New York State Department of Health
AIDS Institute
Office of the Medical Director and Health Research, Inc. (HRI)

Questions and Answers

Ending Epidemics Education, Training and Technical Assistance Services Request for Applications (RFA)

RFA #20760/Internal Program #25-0003

SFS ID #'s: EEET&T-A26; EEET&T-B26; EEET&T-C26; EEET&T-D26; EEET&T-E26

SFS Event Names: RFA#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp A
RFA#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp B
RFA#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp C
RFA#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp D
RFA#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp E

Questions below were received by the deadline announced in the Request for Applications. New York State Department of Health is not responsible for any errors or misinterpretation of any questions received.

The responses to questions included herein are the official responses by the State to questions posted by potential bidders and are hereby incorporated into the **RFA #20760.** In the event of any conflict between the Request for Applications and these responses, the requirements or information contained in these responses will prevail.

Application Submission In the Statewide Financial System (SFS)

Question 1: Where can I access the RFA?

Answer 1: This opportunity has been posted on the New York Statewide Financial System (SFS) website.
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.

Questions? Contact the SFS Technical Support Help Desk:
helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov | 1-877-737-4185 toll-free | 518-457-7737.

Question 2: How do I apply in SFS?

Answer 2: Please refer to Section IV. Administrative Requirements, E. How to File an Application in the Request for Applications.

Reference materials and videos are available for Applicants to funding opportunities on the New York 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.
   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#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp A (for Component A)
   RFA#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp B (for Component B)
   RFA#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp C (for Component C)
   RFA#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp D (for Component D)
   RFA#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp E (for Component E)
3. 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.

Additionally, you can search using the SFS ID in the Event ID field as follows: EEET&T-A26; EEET&T-B26; EEET&T-C26; EEET&T-D26; EEET&T-E26

You can 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.

Question 3: What if I try to submit my application and it is past the due date/time of the RFA?

Answer 3: Please refer to Section IV. Administrative Requirements, E. How to File an Application in the Request for Applications.

Late applications will not be accepted.

Applications must be submitted online via the Statewide Financial System (SFS) by the date and time posted on the Cover Page of this Request for Applications under the heading "Key Dates".

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 Request for Applications. 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.**

Question 4: How do I determine if my agency is pre-qualified?

Answer 4: Please refer to Section IV. Administrative Requirements, N. Vendor Prequalification for Not-for-Profits in the Request for Applications.

An Application cannot be submitted/received from a not-for-profit Applicant that:

(a) has not Registered in the New York State 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 the Request for Applications.

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.

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.

Question 5: Can an agency apply if they are not prequalified?

Answer 5: Applicants ***must*** be prequalified in SFS (if not exempt) by the date and time applications are due.

Please refer to Section IV. Administrative Requirements, N. Vendor Prequalification for Not-for-Profits in the Request for Applications.

An Application cannot be submitted/received from a not-for-profit Applicant that:

(a) has not Registered in the New York State 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 Request for Applications.

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.

Question 6: What does the asterisk * mean in the SFS on-line application?

Answer 6: The asterisk* alerts applicants that a response is mandatory. Applicants will not be allowed to submit their application without completing all mandatory questions and uploading all mandatory attachments.

<u>Application Format</u>

Question 7: How do I submit my application in SFS?

Answer 7: Please refer to Section V. Completing the Application in the RFA for guidance.

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 Narrative. 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 20)** 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 20.**

The Application Narrative should not exceed eleven (11) double-spaced pages, using an 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 eleven (11) double-spaced 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 11 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 and uploaded with the full Application pdf.

Question 8: On bottom of page 1 of the RFA, it notes that one complete PDF is required including all required attachments. On the checklist (Attachment 20), only select attachments are included. Can you confirm that the attachments on the checklist are the required attachments to be included in the PDF?

Answer 8: Yes, please use **Attachment 20: Application Checklist** to determine which Attachments should be included as part of your full Application submission.

As noted in Section VI. Attachments of the RFA, some attachments are to be uploaded as part of the full application submission (noted with an asterisk "*") and some attachments are for information only (noted with two (2) asterisks "**").
The information-only attachments do not need to be uploaded with the full application submission.

Be sure to clearly label all attachments using the assigned Attachment numbers and Attachment names. Attachments apply to all Components of the RFA except where otherwise specified.

Question 9: Is it acceptable in the 11-page narrative to answer the questions with clearly marked numbers without restating the questions?

Answer 9: Yes, this is acceptable.

Question 10: What do I enter for the Work Plan Project Summary in SFS?

Answer 10: Please review the instructions given in the RFA for the Work Plan section (Section V. Completing the Application, A. Application Format/Content, 6. Work Plan) for the Component for which you are applying.

Question 11A: When will announcement of grant awardees be made?

Question 11B: When will awards be issued for the programs who will receive the grant?

Answer 11 A-B: The estimated award announcement date is September 1, 2026.

Question 12: When do you anticipate that the contract will begin for the project funded under the RFA?

Answer 12: Please refer to Section IV. Administrative Requirements, G. Term of Contract in the Request for Applications.

It is anticipated that contracts will have a start date of December 1, 2026.

Question 13: In the Program Abstract Section of the RFA it states "Applicants are instructed to complete and upload Attachment 21: M/WBE Utilization Plan as part of your full application submission." Kindly clarify whether the **M/WBE Utilization Plan - Attachment 21** is incorporated as a reference OR must be completed and submitted with the RFA application in order for the application to be considered complete.

Answer 13: See Addendum #1 posted on March 31, 2026 for an updated Attachment 21. The **M/WBE Utilization Plan - Attachment 21 must** be completed and submitted with the Application for the Application to be considered complete. Instructions for completing **Attachment 21** can be found on the first page of the document.

By submitting an Application, each Applicant and potential Grantee agrees to complete an MWBE Utilization plan as directed in **Attachment 21** of this RFA. The Department will review the MWBE Utilization Plan submitted be 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.

Question 14: Should the M/WBE Utilization Plan be reflective of just the first-year budget or all five years? Will there be a possibility of applying for a waiver from the MBE and WBE requirements? Is this form required?

Answer 14: The **M/WBE Utilization Plan** (Form #1 of **Attachment 21**) should be based on the life of the contract, which is five (5) years. Eligible M/WBE expenditures include any subcontracted labor or services, equipment, materials, or any combined purchase of the foregoing under a contract awarded from this solicitation.

Please refer to the instructions on **Attachment 21**, Guide to New York State DOH M/WBE RFA NFP Required Forms, Form #2: M/WBE Utilization Waiver Request for instructions on applying for a waiver. If the M/WBE Utilization Plan is incomplete, and the applicant is selected for funding, the resulting award will be held pending completion of the required documentation. All Applicants must complete Form # 3 (Online Compliance System Payment Submission Confirmation), Form #4 (M/WBE Staffing Plan), and Form #5 (EEO and M/WBE Policy Statement) in addition to the forms noted above.

Program

Question 15: Per the RFP, applicants may submit up to 7 applications, with limitations for components A, B, and E. Could you please clarify for large entities with multiple locations, that share an SFS ID, if the limit is per campus or for the entire entity?

Answer 15: Yes, large entities that have multiple locations (campuses) that share an SFS ID are allowed to submit up to seven (7) applications per campus. **Please be sure to use the address of the location for which you are applying when submitting your application in SFS.** The name of the campus for the application must clearly be stated in the application.
For more detail regarding number of applications that can be submitted/restrictions refer to Section I. Introduction, B. Available Funding of the RFA.

Question 16: Question 4b asks to describe the unique training needs, should we use anecdotal information as the needs assessment will not be done until after funding is awarded?

Answer 16: Applicants should share their understanding of the unique training needs of non-physician health and human services providers. This information may come from a variety of sources.

Question 17: How are recipients of Component A: Regional Training Centers expected to work with recipients of Component B: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise?

Answer 17: As stated in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program, Component A: Regional Training Center of the RFA, Component A recipients are expected to collaborate with the Component B: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise to facilitate regional access to advanced learning or specialize training content. This may include hosting a Component B recipient within the applicant's training space, facilitating connections to regional partners, assisting with promotion and marketing within the region; and supporting technical assistance. Per the **Work Plan- Component A: Attachment 6**, Task 4.4 – this includes hosting at least three (3) advanced level courses annually.

Question 18A: On page 13, first paragraph under Component A: Regional Training Centers, it says "Approved training curricula will be made available to funded applicants." Does this mean applicants wouldn't create their own training content or that they can build from what is NYS-approved?

Question 18B: On page 13, first paragraph under Component A: Regional Training Centers, is there a requirement that certain topics are covered in trainings? If so, what topics are required to be covered each year?

Answer 18 A-B: As stated in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program, Component A: Regional Training Center of the RFA, applicants funded through Component A will be provided New York State Department of Health-approved curricula to deliver on topics related to HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections, sexual health, LGBTQAI+ health and drug user health. This will include courses that support the New York State Peer Certification Program. In addition, applicants funded through Component A will contribute to ensuring approved curricula remain up-to-date and reflective of evidence-based practices and emerging needs. As needs are identified, new training curricula may be developed by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute, by Component A recipients or by other organizations funded through this RFA. Funded applicants will be expected to participate in the revisions of existing curricula or the creation of new curricula as directed by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute. This includes facilitating expert review of new or revised materials (such as identification of subject matter experts, coordination of pilot training, collection of feedback, etc.)
Funded applicants are expected to collaborate with the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute and other training providers funded through this RFA to develop a semi-annual calendar of training events that is informed by the demographic, epidemiological and/or unique social determinants of health profiles of the region and is designed to meet the unique needs of the region.

Question 19: On page 18, number 2, can all in-person trainings for the region be at the applicant's agency location?

Answer 19: Yes, it is acceptable for in-person trainings within the region provided by applicants funded through Component A: Regional Training Center to be provided at the agency's location, provided it meets the unique needs of the region.

Question 20: On page 18, number 2, are applicants required to use one of the approved platforms like HSLC for virtual learning?

Answer 20: As stated in the **Work Plan - Component A: Attachment 6,** Performance Measure 2.2.1 and 2.2.2, webinar packages used for virtual learning delivery must accommodate at least 250 participants and include core interactive features such as multimedia sharing, digital whiteboards, polling and breakout rooms. As stated in the **Work Plan - Component A: Attachment 6,** Performance Measure 3.2.1 and in Section IV. Administrative Requirements, H. Payment & Reporting Requirements of Grant Awardee(s) of the RFA, all training services must be documented in the initiative's Learning Management System – www.hivtrainingny.org.

Question 21: On page 18, number 2, can the virtual trainings be offered asynchronously?

Answer 21: Component A recipients are expected to deliver a mix of training services to meet the needs of the region. This may include a combination of asynchronous and live training events.

Question 22: On page 19, number 4, is there a certain number of in-person/virtual/hybrid trainings to be held or people to be engaged?

Answer 22: As outlined in the **Work Plan - Component A: Attachment 6** Performance Measures 4.1.1, funded applicants are expected to deliver a minimum of 500 hours of training, capacity building or technical assistance activities annually. Further the Work Plan Task 5.5 establishes a target attendance of at least 20 participants per training. The mix of in-person/virtual trainings proposed should be tailored to meet the unique needs of the region. As outlined in the **Work Plan - Component A: Attachment 6** Performance Measures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, this should include at least 20% of training hours as in-person skills building opportunities and at least 20% of training hours as virtual deliveries.

Question 23A: On page 19, number 4, what type/level of technical assistance is expected? And is there a system in place for agency-specific TA requests?

Question 23B: On page 19, number 4, what percentage of the trainings should be scheduled vs. what percentage of the trainings should be in response to requests for technical assistance?

Answer 23 A-B: Applicants funded through Component A are expected to design a marketing strategy that actively identifies new partners in the region who may benefit from the training and technical assistance services offered. They are expected to develop a calendar of training events in collaboration with the AIDS Institute and other initiative training providers every six (6) months to address regional training needs. Per the **Work Plan – Component A: Attachment 6,** up to 20 hours of AIDS Institute approved technical assistance services may be provided annually. Examples of technical assistance may include agency-specific requests or tailored trainings.

Question 24: On page 19, number 6, what does NYS's "training design and review" entail? Do they have a clearance process for training content that the applicant creates?

Answer 24: Training design and review includes negotiation with the AIDS Institute on the proposed training topic, objectives and outline prior to development; training development that is informed by subject matter experts; submission of training material to the AIDS Institute for review; coordination of a training pilot, and incorporation of feedback.

Question 25: Can you please provide clarity on the "non-clinician" part in background intent on page 5? Does that include nurses, doctors, phlebotomist etc.?

Answer 25: Services provided through this RFA are intended for non-physician health and human services providers, public health staff and peer workers involved in advancing the AIDS Institute's strategic priorities. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Health program managers and administrators;
- Social workers, care coordinators, support services providers;
- Local health department and other public health staff;
- Educators, navigators and other outreach workers; and
- Community Health Workers.

Participants in some of these trainings may include nurses, phlebotomists, or other non-prescribing members of the care team.

Question 26: Are we permitted to apply to provide CEUs through the trainings?

Answer 26: Yes, application for Continuing Education Units (CEUs) may be permitted. HIV Education and Training Programs has authorization to award New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor (CASAC) continuing education credits.

Question 27: Can we access a list of current contractors so that we can see what services currently already exist?

Answer 27: Currently funded providers and their regions/topics are listed below.

Contractor	Region/Topic
Component A - Regional Training Center	
Cicatelli Associates, Inc.	New York City - Mid-Hudson
Research Foundation of SUNY/Stony Brook University, Center for Public Health Education	New York City - Long Island
University of Rochester – Center for Community Practice	Upstate New York
Component B - Topic Specific Centers of Expertise	
University of Rochester – Center for Community Practice	Promoting Health for LGBTGNC people
ACR Health	Promoting Health for People Who Use Drugs
ACR Health	Opioid Overdose Prevention Training and Capacity Building
The Family Center	HCV Mono-infection and HIV/HCV Co-infection
Research Foundation of SUNY/ University of Buffalo, Institute for Trauma and Trauma Informed Care	Trauma-Informed Care
The Albany Damien Center	Expanding Employment Opportunities for People Living with HIV
The Family Center	Improving Health Outcomes Among Older Adults Living with HIV
The Legal Action Center	Legal Issues Impacting People Living with HIV/STI/Viral Hepatitis
Component C - Centers of Expertise in On-Line Training	
Cicatelli Associates, Inc.	Statewide
Component D - Peer Certification Academic Center	
Research Foundation of SUNY/ University of Buffalo, Institute for Trauma and Trauma Informed Care	Statewide
Component E - Leadership Training Institute for HIV, Hepatitis, Drug User Health and PrEP	
Cicatelli Associates, Inc.	Statewide

Question 28A: For Component B, is there a requirement to travel all over the state or are we able to stay specific to a region and offer remote learning?

Question 28B: For Component B: Are we allowed to rent training space, so that we can provide trainings across the state? If so, do we need to show MOUs or contracts for training sites that we plan do the training in at the time of the RFA submittal?

Answer 28 A-B: Yes, applicants applying for Component B are expected to serve all of New York State. Some statewide travel is required. As stated in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program, Component B: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise of the RFA, funded applicants must be prepared to secure fully equipped, accessible, in-person training space throughout the different regions of the state. Applicants may use their own agency space or negotiate use of on-site training space with service providers, or other partners. Applicants are not required to submit a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or contracts for training spaces at the time of the application. However, applicants should describe any proposed training sites.

Question 29: For Component B, can you have multiple trainers and training modules for each topic? (intro page 3)

Answer 29: One (1) contractor will be selected for *each* of the seven (7) topic areas in Component B Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise. Applicants funded through Component B will be responsible for providing statewide services to address the full range of training needs related to the awarded topic area as described in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, A. Program Model Description, **Component B: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise** of the RFA. As stated in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program, **Staffing Requirements Component B: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise** of the RFA, funded training centers are expected to have access to a diverse panel of qualified trainers and/or consultants who are representative of the priority audience and communities served.

Question 30: If you are applying for more than one Component B do we need a different program coordinator for each or can one program coordinator do all of them?

Answer 30: Funded Applicants are expected to establish a staffing plan to meet the goals outlined in the RFA as described in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program, Staffing Requirements Component B: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise. This includes at least .05 FTE allocated for a Program Manager who will be responsible for the programmatic and fiscal oversight of the contract. Recipients of multiple awards may choose to have a single program coordinator.

Question 31: Is it expected that previously funded Opioid Overdose Prevention activities be included within the “Promoting Health for People Who Use Drugs” topic area in Component B of RFA #20760?

Answer 31: As listed in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, A. Program Model Description, Component B: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise of the RFA, the Center of Expertise for Promoting Health for People who Use Drugs will be responsible for to covering topics related to providing stigma-free services, promoting engagement and retention in care, promoting harm reduction, overdose prevention and safety planning, increasing access to substance use disorder treatment. Additionally, funded applicants will be expected to design new training curricula or capacity building activities to support implementation of latest guidance and best practices for effective service delivery related to promoting health for people who use drugs.

Question 32: For Component E, is refreshments/food an allowable expense for leadership training of participants with shared lived experience?

Answer 32: Yes, refreshments/food are allowable expenses when pre-approved by the AIDS Institute contract manager and budgeted under Operating costs. A description including the cost per person should be included and any allocation methodology for a shared expense. Costs should be reasonable and within acceptable Office of Management and Budget (OMB) circular amounts.

Question 33: How are recipients of Component E expected to coordinate with one another? What is the relationship between Component D and Component E recipients?

Answer 33: As listed in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program, Component E: Training Centers for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources of the RFA, all funded applicants are expected to participate in a collaborative process to achieve the goals of the RFA. Applicants funded through Component E: Training Centers for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment will serve as key regional resources for people with lived experience. Funded applicants are expected to meet at least quarterly to jointly plan and implement regular statewide peer-support calls. They will work with the Component D New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center to promote the benefits of the New York State Peer Worker Certification Program, support peers expressing interest in certification to help them achieve key program milestones, and contribute to developing a directory of practicum opportunities.

Question 34: For Component E, in the workplan Task 5.7 refers to providing training and technical assistance to support employers in integrating peer work in their agencies. Is this referring to new employers, existing employers, or both? If both, is there an estimated proportion of employer sites that would be new vs. existing?

Answer 34: Task 5.7 of **Work Plan – Component E: Attachment 12** aims to support both new and existing employers in successfully integrating and retaining Peer Workers within their agencies. Training and technical assistance needs of employers will likely vary by region and over the course of the initiative. Applicants funded through Component E are expected to routinely review program data and conduct continuous quality improvement activities to enhance the program and overall initiative.

Question 35: I'm reaching out to better understand whether your team is considering a platform-based approach, as opposed to a single-point solution, and if there may be an opportunity to align with your broader objectives.
Our program is designed as a flexible, AI-enabled platform that integrates with existing infrastructure to support real-time patient engagement, staff workflow optimization, and scalable application deployment across care environments. Our focus is on reducing complexity while enhancing both patient experience and operational efficiency as well as reducing hand acquired infections.

Answer 35: Please review the RFA in full, specifically Section II. Who May Apply, A. Minimum Eligibility Requirements and Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, A. Program Model Description and B. Requirements for the Program of the RFA to determine if your organization would be eligible to apply and for details regarding the intent and scope of the RFA, as well as requirements for the resulting program.

Budget

Question 36A: To clarify, are the responses to questions 5a), 5b), and 5c) of the Budgets and Justifications section of the RFA (page 65) to be entered directly onto the SFS budget submission form, or do we need to upload these responses as a separate attachment?

Question 36B: Can you clarify where we are supposed to include the budget information? Is it in the SFS or as a PDF upload? Is the budget supposed to be included in the one PDF to be attached in Q01, although not counted in the 11-page limit?

Answer 36 A-B: As instructed in Section V. Completing the Application, A. Application Format and Content, 5. Budgets and Justifications, questions 5a)-5c), the budget should be entered into the Statewide Financial System (SFS). For more guidance, please see **Attachment 23: Statewide Financial System (SFS) Expenditure Budget Instructions**.

Question 37: Where should we include our response to question 5d from the Budgets and Justifications section of the RFA (page 65)?

Answer 37: Respond to questions 5d and 5e as part of the Narrative of your full application submission, however the responses to questions 5d and 5e will not be included in the page limits for the RFA.

Question 38: For Section 5 Budgets and Justifications, could you clarify these budget-related questions?

1a. Question 5f indicates an indirect rate up to 15% of MDTC (for example, on p.48 and p.53 of the RFA) or up to 20% of the federally approved rate. It also states that for HRI contracts, the rate will be limited to 10% of the total contract costs. Given that multiple awards will have a mix of NYS and HRI funding (p.8), how do we reconcile this into one budget in the application? Can we combine the two different indirect rates into one weighted rate to arrive at a final indirect cost for the budget?

Answer 38: Applicants are instructed to prepare a budget based on 15% MTDC or up to 20% of the federally approved rate. All funded applicants will be asked for a revised budget based on the funding awarded (NYS or HRI funding) and will be able to update their proposed budget as needed if awarded funding.