

**RFA #20662/Internal Program #23-0018  
SFS ID: HECO2025**

**SFS Event Name: RFA #20662 - HE Training Center of Expertise**

**New York State Department of Health  
AIDS Institute  
Office of Health Equity and Human Rights  
And  
Health Research, Inc.**

**Request for Applications**

**Training Center of Expertise: Promoting Health Equity to Improve Community Health Outcomes**

**In order to apply for this Request for Applications, eligible applicants must be prequalified in the Statewide Financial System and must submit an application via the Statewide Financial System.**

**Applicants may submit no more than one (1) application in response to this Request for Applications.**

**KEY DATES**

<b>RFA Release Date:</b>	<b>March 19, 2026</b>
<b>Questions Due:</b>	<b>April 2, 2026, by 4:00 PM ET</b>
<b>Questions &amp; Answers Published (on or about):</b>	<b>April 16, 2026</b>
<b>RFA Applications Due in SFS:</b>	<b>May 7, 2026, by 4:00 PM ET</b>

**Department of Health Contact Name & Address:**

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**IMPORTANT – PLEASE NOTE: Applications MUST be submitted in the Statewide Financial System as one (1) complete PDF document including the Application and all required Attachments in response to Bid Factor Question 01.**

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# I. Introduction

The New York State Department of Health (herein referred to as the Department) AIDS Institute (AI) and Health Research, Inc. (HRI) announce the availability of \$200,000 annually in New York State (NYS) and federal funds to provide an array of professional training and capacity building programs. These programs will advance health equity by promoting systems transformation within healthcare, behavioral health, and community-based organizations, and by training health and human services providers to address health equity, increase their awareness of implicit bias and deliver services in an affirming manner to all patients/clients of all races, ethnicities, and primary languages. Programs will have a specific focus on the health and behavioral health issues in communities disproportionately impacted by HIV, sexually transmitted infections (STI), chronic disease, adverse maternal and child health, COVID-19, and overdose. The intent of the Request for Applications (RFA) is to fund one (1) training center at the level of \$200,000 **annually** for five (5) years.

## A. Background/Intent

The purpose of this Request for Applications is to support a statewide Training Center of Expertise in Health Equity. The Training Center of Expertise will be responsible for implementing a range of innovative training interventions to build the capacity of health and human services providers, health care facilities, community-based organizations (CBOs), and communities to employ a health equity framework to improve health outcomes for New York State residents. These trainings are directed towards:

- 1) executive directors, administrators, and program managers;
- 2) physicians, other prescribers, and nurses; and
- 3) social workers, care coordinators, support services providers, community health workers/ educators, and peer workers.

The funded training center will be expected to tailor trainings to meet the unique needs of each designated training audience, including regional or population-specific needs.

The New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute is committed to ensuring funded programs and partners are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and expertise to adequately address health equity and the social determinants of health. Health equity means everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be healthy, where no one is limited in achieving optimal health because of who they are or where they live.<sup>1</sup> In a world where health equity is the norm, everyone has fair and just access to these conditions, and therefore, has a fair and just opportunity to achieve optimal health. The social determinants of health include socioeconomic status, education, employment, housing, transportation, food/nutrition, health literacy, social supports, and stigma/discrimination.

The New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute is committed to the implementation of new and tailored approaches to address the challenges faced by communities with a disproportionate burden of disease, including people who use drugs, the LGBTQ+ community, Black/Brown, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, and all people impacted by HIV, Hepatitis C, and sexually transmitted infections. Programs are expected to deliver services in accordance with the following health equity principles:

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1. [New York State Department of Health Health Equity Plan](#)

- Be explicit when identifying targeted communities and populations facing inequities.
- Identify evidence-based, tailored solutions and approaches.
- Create an internal organization-wide culture of equity.
- Respect and involve impacted communities.
- Measure and evaluate progress in reducing health disparities.

New York State has been laying the groundwork for Ending the AIDS Epidemic since the disease emerged in the early 1980s. New York State's response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic has involved the development of comprehensive service delivery systems that evolved over time in sync with the evolution of AIDS from a terminal illness to a manageable chronic disease. This strategy enabled the state to implement new technologies as they were introduced, including new treatments, new diagnostic tests and, more recently, Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP). By building upon each individual success and relying on a strong administrative infrastructure, the state was able to roll out innovative programs quickly to achieve the greatest impact. Ending the epidemic in New York State is within reach, thanks to aggressive and systematic public health initiatives that have made it possible to drive down rates of new infections. The State's Ending the Epidemic (ETE) initiative was launched with visionary leadership and extensive stakeholder leadership and participation.

The Request for Applications specifically addresses these Ending the Epidemic Blueprint (BP) recommendations:

- The Ending the Epidemic Blueprint continues to guide all Ending the Epidemic efforts. The Ending the Epidemic Addendum Report is a written report that provides an overview of the past five (5) years of New York State's Ending the Epidemic initiatives, as well as a summary of the community feedback sessions that were conducted in 2020 to assist in identifying areas of focus for Ending the Epidemic beyond 2020.
- The Ending the Epidemic Blueprint and the Ending the Epidemic Addendum report are available on the New York State Department of Health website at: [www.health.ny.gov/endingtheepidemic](http://www.health.ny.gov/endingtheepidemic).
- BP8 Enhance and streamline services to support the non-medical needs of all persons with HIV.
- BP28: Equitable funding where resources follow the statistics of the epidemic.
- Getting to Zero (GTZ1): Single point of entry within all Local Social Services Districts (LSSDs) across New York State to essential benefits and services for low-income persons with HIV/AIDS.

The AIDS Institute acknowledges that more resources and programs need to focus on addressing health disparities. Among the 105,447 individuals diagnosed with concurrent HIV/AIDS in 2023, 2.7% identify as Asian, 30.1% as Hispanic, 44% as Non-Hispanic Black and 22.3% as Non-Hispanic White.<sup>2</sup> In 2023, reported diagnoses of gonorrhea and chlamydia increased for the tenth consecutive year and third consecutive year respectively. The highest rates of sexually transmitted infections in New York State continued to be seen among young persons, racial and ethnic minority communities, and men who have sex with men.<sup>3</sup> Both cases of acute and chronic Hepatitis B increased in 2023 compared to 2022 by 37% and 8% respectively. The most common risk factors for acute and chronic Hepatitis C remain drug use,

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<sup>2</sup> New York State HIV/AIDS Annual Surveillance Report 2023: [New York State HIV/AIDS Annual Surveillance Report 2023](#)  
<sup>3</sup> Sexually Transmitted Infections Surveillance Summary Report, New York State, 2023. [Sexually Transmitted Infections Surveillance Summary Report, New York State, 2023](#)

history of incarceration and close contact with a person with Hepatitis C.<sup>4</sup>

Other relevant resources are the National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS) and the New York State Prevention Agenda. The National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS) is a five-year plan that details principles, priorities, and actions to guide our collective national response to the HIV epidemic.<sup>5</sup> Information on the National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS) and updates to the strategy through 2025 can be found at: <https://files.hiv.gov/s3fs-public/NHAS-2022-2025.pdf>. The New York State Prevention Agenda is the blueprint for state and local action to improve the health of New Yorkers in five (5) priority areas and to reduce health disparities for racial, ethnic, disability, and low socioeconomic groups, as well as other populations who experience them.<sup>6</sup> The New York State Prevention Agenda can be found on the following website [https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/prevention\\_agenda/2025-2030/](https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/prevention_agenda/2025-2030/)

## **B. Available Funding**

A total of up to \$200,000 annually in New York State and Health Research, Inc. (federal) funding is available to support a program funded through this Request for Applications.

Applicants should be prepared to provide training and capacity building services across New York State and able to address the unique needs of health facilities and Community-Based Organizations, executive directors, administrators, program managers, physicians and other prescribers, nurses, social workers, care coordinators, support services providers, community health workers/educators, and peer workers.

**Applicants may submit no more than one (1) application in response to this Request for Applications.** If more than one (1) application is submitted in response to this Request for Applications, the last application that is submitted will be reviewed and considered for funding. All other applications will be rejected.

- One (1) award will be made to the highest scoring applicant in New York State.
- If there is an insufficient number of acceptable applications (scoring 70 or above) received, the New York State Department of Health/Health Research, Inc. reserves the right to fund an application scoring in the range of (60-69).
- The New York State Department of Health/Health Research, Inc. reserves the right to revise the award amount as necessary due to changes in availability of funding.

Should additional funding become available, the New York State Department of Health/Health Research, Inc. may award those funds to the selected applicant, or to an organization from the pool of approved applicants deemed not funded, due to limited resources. If it is determined that the needed expertise is not available among these organizations, the New York State Department of Health/Health Research, Inc. reserve the right to establish additional competitive solicitations.

All applicants are instructed to submit **Attachment 1 - Statement of Assurances** signed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Designee to certify the organization meets all criteria listed on **Attachment 1**.

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<sup>4</sup> New York State Hepatitis B and C Annual Report 2023, [New York State Hepatitis B and C Annual Report](#)

<sup>5</sup> National HIV/AIDS Strategy

<sup>6</sup> Prevention Agenda 2019-2024: New York State's Health Improvement Plan:  
[https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/prevention\\_agenda/2025-2030/](https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/prevention_agenda/2025-2030/)

## **II. Who May Apply**

### **A. Minimum Eligibility Requirements**

All applicants must meet the following Minimum Eligibility Requirements:

- Applicants must be prequalified in the New York State Statewide Financial System (SFS), if not exempt, on the date and time Applications in response to this Request for Applications (RFA) are due as specified in the “Key Dates: set forth on the Cover Page of this RFA.
- Applicants must be a registered not-for-profit 501(c)(3) or tribal organization. Not-for-profit Applicants must be either a community-based organization, government organization, training organization, or academic institution.
- Applicants must have at least three (3) years of experience in the field of health equity which must include one (1) or more of the following, as demonstrated in Program Abstract - Program Specific Question (PSQ) 1d:
  - 1) developing and delivering training or capacity building for health and human services providers to promote health equity;
  - 2) developing and delivering direct service programs that promote health equity; and/or
  - 3) developing conference presentations and journal publications on health equity.

## **III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes**

### **A. Program Model Description**

The Training Center of Expertise, also referred to as Center of Expertise (COE), will be responsible for implementing a range of innovative training interventions to build the capacity of health and human services providers, health care facilities, community-based organizations (CBOs), and communities to employ a health equity framework to improve health outcomes for New York State residents. These trainings are directed towards:

- 1) executive directors, administrators, program managers;
- 2) physicians, other prescribers, and nurses; and
- 3) social workers, care coordinators, support services providers, community health workers/ educators, and peer workers.

This Center of Expertise (COE) will develop educational materials for the intended audiences of health and human services providers on health equity-related topics in a variety of formats, including fact sheets, position briefs, slide sets, audio files, videos, digital formats, and training curricula. Topics to be addressed will include, but not be limited to: understanding and applying a health equity framework in the context of health and human services programs; how to gather community-level data on health equity and health disparities; how to promote agency-wide discussions about health equity and disparities based on race; fostering consumer engagement around health disparities and health equity; developing policies to eliminate health disparities and improve health outcomes for Black/Brown, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) individuals; conducting screening for social determinants of health; developing health equity consumer and community champions; becoming an organization that complies with Civil Rights laws and regulations; building cross-agency partnerships to address unmet social determinants of health needs; evaluating efforts to improve health equity; and other emerging topics as

determined by the Department, AIDS Institute and the funded applicant.

Under the direction of the Department, AIDS Institute, this Training Center will: deliver formal training and capacity building sessions virtually and in-person; provide individual agency technical assistance (TA) to selected New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute-funded or affiliated programs; make resources in digital formats widely available; facilitate discussions about health equity at New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute-sponsored community meetings; and provide technical assistance (TA) to the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute on strategies for improving health outcomes by promoting the health equity framework.

The initiative will offer training that will provide Continuing Medical Education (CME) and Continuing Education Unit (CEU) to further New York State's efforts to end the epidemic, address chronic disease, advance the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute priorities, and advance health equity by the end of the five-year funding cycle as follows (please refer to **Attachment 2: Training Center of Expertise Work Plan**):

1. Collaborate with the AIDS Institute to provide capacity building services to prepare at least 50 agencies to apply a health equity framework in their efforts to improve health outcomes for communities of color by the end of year 4.
2. Train at least 500 health care providers to implement New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute's [Health Equity Competencies for Health Care Providers](#) in their practice.
3. Promote adoption of the [Health Care Organization Considerations in Support of Health Equity](#) in at least 50 health care organizations.
4. Train at least 500 health and human services providers to conduct screening for social determinants of health in a client-centered, affirming manner.
5. Prepare at least 25 agencies to adopt and implement the principles of an anti-discrimination organization in the provision of health and social services.
6. Provide training and capacity building services to build cross-agency partnerships to address unmet social determinants of health needs in at least five (5) priority communities (at least one (1) priority community annually starting in year 2). Priority populations are identified in New York State's Blueprint to End the AIDS Epidemic<sup>7</sup>.
7. Collaborate with the AIDS Institute to work with community, including community-based organizations, providers and people with lived experience to build capacity around the evaluation of above-mentioned efforts to address social determinants of health.

An applicant may subcontract components of the Work Plan to be performed by Applicant pursuant to the terms of its Application. If known, the Applicant is expected to state in their Application the specific components to be performed through subcontracts, no more than 50% of the funds or scope of work outlined in this Request for Applications, as well as the names of the subcontractors. Grantees will need to name subcontractors prior to reimbursement. Applicants should note that the lead organization (that is, the successful Applicant, as Contractor) will have overall responsibility for all Contract activities, including those performed by subcontractors, and will be the primary contact for the Department. All subcontractors and subcontracts will be required to be approved by the Department.

## **B. Requirements for the Program**

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<sup>7</sup> New York State Blueprint to End the AIDS Epidemic: [http://health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/ending\\_the\\_epidemic/docs/blueprint.pdf](http://health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/ending_the_epidemic/docs/blueprint.pdf)

**The Applicant selected for funding will be expected to:**

**1. Program Requirements**

- a) Adhere to Health Literacy Universal Precautions (<https://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/quality-patient-safety/quality-resources/tools/literacy-toolkit/index.html>);
- b) Adhere to all objectives, tasks and performance measures as listed in **Attachment 2: Training Center of Expertise Work Plan**, under the guidance of the Department;
- c) Follow initiative-wide best practices for promoting trainings, participant registration, provision of quality training, implementing distance learning programs, and program evaluation as outlined in **Attachment 3: Training Center Best Practices**;
- d) Keep abreast of the latest program and policy developments in health equity;
- e) Develop new training programs (including trainer manuals, participant manuals, slides, handout materials, interactive exercises, role plays, values clarification activities, and other educational activities consistent with adult learning principles) to translate the latest developments into skills-building trainings for the indicated audience;
- f) Develop a training plan that respects the needs of different members of the target audience. The plan should clearly define the audience for each training and ensure that the content is appropriate. For example, the objectives and content of trainings for physicians and advanced practice nurses would be clearly distinct from the objectives, and content of trainings intended for support services staff or peer workers;
- g) Involve members of the community or target audience in the development and design of training curricula;
- h) Deliver a mix of in-person and distance learning trainings to ensure adequate access to training in every region of New York State;
- i) Facilitate capacity building initiatives as directed by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute;
- j) Create and implement a marketing plan using all appropriate media to promote trainings on a statewide basis to New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute-funded programs and other health and human services providers;
- k) Provide technical assistance in a variety of formats to New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute-funded providers as directed by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute;
- l) Provide training-of-trainers sessions to prepare selected facilities and training organizations to deliver trainings developed under this contract;
- m) Provide training to staff that are representative of the target audience, including staff or consultant trainers who are physicians, nurse practitioners, program directors and managers, support services providers, and peer workers;
- n) Coordinate delivery of trainings with other HIV/sexually transmitted infection/viral hepatitis regional training centers, centers of expertise, the New York State Department of Health's Clinical Education Initiative, AIDS Education and Training Centers, and other entities that offer related trainings;
- o) Create a training environment reflective of the diverse population of providers being trained and the communities they serve. To accomplish this, Centers of Expertise are expected to display posters and other images showing diversity with regards to race, ethnicity, age, and people with disabilities. Centers of Expertise are also expected to display Safe Zone statements indicating the center is a safe environment for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people;
- p) Attend four (4) webinar-based contractor work group meetings annually. These sessions, held from 10am to 3pm, should be attended by the Program Manager and Lead Trainer/Curriculum Developer;

- q) Participate in initiative-wide quality improvement activities, preparing a minimum of three (3) Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles per year. Training centers are expected to implement best practices identified through the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) process;
- r) Collaborate with local health departments, regional offices of the Department, as well as other health and human service providers in identifying and responding to emerging trends.

Please see **Attachment 4 for Health Equity Definitions and Examples** of social and structural determinants of health.

## **2. Program Staff**

The funded Center of Expertise will provide qualified administrators, clerical staff, trainers, and approved consultants to perform contract-related activities. Below are program standards for these positions. Applicants with the following staffing will be best prepared to successfully administer training programs. Please note that Applicants are not required to have each of these positions in place in order to be eligible to apply:

**Program Manager** – Master’s degree and at least five (5) years of professional experience providing leadership to health, behavioral health, public health, and/or community-based organizations. This experience is expected to include programmatic and fiscal oversight responsibilities, with at least three (3) years of experience overseeing programs related to health equity. An effective Program Manager will have experience in training, curriculum development, coordinating activities with community-based and governmental organizations, program development and implementation, evaluation of training programs, and will have excellent interpersonal skills.

**Lead Trainer/Curriculum Developer** – Master’s degree or higher and at least three (3) years of professional training and curriculum development in the field of health equity. The Program Manager and Lead Trainer/Curriculum Developer may be the same person.

**Trainers and consultants** – The funded training center will have access to a diverse panel of staff trainers and consultants. The panel of trainers is expected to include a physician/ nurse practitioner/physician assistant trainer to train clinical audiences, and appropriate trainers to train non-clinical providers. Trainers should be representative of the communities disproportionately impacted with a minimum standard of a Bachelor’s degree, demonstrated training skills, and appropriate experience and qualifications in the topics they will train.

Resumes/CVs of staff and consultants are subject to approval by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute.

The Center of Expertise will be responsible for ensuring all consultant trainers are fully prepared to deliver trainings for which they are assigned as primary or back-up trainers. Resumes of all key staff should be uploaded and submitted with **Attachment 5: Agency Capacity and Staffing Information**.

## **IV. Administrative Requirements**

## A. Issuing Agency

This RFA is issued by the Department, AIDS Institute, Office of Health Equity and Policy Initiatives and Health Research, Inc. (HRI). The Department and HRI are responsible for the requirements specified herein and for the evaluation of all Applications (refer to Section V.C. Review and Award Process). **See Attachment 6: Health Research, Inc.'s Contracts General Terms and Conditions.**

## B. Question and Answer Phase

All substantive questions by Applicants with respect to any aspect of the RFA must be submitted in writing to Nadine Kela-Murphy, New York State Department of Health, Office of Health Equity and Policy Initiatives, at the following email address: [OHEPI@health.ny.gov](mailto:OHEPI@health.ny.gov). This includes Minority and Woman-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) Requirements questions and related forms. Refer to Section IV.K. Minority and Woman Owned Business Enterprise Requirements. Questions of a technical nature related to formatting or other minor details related to preparation of an Application may also be addressed in writing to the email address noted above. Questions are of a technical nature if they are limited to how to prepare your Application (e.g., formatting) rather than relating to the substance of the Application.

To the degree possible, each question submitted by a potential Applicant pursuant to the terms of this RFA should cite the RFA section and paragraph to which it refers. Written questions will be accepted until the date posted on the Cover Page of this RFA.

Some helpful links for questions of a technical nature are below. Questions regarding specific opportunities or Applications should be directed to the Department contact listed on the cover of this RFA.

- On-Demand Statewide Financial System Training Videos: On-demand training focused on using the new grants management features in SFS is available by logging in to the SFS Vendor Portal and clicking the SFS Coach icon available on the homepage. Additional questions? Contact the SFS Help Desk listed below:
- Statewide Financial System Technical Support Help Desk  
Phone: 1-877-737-4185 toll-free / 518-457-7737  
Hours: Monday thru Friday 8am to 8pm  
Email: [helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov](mailto:helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov)

Prospective Applicants must submit all requests for clarifications of, or exceptions or changes to, the terms, conditions or provisions of this RFA or the State of New York Contract for Grants during the Question and Answer Phase, which will end on the "Questions Due" date specified on the Cover Page of this RFA. An Applicant must clearly indicate the clarification, exception or change in the RFA or the State of New York Contract for Grants the Applicant is requesting. All questions, answers, and requests for clarification, exception or change will be published by the Department at [SFS Public Portal Homepage](#) to ensure equal access and knowledge by all prospective Applicants, on or about the date specified on the Cover Page of this RFA.

This RFA has been posted on the NYS Statewide Financial System website at: [SFS Public Portal Homepage](#) and additionally, via a link provided on the Department's public website at:

<https://www.health.ny.gov/funding/>.

Questions and answers, as well as any updates, addendums to, and/or other modifications of this RFA, will be posted on these websites. All such questions and answers, updates, addendums to, and other modifications to this RFA will be posted by the date identified on the Cover Page of this RFA under “Key Dates”.

**All Questions must be received by the date and time specified on the Cover Page of this RFA, under “Key Dates”, opposite the heading “Questions Due”.**

**All questions submitted by email should state the RFA Title and Number set forth on the Cover Page (RFA#20662, Training Center of Expertise: Promoting Health Equity to Improve Community Health Outcomes) in the subject line on the email.**

### **C. Letter of Interest**

A Letter of Interest is not requested for this project.

### **D. Applicant Conference**

An Applicant Conference will not be held for this project.

### **E. How to File an Application**

Applications must be submitted online via the Statewide Financial System by the date and time posted on the Cover Page of this RFA under “Key Dates”.

Reference materials and videos are available for Applicants to funding opportunities on the NYS Statewide Financial System. Please visit the Statewide Financial System website at the following web address: [SFS Public Portal Homepage](#) and click the “Search for Grant Opportunities” tile. There is also a more detailed “Statewide Financial System: Vendor User Guide” available in the documents section under Training & Guidance; For Grant Applicants located in SFS Coach. Training webinars are also provided by the Grants Management Team. Dates and times for webinar instruction can be located at the following web address: [Live Webinars | Grants Management \(ny.gov\)](#)

To submit an Application an Applicant must:

1. Log into the [Statewide Financial System Vendor Portal](#) .
2. Click the Grant Management Tile. Next, Click the Bid Event Search tile.
3. Enter the applicable search criteria in the Search Criteria Fields. Locate an opportunity; search by Funding Agency (DOH01) or enter the Grant Opportunity name into the Search by Grant Opportunity field: RFA #20662 - HE Training Center of Expertise You can also filter search by Status such as “available” which filters to include only the bid events that are published and open for potential bid response.
4. Click on “Search” button to initiate the search.
5. Click on Event ID link to initiate a bid response.
6. Please review the Grantee User Manual found in SFS Coach for additional steps on how to respond to various types of Bid Events.

Once the Application is complete, a prospective Applicant is **strongly encouraged** to submit their Application at least **48 hours prior to the** Application's due date and time specified on the Cover Page of this RFA. This will allow sufficient opportunity for the Applicant to obtain assistance and take corrective action should there be a technical issue with the submission process. **Failure to leave adequate time to address issues identified during this process may jeopardize an Applicant's ability to submit their Application.** SFS staff are available to answer an Applicant's technical questions and provide technical assistance prior to the Application due date and time. Contact information for the SFS Help Desk is available under Section IV.B. Question and Answer Phase of this RFA.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Although the Department and SFS Help Desk staff will do their best to address concerns that are identified less than 48 hours prior to the due date and time for the submission of an Application, there is no guarantee that they will be resolved in time for the Application to be submitted on time and, therefore, considered for funding.

During the Application process, please pay particular attention to the following:

- Not-for-profit Applicants must be prequalified, if not exempt, on the date and time Applications in response to this Request for Applications are due as specified in the "Key Dates" set forth on the Cover Page of this RFA. Be sure to maintain prequalification status between funding opportunities. **NOTE:** Three of a not-for-profit's essential financial documents - the IRS990, its Financial Statement, and its Charities Bureau filing - expire on an annual basis. If these documents are allowed to expire, the not-for-profit's prequalification status expires as well, and it will not be eligible for State grant funding until its documentation is updated and approved, and prequalified status is reinstated.
- Only individuals with the role of "Bid Response Submitter" can submit an Application on behalf of an Applicant.
- Prior to submission, the Statewide Financial System will automatically initiate a global error checking process to protect against an incomplete Application. An Applicant may need to attend to certain parts of the Application prior to being able to submit the Application successfully. An Applicant must be sure to allow time after pressing the submit button to clean up any global errors that may arise. (Vendor User Guide).
- Applicants should use numbers, letters, and underscores when naming their uploaded files. There cannot be any special characters in the uploaded file name. Also, be aware of the restriction on file size (20 MB) when uploading documents. Applicants should ensure that any attachments uploaded with their application are not "protected" or "passworded" documents.

The Applicant's Delegated Administrator is able to assign, modify, and remove roles for the applicant in SFS. Please see SFS Vendor Portal Access Reference Guide, [SFS Vendor Portal Access Reference Guide.pdf \(ny.gov\)](#), for additional information on roles. **Bid Response Initiator and Bid Response Submitter** are the **necessary roles for applying to a Bid Event in SFS**. If you are a not-for-profit you will also need Prequalification Processor for Prequalification purposes.

**PLEASE NOTE: Waiting until the last several days to complete your Application online can be risky, as you may have technical questions or issues that will take time to resolve. Beginning the process of applying as soon as possible will produce the best results.**

**Applications will not be accepted via fax, e-mail, paper copy, or hand delivery.**

## **LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

### **F. Department of Health's and HRI's Reserved Rights**

The Department of Health and HRI reserve the right to:

1. Reject any or all Applications received in response to this RFA.
2. Withdraw the RFA at any time, at the Department's or HRI's sole discretion.
3. Make an award under the RFA in whole or in part.
4. Disqualify any Applicant whose conduct and/or Application fails to conform to the requirements of the RFA.
5. Seek clarifications and revisions of Applications, in the Department's or HRI's sole discretion.
6. Use Application information obtained through site visits, management interviews, and the State's investigation of an Applicant's qualifications, experience, ability, or financial standing, and any material or information submitted by the Applicant in response to the Department's or HRI's request for clarifying information in the course of evaluation and/or selection under the RFA.
7. Prior to Application opening, amend the RFA specifications to correct errors or oversights, or to supply additional information, as it becomes available.
8. Prior to Application opening, direct Applicants to submit proposal modifications addressing subsequent RFA amendments.
9. Change any of the scheduled dates.
10. Waive any requirements that are not material.
11. Award more than one contract resulting from this RFA.
12. Negotiate with successful Applicants within the scope of the RFA in the best interests of the State and HRI.
13. Conduct contract negotiations with the next responsible Applicant, should the Department or HRI be unsuccessful in negotiating with the selected Applicant.
14. Utilize any and all ideas submitted with the Applications received, at the Department's or HRI's sole discretion.
15. Unless otherwise specified in the RFA, every offer in an Applicant's Application is firm and not revocable for a period of 60 days from the Application opening.
16. Waive or modify minor irregularities in Applications received after prior notification to the Applicant.

17. Require clarification at any time during the procurement process and/or require correction of arithmetic or other apparent errors for the purpose of assuring a full and complete understanding of an Applicant's Application and/or to determine an Applicant's compliance with the requirements of the RFA.
18. Eliminate any term of this RFA that can be complied with by none of the Applicants.
19. Award grants based on geographic or regional considerations to serve the best interests of the State and HRI.

## **G. Term of Contract**

Any Contract resulting from this RFA will be effective only upon approval by the New York State Office of the Comptroller. Any HRI contract resulting from this RFA will be effective only upon approval by HRI. Refer to **Attachment 6 - Health Research Inc.'s Contracts General Terms and Conditions**.

It is expected that State contracts resulting from this RFA will have the following time period: January 1, 2027 To: December 31, 2031.

Continued funding throughout this five (5)-year period is contingent upon availability of funding and state budget appropriations and the Grantee's continued satisfactory performance of its obligations under the Contract. The Department also reserves the right to revise the award amount as necessary due to changes in the availability of funding.

A sample New York State Contract for Grants can be found at [https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2025/01/mcg\\_tandc\\_january\\_2025.pdf](https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2025/01/mcg_tandc_january_2025.pdf)

To view the following Department of Health specific State of New York Contract for Grants documents, follow the instructions in Section VI. Attachments.

- Attachment A-1, Agency Specific terms and Conditions (**RFA Attachment 7**);
- Attachment A-2, Program Specific Terms and Conditions (**HIV/AIDS Clause Attachment 8**);
- Attachment E-1, AIDS Institute Policy on Personal Health Related Information (**RFA Attachment 9**);
- Attachment M, Participation by Minority Group Members and Women With Respect to State Contracts: Requirements and Procedures (**RFA Attachment 10**)

HRI funded contracts resulting from this RFA will be for 12-month terms. The anticipated start date of HRI contracts is November 1, 2026. However, depending on the funding source, the initial contract term could be for a shorter time period. HRI awards may be renewed for up to four (4) additional annual contract periods based on satisfactory performance and availability of funds. HRI reserves the right to revise the award amount as necessary due to changes in the availability of funding.

## **H. Payment & Reporting Requirements of Grant Awardee(s)**

1. The Department may, at its discretion, make an advance payment to a successful not-for-profit grant Applicant under this RFA (a “Grantee”) in an amount not to exceed 25 percent of the annual grant provided for under the Grantee’s Contract. **Due to requirements of the federal funder, no advance payments will be allowed for HRI contracts resulting from this procurement.**

2. The Grantee will be required to submit invoices and required reports of expenditures based upon the terms of payment set forth in Attachment A-1 to its Grant Contract to the State's designated payment office (below) or, if requested by the Department, through the Statewide Financial System:

AIDS Institute  
New York State Department of Health  
[AIDS.Institute.Admin@health.ny.gov](mailto:AIDS.Institute.Admin@health.ny.gov)

A Grantee must provide complete and accurate billing invoices in order to receive payment of the grant funding provided for under the terms of its Grant Contract. Invoices submitted to the Department must contain all information and supporting documentation required by the Contract, the Department, and the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC). Payment for invoices submitted by the Grantee shall only be rendered electronically unless payment by paper check is expressly authorized by the Commissioner of Health, in the Commissioner's sole discretion, due to extenuating circumstances. Such electronic payment shall be made in accordance with OSC’s procedures and practices to authorize electronic payments. Authorization forms are available at OSC’s website at: <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/epay/index.htm>, by email at: [epayments@osc.state.ny.us](mailto:epayments@osc.state.ny.us) or by telephone at 855-233-8363. Each Grantee acknowledges that it will not receive payment on any claims for reimbursement submitted under its Grant Contract if it does not comply with OSC’s electronic payment procedures, except where the Commissioner has expressly authorized payment by paper check as set forth above.

Payment of claims for reimbursement by the State (Department) shall be made in accordance with Article XI-A of the New York State Finance Law. Payment terms will be: Grantee will be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred as allowed in the Contract Budget and Work Plan.

3. The Grantee will be required to submit the following reports to the Department at the address above or, if requested by the Department, through the Statewide Financial System:

- A monthly narrative addressing program implementation, barriers and accomplishments.

For HRI contracts, contractors will be expected to submit voucher claims and reports of expenditures in the manner that HRI requires. Required forms will be provided with the contract package.

All payment and reporting requirements will be detailed in “Attachment D: Payment and Reporting”, of the final State of New York Contract For Grants.

## I. Procurement Requirements

### 1. General Requirements

The Grantee may procure various goods and services in connection with the grant-funded project ranging from routinely purchased goods or services to those that involve substantive programmatic work. The procurement of such goods or services, however, must be conducted in an equitable and competitive manner to promote equal treatment, efficiency, and economy in grant-funded activities.

Any Grantee that is a State entity (i.e., a State agency or political subdivision of the State) must follow the same policies and procedures it uses for procurements from its general funds. All other Grantees (private companies, not-for-profit-organizations, etc.) must have a sufficient and documented procurement process that maintains records to detail the history of procurements associated with any awarded grant project. These records shall include, but are not limited to, rationale for the method of procurement (e.g., micro-purchase, small purchases, sealed bids, request for proposals, noncompetitive/sole source), the selection of a contract type, contractor selection and/or rejection, and the basis of a contract price.

The Grantee's documented procurement process must conform with any applicable federal, State and local laws and regulations. As part of the required procurement procedures, a Grantee must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflict of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award, and administration of contracts. The standards of conduct must provide for disciplinary actions to be applied for violations by officers, employees or agents of the Grantee. Such standards shall provide, at a minimum, that no employee, officer, or agent of the Grantee will participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by grant funds if a conflict of interest, real or actual, is involved. Such conflicts may arise when:

- The employee, officer, or agent, or
- Any member of such individual's immediate family, or
- Such individual's partner, or
- Any organization which employs, or is about to employ the selected contractor, has a financial or other interest in or receives or stands to receive a tangible personal benefit from a firm being considered for a contract.

The standards of conduct shall also cover organizational conflicts of interest. Organizational conflicts of interest arise where an entity is or appears to be unable to conduct an impartial procurement action due to relationships with a parent company, affiliate, or subsidiary organization.

## 2. Bid Protest Procedures

Any contractor, subcontractor, or aggrieved party has the right to protest actions before or after the award of a contract utilizing grant funds. The Grantee alone will be responsible, in accordance with good administrative practice and sound business judgement, for the settlement of all contractual and administrative issues arising out of procurement contract solicitations and awards.

Grantees shall have written protest procedures, which may be analogous to those set forth in Part 24 of Title 2 of the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations, in order for effective due process to be achieved. A Grantee's specific protest procedures shall be outlined in all bid requests, request for proposals, request for applications, etc. issued by or on behalf of the Grantee concerning any grant-funded projects. In summary, Grantees are responsible for

handling all contract activity protests. Except in matters of direct State or possibly Federal concern (in cases involving federally funded grants), the Department will not substitute its judgement for that of the Grantee.

### 3. Procurement Contract Language

Any contract concerning a grant-funded project must be a written agreement between the Grantee and the third party providing specific goods and/or services. Whether with a contractor, subcontractor, consultant or vendor, the contract must as appropriate state the activities to be performed; the time schedule; the policies and requirements that apply to the contractor, subcontractor consultant or vendor, including the above procurement requirements; and any other terms and conditions of the grant and the New York State Contract for Grants.

### **J. Assurances of No Conflicts of Interest and/or Other Detrimental Effects**

The Grantee as well as any subgrantees, contractors, subcontractors or consultants engaged by the Grantee to provide goods or services in connection with the grant-funded project shall attest that their performance of any contracted services does not and will not create a conflict of interest with nor position the Grantee to breach any other contract it currently has in force with the State of New York.

The Grantee as well as any subgrantees, contractors, subcontractors or consultants engaged by the Grantee to provide goods or services in connection with the grant-funded project shall disclose any existing or contemplated relationship with any other person or entity, including relationships with any member, shareholder of 5% or more, parent, subsidiary, or affiliate organization, which would constitute an actual or potential conflict of interest or appearance of impropriety, relating to other clients/customers/agents of the Grantee, subgrantees, contractors, subcontractors, consultants or former officers and employees of the State and its affiliates, in connection with the providing of goods or rendering of services related to the grant-funded project. The Grantee shall have procedures in place for alerting the State of any such actual or potential conflicts as well as procedures to resolve the same.

### **K. Minority & Woman-Owned Business Enterprise Requirements**

Pursuant to New York State Executive Law Article 15-A, the Department recognizes its obligation to promote opportunities for maximum feasible participation of New York State-certified Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises (MWBES) and the employment of minority group members and women in the performance of Department contracts.

In 2006, the State of New York commissioned a disparity study to evaluate whether Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises had a full and fair opportunity to participate in state contracting. The findings of the study were published on April 29, 2010, under the title "The State of Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises: Evidence from New York" ("Disparity Study"). The report found evidence of statistically significant disparities between the level of participation of Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises in state procurement contracting versus the number of Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises that were ready, willing and able to participate in state procurements. As a result of these findings, the Disparity Study made recommendations concerning the implementation and operation of the statewide certified Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises program. The recommendations from the Disparity Study culminated in the enactment and the implementation of New York State Executive Law Article 15-A, which requires, among other things, that the

Department establish goals for maximum feasible participation of New York State Certified Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises (“MWBE”) and the employment of minority groups members and women in the performance of New York State contracts.

### **Business Participation Opportunities for MWBEs**

For purposes of this solicitation, the Department hereby establishes a goal of **30%** as follows:

- 1) For Not-for-Profit Applicants: Eligible Expenditures include any subcontracted labor or services, equipment, materials, or any combined purchase of the foregoing under a contract awarded from this solicitation.
- 2) For-Profit and Municipality Applicants: Eligible Expenditures include the value of the total amount of the Budget provided for the Work Plan in the Grant Contract entered into pursuant to this RFA.

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 MWBE firms). A Grantee awarded a Grant Contract pursuant to this RFA must document good faith efforts to provide meaningful participation by MWBEs as subcontractors or suppliers in the performance of the Grant Contract and Grantee will agree under the terms of its Grant Contract that the Department may withhold payment pending receipt of the required MWBE documentation required by the Department or the OSC. For guidance on how the Department will determine “good faith efforts,” refer to 5 NYCRR §142.8.

The directory of New York State Certified MWBEs can be viewed at:

<https://ny.newnycontracts.com>. The directory is found on this page under “NYS Directory of Certified Firms” and accessed by clicking on the link entitled “Search the Directory”. Engaging with firms found in the directory with like product(s) and/or service(s) is strongly encouraged and all communication efforts and responses should be well documented by a Grantee to evidence its good faith efforts to encourage MWBE participation in the performance of its obligations under its Grant Contract.

By submitting an Application, each Applicant and potential Grantee agrees to complete an MWBE Utilization plan as directed in **Attachment 11** of this RFA. The Department will review the MWBE Utilization Plan submitted by each Grantee. If a Grantee’s MWBE Utilization Plan is not accepted, the Department may issue a Notice of Deficiency. If a Notice of Deficiency is issued, Grantee agrees that it shall respond to the Notice of Deficiency within seven (7) business days of receipt. The Department may disqualify a Grantee as being **non-responsive** under the following circumstances:

- a) If a Grantee fails to submit a completed MWBE Utilization Plan;
- b) If a Grantee fails to submit a written remedy to a Notice of Deficiency;
- c) If a Grantee fails to submit a request for waiver (if applicable); or
- d) If the Department determines that the Grantee has failed to document good-faith efforts to meet the established MWBE participation goals for the procurement.

In addition, Grantees will be required to certify they have an acceptable Equal Employment Opportunity policy statement.

## L. Vendor Identification Number

Effective January 1, 2012, in order to do business with New York State, you must have a vendor identification number. As part of the Statewide Financial System (SFS), the Office of the State Comptroller's Bureau of State Expenditures has created a centralized vendor repository called the New York State Vendor File. In the event of an award of a grant to a successful Applicant pursuant to the terms of this RFA and in order to initiate a Grant Contract with the Department, a Grantee must be registered in the New York State Vendor File and have a valid New York State Vendor ID.

If already enrolled in the Vendor File, the Applicant should include the Vendor Identification number in your organization information. If not enrolled, to request assignment of a Vendor Identification number, an Applicant should please submit a New York State Office of the State Comptroller Substitute Form W-9, which can be found on-line at:

<https://www.osc.state.ny.us/files/vendors/2017-11/vendor-form-ac3237s-fe.pdf>

Additional information concerning the New York State Vendor File can be obtained on-line at: [http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendor\\_management/index.htm](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendor_management/index.htm), by contacting the SFS Help Desk at 855-233-8363 or by emailing at [helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov](mailto:helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov).

## M. Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire

The Department strongly encourages each Applicant to file the required Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire online via the New York State VendRep System. The Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire must be updated and certified every six (6) months. To enroll in and use the New York State VendRep System, see the VendRep System Instructions available at <https://www.osc.state.ny.us/state-vendors/vendrep/file-your-vendor-responsibility-questionnaire> or go directly to the VendRep system online at <https://www.osc.state.ny.us/state-vendors/vendrep/vendrep-system>.

An Applicant must provide their New York State Vendor Identification Number when enrolling. To request assignment of a Vendor ID or for VendRep System assistance, contact the Office of the State Comptroller's Help Desk at 866-370-4672 or 518-408-4672 or by email at [itservicedesk@osc.ny.gov](mailto:itservicedesk@osc.ny.gov).

Applicants opting to complete online should complete and upload the **Vendor Responsibility Attestation (Attachment 12)** of the RFA. The Attestation is located under the SFS Attachments Section and once completed should be uploaded to the applicable PSQ/Bid Factor.

Applicants opting to complete and submit a paper questionnaire can obtain the appropriate questionnaire from the VendRep website, [www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep), and upload it with their Application in response to the applicable PSQ/Bid Factor.

## N. Vendor Prequalification for Not-for-Profits

Each not-for-profit Applicant subject to prequalification is required to prequalify prior to having the ability to submit an Application in the NYS Statewide Financial System.

Pursuant to the New York State Division of Budget Bulletin H-1032, dated July 16, 2014, and revised on December 9, 2023, the new Prequalification Policy became effective as of January

16, 2024. The updated policy requires that not-for-profit organizations register and prequalify in the SFS using the updated Prequalification Application. The updated Prequalification Application and New York State Prequalification Manual for Grantees can be found on the Grants Management website at: <https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/get-prequalified>.

**An Application cannot be submitted/received from a not-for-profit Applicant that (a) has not Registered in the NYS Statewide Financial System or (b) has not Prequalified in the Statewide Financial System by the Application’s due date specified on the Cover Page of this RFA.**

Below is a summary of the steps that must be completed to meet registration and prequalification requirements. The Vendor User Manual within the Statewide Financial System Website details the requirements and job aid walks users through the process.

### **1) Register for the Statewide Financial System**

- Applicants will first need to create an account in SFS. Applicants that need to create an account should do so at the following link: <https://www.osc.ny.gov/state-vendors/portal/enroll-vendor-self-service-portal>. Any questions related to SFS accounts should be sent to the SFS Help Desk ([HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov](mailto:HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov)).

If you have previously registered and do not know your Username, please email [helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov](mailto:helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov). If you do not know your Password, please click the “I Forgot My Password” link from the main log-in page and follow the prompts.

### **2) Complete your Prequalification Application**

- Log in to the Statewide Financial System.
- Applicants will first need to create an account in SFS. Applicants that need to create an account should do so at the following link: <https://www.osc.ny.gov/state-vendors/portal/enroll-vendor-self-service-portal>. Any questions related to SFS accounts should be sent to the SFS Help Desk ([HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov](mailto:HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov)).
- Instructions for SFS Prequalification can be found on Page 20 of the SFS Grantee User Manual entitled, “! Grantee Processing in SFS”. This user manual is accessible to organizations with an SFS account under the SFS Coach Tile/Button in the SFS Vendor Portal. Select “Handbook: User Manual with Screenshots” from the Training Type drop down to locate the manual. If you have any problems accessing the manual please contact [HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov](mailto:HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov). Please see the section entitled, “Enter and Submit a Prequalification Application”, located on page 20 of the SFS Grantee User Manual, for complete instructions on how to complete and submit an SFS Prequalification in the NYS Statewide Financial System.
- Specific questions about the prequalification process should be referred to your primary New York State agency representative. The representative specific to the NYS Department of Health can be reached at: [vendor.responsibility@health.ny.gov](mailto:vendor.responsibility@health.ny.gov).

### **3) Add SFS Roles to Submit a Bid and to Add a signatory or “Grant Contract Approver” to your Account**

- **To start, review, and submit an Application to this Bid Event in SFS, Applicants will need to acquire the following SFS Security Roles:**

<b>SFS Security Role Name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Access Provided</b>
NY_GM_VENDOR_EVENT_INITIATE	Bid Response Initiator	Allows the vendor user to initiate a bid response to a bid event but not submit the bid response to the agency.
NY_GM_VENDOR_EVENT_INQUIRY	Bid Event Inquiry	Allows a vendor user the ability to review bid events. This is a view-only role.
NY_GM_VENDOR_EVENT_SUBMIT	Bid Response Submitter	Allows a vendor user to both initiate a bid response and submit a bid response to the agency.

- In order to have your designated signatory (known in SFS as Grant Contract Approver) sign a contract and have their name appear on the contract agreement you have to add the Grant Contract Approver's name to your SFS Vendor Profile. The Delegated Administrator for your organization can add the Signatory's Name by following the instructions found on page 17-20 of the SFS Grantee User Manual entitled, "Grant Processing in SFS". This user manual is accessible to organizations with an SFS account under the SFS Coach Tile/Button in the SFS Vendor Portal. Select "Handbook: User Manual with Screenshots" from the Training Type drop down to locate the manual. If you have any problems accessing the manual please contact [HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov](mailto:HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov).

**All potential Applicants are strongly encouraged to begin Statewide Financial System Registration and Prequalification process as soon as possible in order to participate in this opportunity.**

## **O. General Specifications**

1. By submitting the "Application Form" each Applicant attests to its express authority to sign on behalf of the Applicant.
2. Grantees will possess, at no cost to the State, all qualifications, licenses and permits to engage in the required business as may be required within the jurisdiction where the work specified is to be performed. Workers to be employed in the performance of any Contract awarded pursuant to this RFA will possess the qualifications, training, licenses, and permits as may be required within such jurisdiction.
3. Submission of an Application indicates the Applicant's acceptance of all terms and conditions contained in this RFA, including the terms and conditions of the State of New York Contract for Grants. Any exceptions the Applicant would like considered by the Department relating to the terms and conditions of this RFA and/or State of New York

Contract for Grants must have been raised during the Question and Answer Phase of this RFA (See, Section IV.B.).

4. An Applicant may be disqualified from receiving an award if such Applicant or any subsidiary, affiliate, partner, officer, agent, or principal thereof, or anyone in its employ, has previously failed to perform satisfactorily in connection with public bidding or contracts, in the State of New York or otherwise.
5. Provisions Upon Default
  - a. The services to be performed by [the][a] successful Applicant pursuant to the terms of the Grant Contract entered into with the Department shall be at all times subject to the direction and control of the Department.
  - b. In the event that the Grantee, through any cause, fails to perform any of the terms, covenants, or promises of any Contract resulting from this RFA, the Department acting for and on behalf of the State, shall thereupon have the right to terminate the Contract by giving notice in writing of the fact and date of such termination to the Grantee.
  - c. If, in the judgement of the Department, the Grantee acts in such a way is detrimental to, or does or is any way likely to impair or prejudice the interests of the State, the Department may terminate the Grant Contract awarded pursuant to this RFA. In such case, the Grantee may receive equitable compensation for all services as shall, in the judgement of the State Comptroller, have been satisfactorily performed by the Grantee up to the date of the termination of the Contract.
6. Gender-Based Violence and the Workplace Certification

New York State Finance Law [§139-M](#) requires Applicants on competitive state procurements to certify that they have a written policy addressing gender-based violence and the workplace and that such policy meets the minimum requirements outlined on **Attachment 16**. Applicants should review, sign, date and include as part of their submission **Attachment 16**.

## V. Completing the Application

### A. Application Format and Content

Please refer to the Statewide Financial System: Vendor User Guide for assistance in applying for this procurement through the NYS Statewide Financial System. This guide is available by logging into the Statewide Financial System and searching under SFS Coach.

Applicants are instructed to respond to each of the following statements and questions under “Program Specific Questions (PSQ)/Bid Factors.” Your responses comprise your application. Number/letter your narrative to correspond to each statement and question in the order presented below. When responding to the statements and questions, be mindful that Application reviewers may not be familiar with your agency and its services. Your answers should be specific, succinct, and responsive to the statements and questions as outlined. Please be aware that the value assigned to each section described below indicates the relative weight that will be given to each section of your Application when scoring your Application.

An **Application Checklist (Attachment 17)** has been included to help ensure that submission requirements have been met. Applicants should refer to this Attachment before and after writing the application. In assembling your application, please follow the outline provided in the **Application Checklist: Attachment 17**.

The Application Narrative should not exceed twelve (12) double-spaced pages, using a 11-point Arial font with one-inch margins on all sides. Pages should be numbered consecutively. All Attachments should be labeled with the Attachment name and corresponding attachment number. The twelve (12) page limitation is specific to the Application Narrative and does **not** include all required Attachments. Please submit only the requested information in the attachments and **do not add attachments or information that are not requested**. Any additional attachments or narrative exceeding the twelve (12) double-spaced page limitation will not be scored or considered by reviewers. **Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a deduction of up to ten (10) points.**

It is each Applicant’s responsibility to ensure that all materials included in its Application have been properly prepared and submitted. Applications must be submitted via the Statewide Financial System by the Application deadline date and time specified on the Cover Page of this RFA.

**IMPORTANT:**

Please upload the full Application and all required Attachments as one (1) complete PDF document no larger than 20MB in response to Bid Factor Question 01. **Please ensure that uploaded files are not fillable PDFs or “secure” or “password protected” or your document will not upload properly.**

Any material added to a Bid Factor “Add Comments” box in SFS will not be reviewed as part of a submitted application.

**See the Event Comments and Attachments link at the bottom of the Bid Event page in SFS for required attachments to be completed in response to corresponding bid factor questions, as well as informational only attachments.**

**Program Specific Questions (PSQ)/Bid Factors**

**Application Format**

1. Program Abstract	Not Scored	
2. Community and Agency Description	Maximum Score:	15 points
3. Health Equity	Maximum Score:	20 points
4. Program Design and Implementation	Maximum Score:	45 points
5. Budget and Justification	Maximum Score:	<u>20 points</u>
6. Workplan	Not Scored	
		100 points

**1. Program Abstract** **Maximum 1 Page Not Scored**

Applicants should provide a Program Abstract with the following information:

- 1a) Describe the proposed program. Include what will be completed and how.
- 1b) What are the Project goals and objectives?
- 1c) What is the geographic region to be served?
- 1d) Provide the number of years of experience in the field of health equity, which must include one (1) or more of the following, please specify which in your response:
- developing and delivering training or capacity building for health and human services providers to promote health equity;
  - developing and delivering direct service programs that promote health equity; and/or
  - developing conference presentations and journal publications on health equity.
- 1e) Applicants are instructed to include a written description of a relevant work product that has been completed.
- 1f) Indicate the total number of health and human services providers and organizations to receive training interventions annually.
- 1g) What types of outcomes does your organization expect to achieve? How will success be measured?
- 1h) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 1 – Statement of Assurances** as part of your full Application submission.
- 1i) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 11 – Minority & Women-Owned Business Enterprise Forms** as part of your full Application submission.
- 1j) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 12 – Vendor Responsibility Attestation** as part of your full Application submission.
- 1k) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Application Cover Page - Attachment 13** as part of your full Application submission.
- 1l) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Gender-Based Violence and the Workplace Certification – Attachment 16** as part of your full Application submission.
- 1m) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Application Checklist - Attachment 17** as part of your full Application submission.

## **2. Community and Agency Description**

**Maximum 2 Pages  
Total 15 Points**

- 2a) Describe your organization's qualifications, strengths, partnerships, and experience related to serving as a Health Equity Training Center of Expertise.
- 2b) Describe your organization's experience providing training related to health equity as a result of any prior grants, consulting agreements or other sources of support from government, private organizations, health facilities/systems, or foundations.

- 2c) Describe your organization's experience providing training to 1) executive directors, administrators, and program managers; 2) physicians, other prescribers and nurses; 3) social workers, care coordinators, support services providers, community health workers/educators, and peer workers at healthcare facilities and community-based organizations. Include the number of individuals and agencies trained for the past two (2) years.
- 2d) Describe your organization's commitment to Health Equity and outline concrete steps that have been taken to advance health equity in its operations.
- 2e) Describe where your specific program fits within the agency and how it will support the Health Equity Training Center programmatic goals.

**3. Health Equity**

**Maximum 2 Pages  
Total 20 Points**

- 3a) Describe how you will ensure that training and capacity building services provided under this initiative will impact the communities in New York State most impacted by health disparities and inequities.
- 3b) How do the organization's leadership, training staff, and consultant trainers for different types of trainings (i.e. trainings for executive directors, physicians, peer workers, etc.) reflect the diversity of the workforce?
- 3c) Describe a specific training or capacity building initiative that your organization has offered that you believe successfully addressed health equity. Explain the strategies used, what data you have that demonstrates its success, and how you would build on this success in the provision of services under this initiative.
- 3d) Describe how you will monitor and evaluate the immediate impact of your educational materials related to health equity and improving social determinants of health (SDOH).
- 3e) Describe your approach to educating health and human services providers of all races and ethnicities to understand that promoting health equity is foundational.

**4. Program Design and Implementation**

**Maximum 7 Pages  
Total 45 Points**

- 4a) Describe the unique training needs of the priority population of health and human services providers to be served through this program.
- 4b) Referring to **Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes** of this Request for Applications, describe how your organization will implement a program that meets all of the Program Description General Program Requirements.
- 4c) Referring to **Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes** of this Request for Applications, describe how your organization will implement a program that meets all of the **Training Center Best Practices** as shown in **Attachment 3**.
- 4d) Referring to **Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes** of this Request for Applications, describe how your organization will implement a program that meets all of the Program Description Staffing Requirements. Include a brief description of each position's

roles and responsibilities, along with job qualifications, educational background, licensures, and experience required for each position. If in-kind staff are included in the proposed program, they should be included in the staffing detail. Applicants are instructed to complete **Attachment 5: Agency Capacity and Staffing Information**. Resumes of all key staff should be uploaded and submitted with **Attachment 5: Agency Capacity and Staffing Information** as part of your full Application submission.

- 4e) What are your program's indicators for success? How will you track and measure the program indicators and implement corrective action for indicators falling below prescribed targets?
- 4f) Describe the policies and procedures your organization would have in place to ensure provision of consistently high-quality training services.
- 4g) Describe how your organization will ensure that the services provided are culturally competent and linguistically appropriate.
- 4h) Describe your organization's readiness to undertake program activities in a timely fashion.

## 5. Budgets and Justifications

**Total 20 Points**

***Applicants are instructed to:***

- ***Respond to Question 5d below as part of your full application submission; and***
- ***Complete and submit a budget in SFS according to the following guidelines:***

- 5a) Applicants are instructed to prepare an annual budget based on the maximum award as indicated in Section I of this RFA. The budget for year one (**1/01/2027 - 12/31/2027**) must be entered into the Statewide Financial System (SFS). Refer to **SFS Expenditure Budget Instructions - Attachment 14**. All budget lines should be calculated as whole dollar amounts. All costs must be related to the provision of **Training Center of Expertise: Promoting Health Equity to Improve Community Health Outcomes** and proposed activities, as described in the Application narrative and work plan. Justification for each cost should be submitted in narrative form and in detail. All costs should be consistent with the scope of services, reasonable, and cost-effective. For all staff, the Budget narrative must delineate how the percentage of time devoted to this initiative has been determined. Contracts established resulting from the Request for Application will be cost reimbursable. Once the budget in SFS is completed, Applicants are required to also enter the total grant funds being requested in the Unit Bid Price field at the bottom of the page. The total grant funds and Unit Bid Price must match in order for the Application to submit successfully.
- 5b) For staff listed in the Personal services (Salary and Fringe) section of the budget, include a breakdown of the total salary and fringe benefit needs for staff. Indicate how the positions relate to program implementation. Applicants are instructed to include a justification for each of the requested Full Time Equivalents (FTE's) and delineate how the percentage of time devoted to this initiative has been determined
- 5c) For each item listed under Non-Personal services, describe how it is necessary for program implementation. Non-Personal services include: Contractual, Travel, Equipment, Space/Property & Utilities, Operating Expenses, and Other costs.

5d) Applicants are required to complete and upload **Health Equity Funding History** for Health Equity training, capacity building and/or services to advance health equity (**Attachment 15**) as part of your full Application submission.

5e) Funding requests must adhere to the following guidelines:

- An indirect cost rate of up to 15% of modified total direct costs can be requested. If your organization has a federally approved rate, contractors may request up to 20% of the federally approved rate. If your organization has a federally approved rate of less than 20%, the maximum indirect rate that can be requested is the approved federally approved rate.
- **Funding provided under this RFA may only be used to expand existing activities or create new activities pursuant to this RFA. These funds may not be used to supplant funds for currently existing staff activities.** Agencies currently funded by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to provide program services in accordance with the requirements of this Request for Applications (RFA) must apply for continuation of funding.
- Any ineligible budget items will be removed from the budget prior to contracting. The budget amount requested will be reduced to reflect the removal of the ineligible items.
- **Faculty Subject Area Experts:** Any agreements established with faculty should be made directly with the faculty and not an institution. Fees should not include any administrative costs and/or institutional fringe benefit rates.

## 6. Work Plan

**Not Scored**

For the Statewide Financial System (SFS) **Work Plan Project Summary**, applicants are instructed to insert the Project Summary as it is listed in the **Attachment 2 – Work Plan**. Any additional Project Summary entered in this area **will not** be considered or scored by reviewers of your application.

Applicants are **not** required to enter the Performance Measures for each Work Plan Objective in the SFS Work Plan at the time of application. Applicants should review the Performance Measures as they are listed in **Attachment 2 – Work Plan**.

Funded applicants will be held to the Objectives, Tasks, and Performance Measures as listed in **Attachment 2 – Work Plan** and will be required to enter the performance measures into SFS if funding is awarded.

## B. Freedom of Information Law

All Applications may be disclosed or used by the Department to the extent permitted by law. The Department may disclose an Application to any person for the purpose of assisting in evaluating the Application or for any other lawful purpose. All Applications will become State agency records, which will be available to the public in accordance with the New York State Freedom of Information Law (FOIL). **Any portion of an Application that an Applicant believes constitutes proprietary information entitled to confidential handling, as an exception to the general rule regarding the availability to the public of State agency records under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Law, must be clearly and specifically designated in the Application.** If the Department agrees with the Applicant's claim regarding the proprietary nature of any portion of an Application, the designated portion of the Application will be withheld from public disclosure. Blanket assertions of proprietary material will not be accepted, and failure to specifically designate proprietary material may be deemed a waiver of

any right to confidential handling of such material.

### C. Review & Award Process

An Application which meets the Minimum Eligibility Requirements will be reviewed and evaluated competitively by the Department, AIDS Institute. An Application that does not meet the minimum criteria (PASS/FAIL) will not be evaluated. An Application that does not provide all required information will be omitted from consideration.

Applications will be evaluated on a 100-point scale as follows:

Program Abstract	Not Scored
Community and Agency Description	15 Points
Health Equity	20 Points
Program Design and Implementation	45 Points
Budget	20 Points
Work Plan	Not Scored
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 Points</b>

In the event of a tie score, the applicant with the highest score for Section 3 – Health Equity – will receive the award. Should there still be a tie score, the applicant with the highest score in Section 4. Program Design and Implementation will receive the award.

- One (1) award will be made to the highest scoring applicant in New York State.
- If there is an insufficient number of acceptable applications (scoring 70 or above) received,
- Health Research, Inc./the New York State Department of Health reserves the right to fund an application scoring in the range of (60-69).
- Health Research, Inc./New York State Department of Health reserves the right to revise the award amount as necessary due to changes in availability of funding.

Should additional funding become available, the New York State Department of Health and Health Research, Inc. may award those funds to the selected applicant, or to an organization from the pool of approved applicants deemed not funded, due to limited resources. If it is determined that the needed expertise is not available among these organizations, the New York State Department of Health and Health Research, Inc. reserve the right to establish additional competitive solicitations.

Applications with minor issues (for example, an Application missing information that is not essential to timely review and would not impact review scores) **may** be processed and evaluated, at the discretion of the State, but any issues with an Application which are identified by the Department **must** be resolved prior to time of award. An Application with unresolved issues at the time award recommendations are made will be determined to be non-responsive and will be disqualified.

If changes in funding amounts are necessary for this initiative or if additional funding becomes available, funding will be modified and awarded in the same manner as outlined in the award process described above.

Applicants will be deemed to fall into one of three categories: 1) not approved, 2) not funded due to limited resources, and 3) approved and funded. Not funded applications may be awarded

should additional funds become available.

Once awards have been made pursuant to the terms of this RFA, an Applicant may request a debriefing of their own Application (whether their Application was funded or not funded). The debriefing will be limited only to the strengths and weaknesses of the Application submitted by the Applicant requesting a debriefing and will not include any discussion of ANY OTHER Applications. Requests for a debriefing must be received by the Department, Health Equity Unit at [OHEPI@health.ny.gov](mailto:OHEPI@health.ny.gov) no later than fifteen (15) Calendar days from date of the award or non-award announcement to the Applicant requesting a debriefing.

To request a debriefing, please send an email to Nadine Kela-Murphy at [OHEPI@health.ny.gov](mailto:OHEPI@health.ny.gov). In the subject line, please write: *Debriefing Request: Training Center of Expertise Promoting Health Equity*.

Unsuccessful Applicants who wish to protest the award(s) resulting from this RFA on legal and/or factual grounds, should follow the protest procedures established by the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC). These procedures can be found on the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) website at <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/agencies/guide/MyWebHelp>. (Section XI. 17.)

## VI. Attachments

- Please note that Attachments to this RFA are not included in the RFA document, but can be accessed on the **"Event Page" for this RFA/Bid Event** located in the [Statewide Financial System \(SFS\) Vendor Portal](#) or once an Application has been started, under the **"Event Comments and Attachments Section"** of the online Application. To access the Event Page and online Application/Bid Event, including required documents such as the Attachments, a prospective Applicant must be registered and logged into the NYS Statewide Financial System Vendor Portal. Once logged into the Vendor Portal, prospective Applicants can locate the "Events Page" for this Bid Event by selecting the "Grants Management – State" tile, selecting the "Bid Event Search" tile, searching for this Bid Event, and then selecting the "View Event Package". Attachments that are requested to be uploaded as part of an Application/Bid Event response will be requested in individual corresponding Bid Factors in the online application (See Section V.A., "Program Specific Questions (PSQ)/Bid Factors").

Note: Any updates to the RFA/attachments will be addressed in an Addendum to the RFA. **Addendums, as well as questions and answers, will be posted to the [SFS Public Portal Homepage](#) under the Grant Opportunity for this Bid Event, not in the application itself.** To access these documents in SFS, Applicants must go to the Grant Opportunity and select "View Grant Opportunity" **which can ONLY be viewed when logged out of the SFS Vendor Portal.** Any updated Attachments will be posted on the NYS Department of Health Funding Opportunity website: <https://www.health.ny.gov/funding/>.

- **ALL applicants are instructed to verify each required Attachment that has been uploaded to the application.** To check attachments, Applicants are instructed to click "View" in the SFS application for each uploaded attachment to ensure that the attachment and all of its applicable information/data is viewable in its final format.
- **PDF Attachments – due to system constraints, PDF attachments cannot be uploaded with annotations, editable fields, or JAVA/active controls. Please submit PDFs that are read- only.**

- Attachment 1: Statement of Assurances\*
- Attachment 2: Training Center of Expertise Work Plan\*\*
- Attachment 3: Training Center Best Practices\*\*
- Attachment 4: Health Equity Definitions and Examples\*\*
- Attachment 5: Agency Capacity and Staffing Information\*
- Attachment 6: Health Research, Inc.'s Contracts General Terms and Conditions\*\*
- Attachment 7: Attachment A-1: Agency Specific Terms and Conditions \*\*
- Attachment 8: Attachment A-2: HIV/AIDS Clause\*\*
- Attachment 9: Attachment E-1: AIDS Institute Policy on Personal Health Related Information\*\*
- Attachment 10: Participation by Minority Group Members and Women with Respect to State Contracts: Requirements and Procedures\*\*
- Attachment 11: M/WBE Utilization Plan\*
- Attachment 12: Vendor Responsibility Attestation\*
- Attachment 13: Application Cover Page\*
- Attachment 14: Statewide Financial System (SFS) Expenditure Budget Instructions\*\*
- Attachment 15: Health Equity Funding History\*
- Attachment 16: Gender-Based Violence and the Workplace Certification\*
- Attachment 17: Application Checklist\*

\*These attachments **must** be uploaded as part of your agency's Statewide Financial System (SFS) online Application in response to corresponding Bid Factor questions. Forms to be completed are located in the "**Event Comments and Attachments Section**" "" of the Statewide Financial System online Application/Bid Event.

\*\*These attachments do not need to be completed and are for Applicant information only. These Attachments may be accessed in the "**Event Comments and Attachments Section**" of the Statewide Financial System online Application/Bid Event.