please see § II., "Who May Apply", Part A. "Minimum Eligibility Requirements."

5. **Question: The attached email indicates the grant application is due 11/21/23 however online the due date shown is 11/9/23; can you confirm the correct due date, thank you much.**

   Response: Per Addendum #1, "The New York State Department of Health has changed the Sexual Risk Avoidance Education Program RFA submission deadline from Tuesday November 21, 2023, to **Thursday, November 9, 2023, at 4:00 PM**."

6. **Question:**
   a. **Can applicants apply for up to $275,000 per year for a total of $1.375M over the five-year grant period, or are they limited to $275,000 over the total five-year period?**
   b. **Additionally, will applicants with higher ASHNI scores be prioritized compared to those with lower scores?**

   Response:

   a. Per § II.B., "Applicants may request an annual award amount up to $275,000 for a single application."
   b. No, applicants will not be prioritized for higher ASHNI scores. Per § II.A., "Applicants must provide programming to one or more priority zip codes as defined by the Adolescent Sexual Health Needs Index score within their identified focused county(ies) (Attachment 5)."

7. **Question: In reviewing the proposal requirements for the Sexual Risk Avoidance Education Program, I was hoping to find the NYS Adolescent Sexual Health Needs Index (ASHNI) in the pre-submission uploads but was unable to locate it. Would you kindly provide me with additional guidance?**

   Response: Per § VI, "Please note that all Attachments to this RFA are accessed under the "Pre-Submission Uploads" section of the Grants Gateway online application and are not included in the RFA document. In order to access the online application and other required documents such as the Attachments, a prospective Applicant must be registered and logged into the NYS Grants Gateway in the user role of either a "Grantee" or a "Grantee Contract Signatory"."

   Additionally, Per § IV.B. of the RFA, "questions of a technical nature" should be directed to Grants Gateway Team Email: grantsgateway@its.ny.gov Phone: (518) 474-5595 Hours: Monday thru Friday 8am to 4p.m (Application Completion, Policy, Prequalification and Registration questions).

8. **Question: Is there a minimum ASHNI score that should be targeted in terms of identifying zip codes in which programming will be implemented? It was unclear whether attachment 5 includes just priority zip codes or whether it is a list of ASHNI scores for every zip code in the State. Some scores are very low (less than 1.0), and others are over 100.**

   Response: No, there is no minimum ASHNI score. Per § II.A., "Applicants must provide programming to one or more priority zip codes as defined by the Adolescent Sexual Health Needs Index score within their identified focused county(ies) (Attachment 5)."

9. **Question:**
   a. **Our Grants Gateway had expired since we had not uploaded the financial documents for last year. They are now uploaded, and the Document Vault is under review. However, because of this we are not able to see the attachments for the opportunity. We are intending to apply and would like to submit a letter of intent. Is there any chance you could email the LOI attachment so that we can submit according to the instructions?**
   b. **Additionally, do you know how long it typically takes for the Document Vault to get reviewed and our vendor profile back up, or who we can reach out to expedite the process?**

   Response:
   a. Per RFA § VI, "Please note that all Attachments to this RFA are accessed under the "Pre-Submission Uploads" section of the Grants Gateway online application and are not included in the RFA document. In order to access the online application and other required documents such as the Attachments, a prospective Applicant must be registered and logged into the NYS Grants Gateway in the user role of either a "Grantee" or a "Grantee Contract Signatory"."
   b. Per § IV.B. of the RFA, "questions of a technical nature" should be directed to **Grants Gateway Team Email:** grantsgateway@its.ny.gov Phone: (518) 474-5595 Hours: Monday thru Friday 8am to 4p.m (Application Completion, Policy, Prequalification and Registration questions).

   Additional information about Prequalification can be found at the following link: https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/get-prequalified.

10. **Question:**
    a. **With the RFP due date moved up, will the Q&A responses be provided earlier as well?**
    b. **I ask because I cannot find any reference to the which are the priority zip codes. The ASHNI score attachment shows all zips and scores but does not show which are the priority areas.**

    Response:

    a. As per the RFA Cover Page, "Questions, Answers and Updates Posted (on or about): 10/25/2023"

b. Per § II.A., "Applicants must provide programming to one or more priority zip codes as defined by the Adolescent Sexual Health Needs Index score within their identified focused county(ies) (Attachment 5)."

11. Question: Having great difficulty in accessing Attachment 8 in Pre-Submission Uploads. Am registered but can't access the system using the search fields. How can I get an Attachment 8?

Response: Per RFA § VI, "Please note that all Attachments to this RFA are accessed under the "Pre-Submission Uploads" section of the Grants Gateway online application and are not included in the RFA document. In order to access the online application and other required documents such as the Attachments, a prospective Applicant must be registered and logged into the NYS Grants Gateway in the user role of either a "Grantee" or a "Grantee Contract Signatory"."

Additionally, Per § IV.B. of the RFA, "questions of a technical nature" should be directed to Grants Gateway Team Email: grantsgateway@its.ny.gov Phone: (518) 474-5595 Hours: Monday thru Friday 8am to 4p.m (Application Completion, Policy, Prequalification and Registration questions).

12. Question:
   a. **In Attachment #7 Standardized Work Plan and the full RFA, we do not see requirements for quantities, such as number served, number or workshops, hours, etc. Are there any required minimum thresholds for each of the three required components?**
   b. **In Attachment #7 Standardized Work Plan Performance Measures #2 and #3 for each task and RFA 6. 601 Description of Project Narrative, Components and Description, p. 26, is there where we might include projected quantities?**
   c. **For the cover page, Attachment #11, and RFA 3. 302 Project Summary and 6. 603. Description of Project Narrative, Components and Description, pp. 24 and 26, our service area occurs within Region 6: 10469 Bronx with an ASHNI Score of 291.34; 10470 Bronx with an ASHNI Score of 34.4; 10467 Bronx with an ASHNI Score of 378.25; 10468 Bronx with an ASHNI Score of 338.15. Does our providing services in these zip codes align with the NYSDOH SRAE initiative?**

Response:

a. No, per § III.B. "Utilizing the framework of the three components, Applicants are to design and implement effective projects based on the resources and needs of the priority community and the developmental, socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, cultural needs and perspectives of the population(s) to be served." Additionally, in response to Questions 605 – 607, Applicants are to: "Provide estimates of the overall number of program participants and rationale for the estimates."; "Indicate the number of adult volunteers who will provide adult-supervised activities"; and "Provide an overview of the topics to be covered as indicated in Section III. B. Project

Components, Component 3, as well as the number of participants and number of sessions for each topic area.", respectively.

b. Per § V.A.7., "The objectives, tasks, and performance measures have been completed for you on the workplan. For the Grants Gateway Work Plan Project Summary, Applicants are instructed to insert the Project Summary as listed on page 1 of Attachment 7. In the Grants Gateway Work Plan Organizational Capacity section, Applicants are instructed to list this as "not applicable." Any additional Project Summary or Organizational Capacity entered into these areas will not be reviewed."

c. Per § II.A., "Applicants must provide programming to one or more priority zip codes as defined by the Adolescent Sexual Health Needs Index score within their identified focused county(ies) (Attachment 5)."

13. **Question: On p. 2 of Attachment 12 of the RFA, it indicates that "Positions required include: a Program Director/Manager (who serves as primary SRAE contact) and a Health Educator." Under the Project AIM curriculum, which we intend to implement, (see p. 1 of Attachment 3 of the RFA), 2 facilitators and a Program Manager are required.**
   a. **Are there minimum FTEs for the Program Manager and Health Educator?**
   b. **If so, what are they?**
   c. **Can the Program Manager also be a facilitator under the Project AIM model?**
   d. **Can the Health Educator also be a facilitator?**

   Response:

   a. There are no minimum or maximum FTE requirements indicated, however, per § V.A.8., "Applicants must: List all personal services from the Applicant Organization/agency. Include a Project Director/Coordinator or Program Manager accessible for communications, and those who will perform the essential tasks required to administer the project, including the lead in programmatic activities responsible for successful completion of the project/contract. Also, include non-personal services related to this project regardless of funding source. Indicate the funding source for each line item as indicated on the budget forms; and email contact information as applicable."
   b. See above.
   c. Yes
   d. Yes

14. **Question: In Section 8, Budget, and Staffing Plan (p. 28), the RFA states that "The initiative will not provide funding for other direct clinical/medical services and supplies, including, but not limited to: case management, mental health counseling, health care, crisis intervention, childcare or services that are available through other resources" (emphasis added). Yet, the Budget Instructions on page 2 of Attachment 12 of the RFA indicate, in part, that: "In order to be approved, all SRAE budgets must clearly include the following: Line-item detail of funds (either grant or in-kind) used to support the purchase of Contraceptive supplies. This should be included in the narrative justification under NPS "Operating Expenses"**

and include the cost per unit multiplied by the total number of units purchased. The acquisition cost for all contraceptives must reflect current 340B costs."

> **a. Is the distribution of contraceptive supplies required by this RFA? We intend to refer youth participants to youth-serving medical providers for this purpose.**
> **b. Must we include the purchase of contraceptive supplies in the budget?**
>
> **c. If yes, does that contradict the prohibition on funding for direct clinical/medical services and supplies?**
>
> **d. We receive free male and female condoms, finger cots, and dental dams from the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Must we include these free supplies in the budget?**

Response: No. Per Addendum #2, Attachment 12 has been revised to strike the following: "~~Line item detail of funds (either grant or in-kind) used to support the purchase of Contraceptive supplies. This should be included in the narrative justification under NPS "Operating Expenses" and include the cost per unit multiplied by the total number of units purchased. The acquisition cost for all contraceptives must reflect current 340B costs.~~"

15. **Question: Attachment 12 of the RFA on p. 2 states that: "A minimum of 15% of the total award amount must be allocated toward Non-Personal Expenses." Can indirect costs be included in the 15% minimum for non-personnel expenses?**

    Response: Per Addendum #2, the following text has been deleted from Attachment 12, "~~A minimum of 15% of the total award amount must be allocated toward Non-Personal Expenses.~~"

16. **Question: On p. 4 of the RFA under Introduction, it states, "…the New York State plan for SRAE funds prioritizes youth ages 10-13 living in priority communities…" The Project AIM curriculum is "designed to reduce HIV risk behaviors among youth ages 11 to 14" according to the Project AIM Starter Kit. Is it acceptable to target youth ages 10-14 for program services?**

    Response: Yes. Per § I, "This initiative strives to implement strategies to build protective factors to promote the optimal transition of youth (ages 10 - 13) living in priority communities by fostering a transition to a healthy, productive, connected middle adolescence." For purposes of Project AIM, it is acceptable to serve youth who may fall slightly outside of this age range (i.e. 10-14 years-old) to meet the curriculum's parameters.

17. **Question: Is the RFP intended to solely support abstinence-only programs, and all three-curricula intended to be abstinence-only?**

    Response: Per Addendum #2, Section III.B. Component 1 has been revised to add the following language: Education on sexual risk avoidance must ensure that it is unambiguous and has primary emphasis and context for youth that normalizes the optimal health behavior of avoiding premarital sexual activity. is medically accurate and complete.

18. **Question: If awarded a grant, would the grantee be able to include safer sex information and strategies (such as condom use) in its programming under this grant?**

Response: No. Per § I, "The purpose of the Sexual Risk Avoidance Education initiative (SRAE) is to develop, enhance, and expand prevention programs aimed at delaying the onset of adolescent sexual activity, preventing sexual abuse, coercion, and decreasing the incidence of adolescent pregnancy."

19. **Question: For Project AIM specifically, would grantees be required to attend training in California, or can training occur remotely and/or within NY?**

Response: Per § II.C., "Awardees will work with ACT (Assets Coming Together) for Youth Center for Community Action technical assistance for technical needs, including staff training for implementation of the selected curriculum from (Attachment 3)."

20. **Question: Will letters of support be accepted/read for this grant application? We thought it would be a way to demonstrate what it says on page 8 – "we are expected to work with other service providers to identify and to provide a range of positive opportunities for youth and their families; and demonstrate mechanisms are in place to make referrals to substance abuse, including alcohol and tobacco, health care services, mental health services, intimate partner, and sexual violence prevention assistance." Of course, we can state this in the application, but we thought letters of support would demonstrate that these mechanisms and relationships are in fact in place and do exist.**

Response: Support letters and linkage agreements are not to be uploaded with the Application. Per Question 604, Applicants will "describe how the Applicant organization will provide related health care service referrals to other providers of health care services to link program participants to services with local community partners and other agencies that support the health, safety and well-being of program participants, including for substance use and abuse, and mental health services."

21. **Question: On page 9 – the rfp states "Programming during regular school hours will be approved by NYSDOH on a case-by-case basis." We are a current SRAE grantee that have been approved to implement during the school day. We would like to apply to continue this practice. Can we assume that it will be accepted or is there additional information that should be included in our application?**

Response: Per § III, "Programming funded under this RFA may be provided during regular school hours, on weekdays after school hours, school vacation breaks, weekend hours, and summer vacation period. Programming during regular school hours will be approved by NYSDOH on a case-by-case basis. If an awardee is approved to provide services during regular school hours, the awardee must follow all additional guidelines given by NYSDOH. Services provided to individuals should be sustained efforts rather than one-time or sporadic contacts."

22. **Question:**
    a. **Where can we locate MWBE goal calculation guidance?**
    b. **Is there a MWBE formula recommended for with this RFA budget?**

Response:

    a. Per Attachment 9, please contact MWBE@health.ny.gov for goal calculation guidance.

    b. Per § IV.I., "The goal on the Eligible Expenditures portion of a Grant Contract awarded pursuant to this RFA will be **15%** for Minority-Owned Business Enterprises ("MBE") participation and **15%** for Women-Owned Business Enterprises ("WBE") participation (based on the current availability of qualified MBEs and WBEs and outreach efforts to certified M/WBE firms)."

23. Question: I received the grant opportunity and was wondering if it is still ok to put in a letter of interest?

Response: Per § IV.C., "Prospective Applicants who submit a Letter of Interest by the date specified on the Cover Page of this RFA may receive email notifications when updates to and modifications of this RFA are posted, including responses to written questions. Submission of a Letter of Interest is not a requirement of this RFA, nor does the submission of a Letter of Interest by a prospective Applicant impose any obligation upon the Applicant to submit an Application in response to this RFA. An application may be submitted without first having submitted a Letter of Interest."

24. Question: Is there a budget form or a budget template that must be completed in addition to completing the Expenditure Budget section in Grants Gateway?

Response: No. Per § V.A.8., "Applicants are instructed to complete the budget template in the NYS Grants Gateway". Per § V.A. Pre-Submission Uploads, "As a reminder, the following attachments need to be uploaded under the Pre-Submission Uploads section of the Grants Gateway in order to submit an application in the system.
1. Attachment 1 - Statement of Assurances
2. Attachment 9 - MWBE forms
3. Attachment 10 - Vendor Responsibility Attestation
4. Attachment 11 - Cover Sheet
5. Attachment 14 - Vendor Contact Form
6. Attachment 15 - Subcontractor Information Form, if needed"

25. Question: Is the Contract Document Properties section a part of the application that must be completed? Or is it similar to the Document Vault in that it's updated periodically?

Response: No, the Contract Documents Properties section contains elements of the contract proper and is there for preview. Per § IV.B. of the RFA, "questions of a technical nature" should be directed to Grants Gateway Team Email: grantsgateway@its.ny.gov Phone: (518) 474-5595 Hours: Monday thru Friday 8am to 4p.m (Application Completion, Policy, Prequalification and Registration questions).

26. Question: In Section II.A (page 5) of the RFP, it states that a minimum eligibility requirement is that applicants must "provide programming to one or more priority zip codes as defined by the ASHNI within their identified counties," and refers to

Attachment 5. Attachment 5 lists all zip codes in all counties but does not clearly show which are considered "Priority." How do we find the priority list of zips?

Response: Per § II.A., "Applicants must provide programming to one or more priority zip codes as defined by the Adolescent Sexual Health Needs Index score within their identified focused county(ies) (Attachment 5)."

27. **Question: Could you please let us know if the Vendor Contact Form (attachment 14) is a required document? If so, would [our agency] be the "vendor" in this case? Who would be the "vendor reviewer" that signs the form?**

Response: Per § V.A. Pre-Submission Uploads, "As a reminder, the following attachments <u>need</u> to be uploaded under the Pre-Submission Uploads section of the Grants Gateway in order to <u>submit an application</u> in the system.
   1. Attachment 1 - Statement of Assurances
   2. Attachment 9 - MWBE forms
   3. Attachment 10 - Vendor Responsibility Attestation
   4. Attachment 11 - Cover Sheet
   5. <u>Attachment 14</u> - Vendor Contact Form
   6. Attachment 15 - Subcontractor Information Form, if needed"
Per Attachment 14, "Providing this information will allow us to keep accurate records and ensure that <u>you</u> receive contract related information in a timely manner."

28. **Question: We missed the deadline to submit the letter of intent. Can we still submit it and apply?**

   Response: Per § IV.C., "Prospective Applicants who submit a Letter of Interest by the date specified on the Cover Page of this RFA may receive email notifications when updates to and modifications of this RFA are posted, including responses to written questions. Submission of a Letter of Interest is not a requirement of this RFA, nor does the submission of a Letter of Interest by a prospective Applicant impose any obligation upon the Applicant to submit an Application in response to this RFA. An application may be submitted without first having submitted a Letter of Interest."