

New York State Department of Health

Office of Public Health

Division of Public Health Infrastructure

Request for Applications OHEP 2025-01

Local Health Department Health Equity Contractor

Question and Answer Document

Questions below were received by the deadline announced in the Request for Applications. New York State Department of Health and Health Research, Inc. are not responsible for any errors or misinterpretation of any questions received. The responses to questions included herein are the official responses by DOH and HRI to questions posted by potential bidders and are hereby incorporated into the RFA. In the event of any conflict between the Request for Applications and these responses, the requirements or information contained in these responses will prevail.

Question 1: Our organization is eager to apply for the [Local Health Department Health Equity Consultant RFA](#). We have a few questions, which we will compile and submit before the 7/23 deadline, but one time-sensitive question regarding our eligibility that we're hoping can be answered sooner than 7/30 to provide sufficient time to prepare our application.

We are a non-profit organization that holds multiple grants with NYSDOH/HRI. This RFA notes eligible applicants include not-for-profit 501(c)(3) community-based organizations or academic institutions. We are not an academic institution, and while we are a not-for-profit 501(c)(3), I'm hoping to get clarity regarding what the specific criteria is to be considered a community-based organization.

Can you please confirm whether we are eligible to apply for the Local Health Department Health Equity Consultant RFA? I'm happy to provide any additional information that may be helpful.

Answer 1: For this RFA, a qualifying large Community Based Organization (CBO) is a non-profit 501(c)(3), charitable organization with an operating budget of more than \$1 million and an already established staff structure. CBOs must be able to focus on public health implementation, providing technical assistance on health improvement initiatives and/or community health planning statewide.

Question 2: I am reaching out to ask a clarifying question regarding the RFA listed above. The contracted period is listed as only three months - is this correct? I hope that since this is a verification question, you will be able to answer it prior to the question period.

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Answer 2: The current contract period is for three months (September 1 – November 30, 2025), and applicants should plan to build key foundational activities within that timeframe. The intent is to continue the work beyond this initial phase, as we anticipate a contract extension, pending funding availability and satisfactory performance, with the goal of completing the full scope of work over an estimated two-year period.

Question 3: Is there a page limit? Double/ single spaced? Margins?

Answer 3: There is no specific page limit, spacing, or margin requirement outlined in the RFA.

Question 4: Are Letters of Support required or allowed?

Answer 4: A Letter of Commitment from the organization's Executive Director or Chief Executive Officer is required as part of the application.

Question 5: Are the regional forum and statewide meeting expected to be held in-person?

Answer 5: Meetings can be held virtually.

Question 6: Is the contractor expected to cover attendee travel costs for trainings, forum, and statewide meeting?

Answer 6: The contractor is not expected to cover any travel cost or other expenses associated with attendee travel costs.

Question 7: Is food and allowable cost for forum and statewide meeting?

Answer 7: Food expenses must be pre-approved and be deemed necessary and reasonable.

Question 8: Is all this work expected to be completed in the timeframe of 3 months? or in two years?

Answer 8: The current contract period is for three months (September 1 – November 30, 2025), and applicants should plan to build key foundational activities within that

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timeframe. The intent is to continue the work beyond this initial phase, as we anticipate a contract extension, pending funding availability and satisfactory performance, with the goal of completing the full scope of work over an estimated two-year period.

Question 9: What are the evaluative components for the first 3 months for renewal of work/extension of contract?

Answer 9: Performance will be evaluated based on the completion of tasks and adherence to the deliverables outlined in the scope of work. Monthly progress reports will be required to be submitted to the NYSDOH Contract Manager. These reports must include a summary of activities conducted during the reporting period and status update on completed deliverables.

Question 10: Will the renewals be separate contracts or extensions of existing contract?

Answer 10: A new contract will be awarded as a continuation.

Question 11: Please clarify (provide more specifications) the achievement of the deliverables? Define satisfactory performance (benchmarks).

Answer 11: Performance will be evaluated based on the completion of tasks and adherence to the deliverables outlined in the scope of work. Monthly progress reports will be required to be submitted to the NYSDOH Contract Manager. These reports must include a summary of activities conducted during the reporting period and status update on completed deliverables.

Question 12: Is an evaluation plan expected?

Answer 12: Performance will be evaluated based on the completion of tasks and adherence to the deliverables outlined in the scope of work. Monthly progress reports will be required to be submitted to the NYSDOH Contract Manager. These reports must include a summary of activities conducted during the reporting period and status update

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on completed deliverables.

Question 13: Section I. Introduction, B. Available Funding: Can you please provide clarification on the project period? The RFA lists an anticipated start date of 9/1/25 and end of 11/30/25 (3-month term). It also says it may be renewed through November 30, 2026. Is the full Scope of Work expected to be fulfilled by 11/30/25, or will the selected contractor have through 11/30/26 to fulfill the scope of work?

Answer 13: The current contract period is for three months (September 1 – November 30, 2025), and applicants should plan to build key foundational activities within that timeframe. The intent is to continue the work beyond this initial phase, as we anticipate a contract extension, pending funding availability and satisfactory performance, with the goal of completing the full scope of work over an estimated two-year period.

Question 14: Section I. Introduction, B. Available Funding: Can you please clarify whether the budget (\$400,000) is for a three (3) month period (9/1/25 - 11/30/25) or whether it's through 11/30/26 (based on satisfactory performance and availability of funds)?

Answer 14: The current contract period is for three months (September 1 – November 30, 2025), and applicants should plan to build key foundational activities within that timeframe. The intent is to continue the work beyond this initial phase, as we anticipate a contract extension, pending funding availability and satisfactory performance, with the goal of completing the full scope of work over an estimated two-year period.

Question 15: Section V. Administrative Requirements, D. Budget, Section VI Attachment, HRI Budget Form Instructions, Page 6 –Subcontracts/Consultant/ Indirect Costs: Can you please confirm whether applicants with a federally approved indirect cost rate (NICRA) may apply their full rate even if above 20%?

Answer 15: The contractor may use their federally approved indirect cost rate agreement.

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Question 16: Deliverable 1, Activity 2: Are the regional engagement forums in-person or virtual?

Answer 16: Meetings can be held virtually.

Question 17: How long in duration are the forums (e.g., a couple of hours, half day, full day)?

Answer 17: There is no specified or required duration for the forums.

Question 18: Is the selected contractor expected to cover travel costs for meeting participants, or are they expected to cover their own travel costs?

Question 18: The contractor is not expected to cover any travel costs or other expenses associated with participant attendance.

Question 19: Deliverable 1, Activity 3: Is the statewide meeting in-person or virtual?

Answer 19: Meetings can be held virtually.

Question 20: Deliverable 5, Activity 1: Is the regional peer learning forum or community of practice meeting in-person or virtual?

Answer 20: Meetings can be held virtually.

Question 21: Are there additional in-person meetings the contractor is expected to host? If so, how many and are they regional or statewide?

Answer 21: There are no additional in-person meetings required.

Question 22: Is a fee or administrative fee allowable for applicants as part of this procurement?

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Answer 22: Miscellaneous items require appropriate justification related to the program objectives.

Question 23: Can you describe what level of engagement/communication the selected contractor will have with HRI? For example, who gives final approval for workplan activities? Can you confirm monthly invoices/vouchers and progress reports are submitted to DOH?

Answer 23: Monthly progress reports will be required to be submitted to the NYSDOH Contract Manager. These reports must include a summary of activities conducted during the reporting period and status update on completed deliverables.

Question 24: Is this scope of work building off another scope of work? If so, who was the contractor who supported the original scope of work from which this builds?

Answer 24: This work is not a continuation of a previous scope of work, and there was no prior contractor supporting an earlier version of this project.

Question 25: Our organization is interested in responding to the Local Health Department Health Equity RFA. I am in the SM Apply portal, however have received the following error “this task cannot be started at this time” (screenshot below). Please let me know if there is something I should be doing differently to enter the proposal information.

Answer 25: The dates in the application portal have been updated to ensure that organizations are able to apply without issues.

Question 26: Could you please clarify whether the requirements is intended to mean:

- (a) The applicant must be a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) and a community-based organization, or
- (b) The applicant must be either a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) or a community-based organization, or an academic institution?

Answer 26: Applicant must be a not-for profit 501(c)(3) OR a community-based organization OR an academic institution.

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Question 27: I do have one additional time-sensitive question. It's regarding the indirect cost rate. The RFA has language stating administrative costs are capped at 10% MTDC. It also states that if an organization has a federally approved rate, an indirect cost rate of up to 20% of total direct costs can be requested. We have a federally approved rate, which is over 20%. Can you please clarify whether we are capped at the 20%? 10%? Or can we request our federally approved rate?

Answer 27: You may use your federally approved rate agreement.

Question 28: Our team would like to submit the following questions regarding **RFA OHEP 2025-01** for a Local Health Department Health Equity Contractor: Coordinate and facilitate at least one regional engagement forum..." Is the expectation that the regional engagement forum(s) would be in-person or web-based?

Answer 28: Meetings can be held virtually.

Question 29: When it notes "one regional engagement forum" is that one forum for each of the 4 regions, or one state-wide?

Answer 29: One meeting per region.

Question 30: "Establish an online resource hub to house materials..." is this online resource to be housed independently, or part of the NYSDOH website?

Answer 30: The online resource hub is expected to be housed independently and must not be part of the New York State Department of Health website. Existing infrastructures and platforms are allowed to be used to house materials, as long as it is accessible.

Question 31: "Coordinate and facilitate at least one regional peer-learning forum or community-of-practice meeting..." Is the expectation that the peer-learning forum(s) would be in-person or web-based?

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Answer 31: Meetings can be held virtually.

Question 32: The questions in the RFA are slightly different than those in SM Apply. Please let us know which resource takes priority.

Answer 32: Please answer the questions in Apply.

Question 33: The scoring within the RFA and in SM Apply are different (RFA totals 95 points, SM Apply totals 65 points). Please let us know which resource takes priority.

Answer 33: The scoring remains the same. Responses should be submitted in Apply.

Question 34: I have a follow up question regarding the payment structure. Would payment be made in advance or as a reimbursement?

Answer 34: This is a cost-reimbursable contract. Contractors will be reimbursed for allowable, documented expenses incurred during the performance of the work, in accordance with the approved budget and contract terms.

Question 35: RFA Section I.A.: Will NYSDOH help facilitate access to key documents and data sources (e.g., CHAs, CHIPs, SHA findings) to support deliverables like regional scans?

Answer 35: Yes, the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) will facilitate access to key documents and data sources, such as Community Health Assessments (CHAs), Community Health Improvement Plans (CHIPs), and State Health Assessment (SHA) findings, to support the successful completion of deliverables like regional scans.

Question 36: RFA Section I.A.: Is there a parallel source of funding provided to collaborating LHDs, community partners, and hospitals, which covers their costs of collaborating with us, or would we want to include funds in our budget to compensate

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them for their time? If there is a parallel funding source for those organizations, do they have a standard workplan associated with that funding?

Answer 36: Partners will not receive a parallel source of funding to cover their collaboration costs. There is no need to include separate funding for partners in this budget.

Question 37: RFA Section I.A: Please clarify the original source of the funds for this project – this is needed for our internal accounting processes. Is it sourced from NYS, or federal monies?

Answer 37: The source of this funding is the [CDC's Public Health Infrastructure Grant \(CDC-RFA-OE22-2203 Strengthening U.S. Public Health Infrastructure, Workforce, and Data Systems\)](#) which was awarded to the NYSDOH.

Question 38: RFA Section I.B: If we budget for \$400,000 in the first 3 months, will additional funds be available if the project is extended? Please clarify whether the \$400,000 should be spent in the first 3 months. The RFA is confusing as it describes an initial short timeline of 3 months (09/1/2025-11/30/25), with possible extensions of 3-month blocks, or until Nov 30, 2026, or for 2 years (and depending on the funding source – how would we know?). Is the state prioritizing certain deliverables (e.g., the directory or trainings) in the initial phase?

Answer 38: The current contract period is for three months (September 1 – November 30, 2025), and applicants should plan to build key foundational activities within that timeframe. The intent is to continue the work beyond this initial phase, as we anticipate a contract extension, pending funding availability and satisfactory performance, with the goal of completing the full scope of work over an estimated two-year period.

Question 39: RFA Section II.B: If the applicant is applying through a university, is the Letter of Commitment from the leadership team written by the applicant's department chair? If co-led, can multiple letters be submitted?

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Answer 39: A Letter of Commitment from the organization's Executive Director or Chief Executive Officer is required as part of the application. If the applicant is applying through a university, the Letter of Commitment should come from a department chair or another appropriate institutional official who can speak to the university's commitment to the project and its support for the applicant's time and effort.

If the project is co-led by individuals from different departments or institutions, multiple letters of commitment may be submitted, each from the perspective leadership affirming their role and support for the project.

Question 40: RFA section III.C and IV.B: The RFA describes three sections which also appear in the application portal (Applicant organization questions, program summary questions, and budget justification excel document), but the RFA also describes 6 aims for the scope of work. Where should the scope of work (project narrative) write-up be attached (and if you want it, how long should it be)?

Answer 40: Applicants should use the Program Summary Questions to clearly address the six aims described in the RFA's scope of work. As for length, while the RFA does not provide a page limit for the narrative, answers should be thorough but concise, directly addressing how your team will meet each aim, and within any character or word limits provided in the portal.

Question 41: RFA section III.C, Deliverable 3, Activity 2: What platform expectations exist for the online resource hub? Can we use existing infrastructure and expand it or must it be built new?

Answer 41: The online resource hub is expected to be housed independently and must not be part of the New York State Department of Health website. Existing infrastructures and platforms are allowed to be used to house materials, as long as it is accessible.

Question 42: RFA section "HRI Budget Form Instructions", Page 6: Regarding indirect costs, if this project is federally funded (i.e. the ultimate source of funds is federal), shouldn't an institution with a federally negotiated F&A rate use their full rate (whether higher or lower), not the 20% specified in the RFA?

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Answer 42: The contractor may use their federally approved rate agreement.