New York State Department of Health
Office of Primary Care and Health Systems Management
Center for Health Care Policy and Resource Development
Center for Healthcare Workforce Innovation

Request for Applications #20529

Healthcare Education and Life-skills Program

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Questions below were received by the deadline announced in the Request for Applications (RFA). The New York State Department of Health (the "Department") 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 applicants and are hereby incorporated into RFA # 20529. In the event of any conflict between the RFA and these responses, the requirements or information contained in these responses will prevail.

WHO MAY APPLY

Question 1a: Would a local government Workforce Development Office be an eligible applicant under this program, if it can demonstrate that the County is a Vendor in the Statewide Financial System, has entered into contracts with NYS DOH, and has the capacity to offer support to students, or trainees pursuing careers in healthcare?

Question 1b: [We are a] four year medical college for the field of podiatry and 501C. Graduates after taking the National Boards for Podiatry, move on to a three year residency. The program is quite rigorous, and we would like to strengthen our wrap around services to support our students in order for them to successfully graduate and meet the national need for podiatrists. Before we proceed down this path for grant application, are we eligible to apply for this?

Question 1c: I was wondering if non-DOH providers are eligible to apply for the grant: RFA # 20529 - Healthcare Education and Life-skills (ie: Behavioral Health providers - OASAS-OMH)?

Question 1d: Are there any limitations on the type of WIO that is eligible to apply? My organization has held WIO contracts to provide home care training.

Question 1e: For this bid does the bidder have to be non for profit?

Question 1f: My organization…is interested in submitting Healthcare Education and Life-Skills application, but I had a question about eligibility. We are not a direct service provider, we are a workforce and education intermediary. However, our partnerships include many education and

healthcare organizations and we are well-versed in offering the kind of support this RFA details. Please let me know if we are eligible to apply as an intermediary organization.
Question 1g: Is a public nursing home (governmental entity) eligible to apply for this opportunity?

Question 1h: Is a non-profit foundation that supports a long-term care facility eligible to apply for this opportunity?

Question 1i: As a for profit adult trade school for Certified Nurse's Aide, am I eligible to apply for this grant to start-up this school?

Question 1j: Is our WDB an eligible applicant if we do not have a 501 c status?

Question 1k: Our organization is classified as an acute care teaching hospital offering general healthcare services, do we have to also prove that we have a separate/affiliate higher learning or university style institution specifically designed for healthcare students?

Question 1l: We are considering identifying students in our new PA program as our target healthcare student population. This program will be starting its first cohort in January 2026, and will not yet have completed the accreditation process. Could you please confirm whether new programs that are not fully accredited are eligible to apply?

Answer 1 a-l: See Section II. Who May Apply, Subsection A. Minimum Eligibility Requirements, which states:

*"Applicant **must** meet **all** the following eligibility requirements stated below.*

1. *An Eligible Applicant 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.*

2. *Applicant must be a legally existing organization located in New York State, capable of entering a Master Grant Contract with the New York State Department of Health.*

3. *Applicant must be a not-for-profit organization that offers support to students, or trainees, pursuing careers in healthcare. Applicant must attest to the Not-for-Profit organization type on the **Attachment 2: Checklist and Commitment Form**.*

   Not-for-Profit organizations eligible to apply for funding may include but are not limited to:

   - *Area health education centers*
   - *Community based organizations*
   - *Community health associations*
   - *Educational institutions*
   - *General hospitals*
   - *Healthcare facilities*
   - *Healthcare worker unions*
   - *Joint labor-management training funds and committees*

- *Long term care facilities*
- *Regional health planning organizations*
- *Regional health networks*
- *Rural health networks*
- *Trade associations*
- *Workforce Investment Organizations*

4. *Applicant must complete and submit an **Attachment 2: Checklist and Commitment Form**, signed by the Executive Director or Chief Executive Officer, which attests that the organization meets the conditions for the program, including the minimum eligibility requirements as outlined in the Request for Applications."*

Question 2: I noticed, unfortunately, in the application that the bid is only for not-for-profit organizations. Is there a reason behind this?

Answer 2: The Department has designated this funding as being for not-for-profit organizations.

Question 3: Are pre-med students eligible participants in a proposed program?

Answer 3: Yes.

Question 4: Are students able be a part of the research team and paid under this grant?

Answer 4: See Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection B. Population Served.

FUNDING/SUBCONTRACTING

Question 5: The state's Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) have geographical distributions that do not align with the ESD region. As such, in many cases one AHEC may provide health workforce development in more than one ESD region. Can an AHEC apply for the application for their primary region, and be a partner with another AHEC for an additional region?

Answer 5: An applicant cannot utilize funds to provide wraparound services outside of the region they are applying for. See Section I. Introduction, Subsection D. Available Funding.

An applicant may subcontract components of the work plan. See Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection C. Program Services, which states:

"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 as well as the names of the subcontractors. Applicants may subcontract up to 25% of the components of the scope of work. The applicant must retain at least 75% of the scope of work within their agency. 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 NYSDOH. All subcontractors and subcontracts will be required to be approved by the Department of Health."
Question 6: Is indirect expense to be added as a sum total of 10% of the operating budget, or should the indirect expense be itemized?

Answer 6: All indirect expenses need to be itemized or categorized within the budget section of the SFS application.

Question 7a: The RFA states that 25% of the intervention can be subcontracted and that 75% must be retained by the applicant. Does that mean that we can subcontract 25% to multiple agencies each or a total of 25% cumulative amongst all subcontractors? (page 11 of the RFA)

Question 7b: What are components of the 25%/75% split? How is "components of scope of work" defined? Is it administration vs scope of work provided, or is it by budget?

Question 7c: Are projects that would disburse funding to multiple nonprofit partners (i.e. as part of a consortium) eligible for funding?

Question 7d: Does the 25% cap for subcontractors…apply?

Answer 7 a-d: See Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection C. Program Services, which states:

"*Applicants may subcontract up to 25% of the components of the scope of work."*

The scope of work is defined by an applicant's total proposed budget. Applicants can only subcontract up to a total of 25% of their proposed budget and may subcontract to one or more partners as long as they do not exceed this amount.

Question 8: How should these partnerships be documented in the application to demonstrate regional impact?

Answer 8: See Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection C. Program Services, which states:

"If utilizing subcontractors, applicants must provide a Statement of Scope of Work along with a Letter of Collaboration and Discussion as ***Attachment 7: Subcontract Utilization Plan.***

Letters of Collaboration should be specific to each proposed partnership in the application. The Scope of Work statement should describe the following:

- *Who the partnering organization(s) is/are;*
- *Why the collaboration is a necessary component of the program;*
- *What the partnering organization(s) proposes to do (i.e., what the partner will contribute);*
- *When the collaborative activities will take place; and*
- *How collaboration will be assessed."*

Question 9: Can the applicant apply the 10% indirect cost rate to subcontracting costs? If so, is there a maximum subcontract amount to which the applicant can apply indirects?

Answer 9: The 10% indirect cost rate may not be applied to any expenses that are subcontracted out. See Section V. Completing the Application, Subsection A. Application Format/Content, Budget section, which states:

"Funding may be requested under the administrative cost line to support a portion of the organization's structure to the extent that it allows a funded applicant to implement program activities. This includes funding for administrative and fiscal staff, space, supplies, telephone, and other expenses indirectly associated with program implementation and service delivery. Indirect administrative costs may not exceed 10% of the total direct costs."

Question 10: Will partial awards be given to an awardee?

Answer 10: It is possible that an applicant would be offered a partial award based on funding availability. See Section I. Introduction, Subsection D. Available Funding, Section IV. Administrative Requirements, Subsection F. Department of Health's Reserved Rights, and Section V. Completing the Application, Subsection C. Review & Award Process.

Question 11: Are the proposed projects applying for funds on a six-year contract basis? Should proposed project budgets reflect a single year or six years?

Answer 11: Contracts resulting from this Request for Applications will have a five-year contract term with anticipated dates of January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2031. See Section IV. Administrative Requirements, Subsection G. Term of Contract. Applicants should submit a proposed budget for year one into the Statewide Financial System (SFS). See Section V. Completing the Application, Subsection A. Application Format/Content for more instructions on completing and submitting a budget.

Question 12a: If awarded the funding, can we draw down the grant funds throughout the year or do submit for reimbursement at the end of the year?

Question 12b: If awarded, what is the planned timeline for reimbursing invoiced expenses?

Answer 12 a-b: Reimbursement under the grant is provided to applicants on a quarterly basis throughout the contract year. See Section IV. Administrative Requirements, Subsection H. Payment & Reporting Requirements of Grant Awardees for more information.

Question 13: If one of our proposed budgeted year reports is less than what was submitted with the RFA, are we allowed to re-allocate the additional funds to the other contracted years as long as we do not exceed the total contract value?

Answer 13: No, grantees will not be allowed to re-allocate funds from one contract year to another.

Question 14: It appears that the RFA does not address any match/cost-share requirements, are there any?

Answer 14: No, there are no match/cost-share requirements.

Question 15: If we are providing these wrap-around supports – can we move within the budget lines under wrap-around supports – e.g., we propose tuition expense of "x" but students secure tuition through Pell, TAP etc., and really need assistance with "daycare, food stipend, transportation…?

Answer 15: Yes, budget modification requests can be submitted to the Department for review.

Question 16: Is this funding to be treated as funding of last resort (e.g., after applying to Pell, TAP, etc.)?

Answer 16: No.

Question 17: Can grantee utilize purchase of services agreements vs. subcontractor to work with a K-12 school district or partnering institution of higher education to achieve grant goals? What regulations pertain to Purchase of Service?

Answer 17: If the grantee is utilizing a purchase of services agreement to provide funds to another entity to perform wrap around services, that service agreement would need to be treated the same as a subcontract. See Section IV. Administrative Requirements, Subsection I. Procurement Requirements, 3. Procurement Contract Language.

Question 18: The RFA indicates applicants can allocate up to 25% for subcontracting. If the applicant plans to use purchased services, would this be considered subcontracting? If not, can you provide clarification on what constitutes subcontracting?

Answer 18: No, purchased services are not considered subcontracting unless an agreement or understanding is entered into with the supplier.

Question 19a: I was wondering if you could provide me with the amount allowed to request for this grant?

Question 19b: What is the anticipated size of each award?

Answer 19 a-b: See Section I. Introduction, Subsection D. Available Funding, which states:

"Award amounts will be a minimum of $250,000 and a maximum of $1,000,000 per year. Applicants are instructed to propose budgets between $250,000 and $1,000,000 per year."

LOCATION/REGION

Question 20a: We are a private non-profit education corporation that is tax-exempt under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c) (3). We administer sponsored programs. Our campuses are educational institutions that may apply with SUNY RF support, may more than one SUNY Campus apply for funding? We ask since SUNY RF has one sole EIN number vs one per campus.

Question 20b: We operate statewide and have multiple training locations in the various regions (downstate & upstate) outlined in the RFA. As a single organization, can we apply under multiple regions?

Question 20c: Are K-12 Pathway to healthcare opportunities eligible to apply as a Consortium with an Institution of Higher Ed as lead agency?

Answer 20 a-c: See Section I. Introduction, Subsection D. Available Funding, which states:

"Only one (1) application per organization will be accepted. If multiple applications are received, the first application received will be accepted and scored. Additional applications from the organization will be disqualified and not scored." Also, see Section IV. Administrative Requirements, Subsection L. Vendor Identification Number.

Question 21a: Otsego County is part of the Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Region. The RFA has Otsego County listed in Southern Tier. Is this designation done in error, or for purposes of this RFA, are we considered Southern Tier?

Question 21b: Can you please confirm which region Otsego County belongs in?

Answer 21 a-b: See Addendum #1 of the RFA posted on 10/30/2024, which shows the correction where Otsego County is listed under the Mohawk Valley Region, instead of Southern Tier, and Hamilton County is listed under the North Country Region, instead of Mohawk Valley.

Question 22a: As Schenectady County's designated Community Action Agency, our service area is the County of Schenectady. If awarded this funding, would we be expected to serve customers outside our county?

Question 22b: Regarding Region: Long Island Counties Nassau and Suffolk: Would the program need to provide services to both Nassau and Suffolk Counties or could organizations choose one county within the region?

Question 22c: Are there specific guidelines for partnerships involving multiple counties?

Question 22d: Is it expected that DOH will elect to award one (1) contract per county, or is it dependent solely on the success of the application? Meaning, both awards can either go to Nassau County or they can go to Suffolk County.

Question 22e: Is there an expectation that successful applicants will serve the entire region (including all counties) for which they are applying? Or, given that two awards are planned per region, can a more localized approach be used?

Answer 22 a-e: An applicant is not required to serve an entire region. See Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection B. Population Served, which states:

"Applications should identify and document the health workforce shortage needs of the local or regional community and describe how the project will improve the healthcare workforce shortage in the identified region."

Also see Section I. Introduction, Subsection D. Available Funding on how an applicant's region will be determined.

Question 23: Where should the program consider the "home" county of the participant?

Answer 23: See Section I. Introduction, Subsection D. Available Funding, which states:

"An Applicant's region will be determined by the location of the home campus, or main training location, of the students served by the healthcare training organization." Healthcare students or trainees may come from other regions to be trained within the applicant's region; therefore, the home county of the participant will be the Applicant's region."

Question 24: As a NYS-designated WIO for the Career Pathways Training (CPT) Program, would you consider updating the regions to those aligned with the three CPT Program regions?

Answer 24: No. See Section I. Introduction, Subsection D. Available Funding for the RFA regions as defined by Empire State Development.

Question 25: What are the 10 regions of interest in the grant?

Answer 25: See Addendum # 1 of the RFA posted on 10/30/2024 for RFA regions as defined by the Empire State Development.

Question 26: Are projects that would comprise multiple regions and/or be statewide eligible for funding?

Answer 26: Applicants must focus on addressing the workforce needs of their identified region. See Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection A. Overview, and B. Population Served. Also, see Section I. Introduction, Subsection D. Available Funding on how an applicant's region will be determined.

PROGRAM SERVICES

Question 27a: Does [the program] support the development/realization of technology that is still in the design stage?

Question 27b: There is a lot of funding already available in NYS. Can this funding be used in combination with current programs (ie CPT Program)? Is this last dollar in for the support services? In expanding existing or creating new activities, can funds be used to hire new staff?

Question 27c: With these grant funds are we able to financially compensate the professional nursing professionals with a competitive clinical rate through the grant? Might the grant budget support such an initiative?

Question 27d: Are assessment activities of new services allowable under this grant?

Question 27e: Are recruitment activities/partner development activities allowed under this grant?

Question 27f: Are their limitations to "wrap-around supports"? – for example, could we award stipends to students that achieve milestones – we used a similar model to what we propose and found this extremely helpful as it forced engagement with the counselor and removed obstacles to completion.

Question 27g: Can wrap-around supports include emergency funds – e.g., student's car repair and/or assistance with rent which might prevent student from completing if they were not awarded some type of emergency stipend?

Question 27h: We plan to pilot the proposed program in calendar year 2025 with private funding; this public funding opportunity would enable us to sustain the program long-term, as well as improve and expand upon it. Is this timeline acceptable?

Answer 27a-h: See Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection C. Program Services, on the interventions and wrap around services to be provided by the applicant to serve healthcare students or trainees. If the applicant sees a benefit in providing certain wrap around services that are not outlined in the RFA, they should be described in detail in the application on how they will help support healthcare students and trainees in the success of their education and training. Projects should offer an innovative response to meeting healthcare workforce needs and funds may not be used to replace funds for existing staff activities.

Question 28: The Budget section of the Healthcare Education and Life-skills Program RFA (page 29, third paragraph) says that expenditures will not be allowed for the purchase of major pieces of depreciable equipment. Our healthcare programs (nursing, OT, PT) need additional nursing simulation equipment and mobility devices (e.g., wheelchairs, mechanical lifts) to serve more healthcare students. Is "major" defined by the dollar amount of each piece of equipment? Would the type of equipment listed above be allowable or are they considered major pieces of depreciable equipment?

Answer 28: No, the purchase of major depreciable equipment is not an allowable expense. The primary focus of funding is to support the provision of services directly benefitting students or trainees, rather than supplying a facility with equipment. See Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection C. Program Services, Interventions, Wrap Around Services and Section V. Completing the Application, Subsection A. Application Format/Content, Budget Section.

Question 29: Can the funds be used for stipends paid directly to trainees to use for wrap-around support?

Answer 29: See Answer 27 a-h, above. Stipends can be used as a tool to reimburse healthcare students and trainees for wrap around services that were received.

Question 30: Are internal program instructor salaries and benefits an allowable expense?

Answer 30: Yes, to the extent that the percentage of their salary and benefits are equal to, or less than, the percentage of their time spent on, or allocated to, the program. Also, see Section V. Completing the Application, Subsection A. Application Format/Content for instructions on completing and submitting a budget.

Question 31a: Can the grant funds be used to support childcare services for trainees, and if so, can this support extend to individuals who transition into employment after completing their training? Additionally, is there a limit on the duration for which these services can be provided, and what are the requirements for offering such services?

Question 31b: Does the funding for support services, such as transportation, cover only trainees or can it be extended to current employees for retention purposes?

Answer 31 a-b: See Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection C. Program Services, on the interventions and wrap around services to be provided by the applicant to serve healthcare students or trainees (e.g., child care services). Once an individual transitions from being a healthcare student or trainee to continuing their career, they will no longer be eligible to receive wrap around services. These services are intended to support individuals specifically during their training period to ensure their successful completion and readiness to enter the workforce.

Question 32: Can grant funds be allocated to support structured career pathways, such as a clinical ladder, that provide monetary incentives for career advancement and retention?

Answer 32: See answer 31 a-b. As long as the individuals are qualifying program participants per the RFA (healthcare students or trainees), they are allowed to receive wrap around services to advance their careers.

Question 33: Is using grant funds for vouchers to partner with local daycares and transportation providers acceptable, and what documentation would be needed to validate these partnerships?

Answer 33: Yes, the documentation must clearly outline the financial expenses incurred and the corresponding reimbursements provided under the grant funds.

Question 34: If students receive some supports through other grants, can additional wrap-around supports be provided through this grant, or is there a cap?

Answer 34: There is no cap.

Question 35: Are salaries and benefits associated with paying an employee while they are attending a program/school an allowable expense?

Answer 35: No, salaries and benefits associated with paying an employee while they are attending a program/school are not allowable expenses. See Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection C. Program Services, Interventions, Wrap Around Services.

Question 36: Can you tell me if the Healthcare Education and Life skills program grant will cover [student or trainee] wages?

Answer 36: No, student or trainee wages are not allowable expenses. See Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection C. Program Services, Interventions, Wrap Around Services.

PROJECT DESIGN

Question 37a: Please expand and further define on what is meant by projects should be designed by a healthcare training program, or healthcare academic program, to meet an identified regional, or local, health workforce need?

Question 37b: According to the RFA, "'healthcare trainee' is broadly defined as those pursuing educational or training courses designed to prepare for a career in the healthcare field. Such programs can range from short-term certificate programs to lengthy degree programs." Would that definition include our own internal training, apprenticeship, and diversity leadership development programs, or must the programs be accredited by an external certification body such as the American Nurses' Credentialing Center or American Caregiver Association?

Question 37c: Is an application that creates a pipeline for workforce mobility across a spectrum of positions considered competitive or are we better served to focus on one area of need?

Question 37d: We are a NYC-based workforce development organization, partnering with a major hospital system to create a critically-needed healthcare employment training program; throughout the course of the program, graduates will earn credentials offered by external agencies (e.g., Mental Health First Aid credential administered via the NYC Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene) and will receive a certificate of completion from our agency (i.e., they will receive a certificate issued by our community-based organization, but not a universally-recognized certificate from an accredited academic institution). Based on this credentialing/certification information, is our program eligible to apply for this opportunity?

Question 37e: The training component of our proposed program will last about eight week; is this length acceptable?

Answer 37 a-e: See Section I. Introduction, Subsection C. Diversifying the Healthcare Workforce, which states:

"The Healthcare Education and Life-skills Program seeks to fund regional programs that provide an innovative response to meet the healthcare workforce demand in New York by preparing and supporting healthcare students/trainees for successful completion of a healthcare educational or training."

Applicants must work with healthcare training or academic programs on providing wrap around services that support enrolled healthcare students or trainees.

Also, see Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection B. Population Served on healthcare students and trainees to be considered.

Also see Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection B. Population Served which states:

"Such programs can range from short-term certificate programs to lengthy degree programs."

Question 38: Although grant funding through the Healthcare Education and Life-skills program will be essential in supporting wraparound support services for our employees, these services would still entail a significant investment of our organizational resources. Is it allowable for us to protect this investment by requiring our program participants, if they jump to a competing employer within a year of completing training, to repay us the grant funds expended on supporting them?

Answer 38: No. Under the payment terms of the award as described in the RFA under Section IV. Administrative Requirements, H.2., grantees will be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred as allowed in the Contract Budget and Workplan. It is important that students/trainees have the autonomy to select a work environment of their choosing. Grantees should focus on fostering a work environment that students/trainees choose without the threat of financial obligation.

Question 39a: Is there a minimum number of students/trainees that an organization should propose for a specific region for this RFA?

Question 39b: Is there a minimum number of individuals that should be served by the program?

Question 39c: To aid in program planning, is there any guidance the funder can provide on an ideal number of participants served or cost per participant?

Answer 39 a-c: While the purpose of the grant funding is to increase the number of students or trainees pursuing careers in healthcare by offering wrap around services and support, there are no requirements regarding the number of program participants.

Question 40a: In accordance with the RFA, we will certainly prioritize recruitment of trainees from marginalized and underrepresented communities. But are there any participant eligibility restrictions in terms of income, demographics, location, etc.?

Question 40b: Are there any specific requirements or examples of culturally relevant interventions that the grant would prefer or prioritize?

Answer 40 a-b: See Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection B. Population Served which states:

"Applications should consider program recruitment of students or trainees from marginalized and/or underrepresented communities, including, but not limited to the following:

- *Asylum seekers/New Americans*
- *Black, Indigenous, and People of Color*
- *Formerly incarcerated individuals*
- *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer individuals*
- *Recipients of public assistance or financially disadvantaged individuals*

- *Rural individuals*
- *Veterans*
- *Other: as determined to meet regional or local community need."*

Also see Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection C. Program Services.

Applicants may consider various types of interventions. Examples may include:
- Services directly related to academic, or career mobility, including but not limited to academic advising, tutoring; tuition, books, fees, supplies, lab fees and similar items; parking, transportation, and travel costs; other educational expenses such as the cost of research, conferences, presentations, publication; and such.
- Services indirectly related to academic, or career mobility, including, but not limited to personal support expenses, childcare, financial support for study time, preparation in English for speakers of other languages.

Question 41: Is this funding opportunity intended to target one healthcare profession per region, or a multitude of professions? Is there a preferred number of professions that an application should include?

Answer 41: There is not a preferred number of professions that an application should include. The Department is looking for innovative strategies to help support healthcare students and trainees. The population served should align with the needs of the community and those of the local or regional healthcare facilities.

Question 42a: Is funding only available for individuals entering a training or degree program or if it can also be used to help people understand health care careers and place them?

Question 42b: Can this funding only be used for individuals entering a training or degree program? Or can it also be used to help people understand healthcare careers and place them?

Answer 42 a-b: Funding is available for individuals entering a training or degree program. See Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection A. Overview and Subsection B. Population Served.

Question 43: When the RFA states, "Grantees will be expected to implement the project within a three-month period from the date of contract execution."], does that mean implement the assessment phase or is it expected that the assessment phase will be complete?

Answer 43: See Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection C. Program Services, which states:

"Grantees will be expected to implement the project within a three-month period from the date of contract execution. Grantees will be expected to have appropriately trained staff to carry out the proposed duties, including the following:
- *Develop assessments, training, and other functions necessary for the successful implementation of the project.*
- *Implement, manage, and coordinate the project.*
- *Meet fiscal and programmatic contract requirements with the Department of Health.*

- *Monitor and evaluate the program."*

The assessment of the program's target population and individual students and trainees will be an ongoing process.

Question 44: Is it up to the applicant to do the training of the staff?

Answer 44: The applicant may provide training for healthcare students and trainees, or work with a subcontractor.

Question 45: Is the use of grant funds permissible for implementing loan forgiveness or student loan repayment programs as part of retention strategies for current healthcare staff?

Answer 45: No, grant funds may not be used to implement student loan forgiveness or repayment. Programs must provide wrap around services to healthcare students and trainees and implementing a loan forgiveness program is not considered a wrap around service. However, stipends can be administered to alleviate financial burden.

Question 46a: If initial project related costs were incurred prior to this date (between award date and end of contract negotiations) are those expenses eligible for reimbursement under this program?

Question 46b: If initial project related costs were incurred prior to this date (between award date and end of contract negotiations) are those expenses eligible for reimbursement under this program? Section G – Term of Contract – pg. 16 of 32). Could the advance payment option be used for these expenses that occurred on the project during the award and contract execution phase?

Answer 46 a-b: Expenses incurred outside the contract period are not allowable expenses.

DEFINITIONS

Question 47a: Could we define "financially disadvantage individuals" as an employee of the organization who makes below living wage according to the MIT Living Wage?

Question 47b: Could we define marginalized/underrepresented as employees who live in a zipcode that has been identified as having high levels of unemployment?

Answer 47 a-b: Financially disadvantaged individuals can be defined as those "who participate in, or whose family participates in, economic assistance programs, such as the free or reduced-price lunch programs, Social Security Insurance (SSI), Food Stamps, Foster Care, Refugee Assistance (cash or medical assistance), Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), Safety Net Assistance (SNA), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), or Family Assistance: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). If one student in a family is identified a low income, all students from that household (economic unit) may be identified as low income."

Source: Enrollment Glossary | NYSED Data Site

Question 48: Would you kindly provide more detailed information or a reference to further information on "an Asset Based Approach? (page 9 in the RFA)"

Answer 48: An asset-based approach in education focuses on leveraging students' unique strengths, experiences, and cultural backgrounds as valuable resources for learning, fostering equity and inclusivity by valuing what they bring to the classroom rather than focusing on weaknesses.

Source: What is Assets-Based Teaching and How Does It Enable Equity Practices in College Classrooms? - Every Learner Everywhere

Question 49: Similarly, would you provide more detailed information or point us to specific references related to a "Life Skills Curriculum?" (starts bottom of page 9 of the RFA)

Answer 49: See Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection C. Program Services for additional details on Life-skills Curriculum. The applicant should provide detailed examples of the target population in their application.

Question 50a: What is your definition of "healthcare student and trainee"?

Question 50b: Will awardees be given a list of eligible healthcare titles? How does the titles/work placement flow work?

Answer 50 a-b: See Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, Subsection B. Population Served, which states:

"Healthcare student" is broadly defined as those pursuing an education that prepares them for a career in healthcare delivery. This includes a wide range of programs, from medicine and nursing to physical therapy, public health, and allied health programs. "Healthcare trainee" is broadly defined as those pursuing educational or training courses designed to prepare for a career in the healthcare field. Such programs can range from short-term certificate programs to lengthy degree programs."

There is no predefined list of eligible healthcare titles.

Question 51: Would you provide a definition for trainee? Would students in a Health Career program in Boces meet the definition? (page 8 of the RFA)

Answer 51: See answer to Question 40 a-b above. Students in a Health Career program in BOCES meet the definition.

OTHER

Question 52: Is it possible to obtain a list of other organizations that are applying?

Answer 52: See https://www.health.ny.gov/regulations/foil/ on FOIL requests.

Question 53: This program is partly online, with some intensive in-person learning that takes place on campus. Are there any restrictions on distributing grant funds to students who might not reside in our region?

Answer 53: Applicants may support healthcare students and trainees who are participating in training in the applicant's region.

Question 54: One of our affiliate facilities is an awardee under the Increasing Training Capacity in Statewide Healthcare Facilities grant program. Is that facility eligible to apply for funding under the Healthcare Education and Life-skills Program? If not, are we (as active parent organization) eligible to apply?

Answer 54: Being an Increasing Training Capacity in Statewide Healthcare Facilities grant program awardee would not preclude a potential applicant from applying under the Healthcare Education and Life skill Program grant.

Question 55a: Will you please provide more information on where the applicant should enter budget information in the SFS system? Is this to be entered in the Budget Properties section, located at the end of the application form, accessed through the link entitled "Event Comments/Attachments."

Question 55b: Where should the applicant enter the budget for submission in SFS?

Answer 55 a-b: See Section V. Completing the Application, Subsection A. Application Format/Content, Question 5A, Budget, which states:

*"Applicants are instructed to prepare an annual budget between $250,000 and $1,000,000 per year as noted in Section I.D. of this RFA. The budget for year one (January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026) must be entered into the Statewide Financial System (SFS). Refer to **Attachment 3: SFS Expenditure Budget Instructions**. The budget for year one will be scored. All budget lines should be calculated as whole dollar amounts. All costs should be related to the proposed activities, as described in the application narrative and work plan, and should be justified in detail. All costs should be reasonable and cost-effective. 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."*

Also see Section IV. Administrative Requirements, Subsection E, How to file an Application, which states:

"Reference materials and videos are available for Grantees applying 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)."

Question 56: NYS-DOH - Office of Healthcare Workforce Innovation's goal is to establish a 30% M/WBE participation goal – 15% MBE and 15% WBE. Is this a mandatory goal for awardees or can applicants illustrate good faith efforts in achieving the 30% participation requirement?

Answer 56: See Section IV. Administrative Requirements, Subsection K. Minority & Woman-Owned Business Enterprise Requirements, which states:

"The goal on the Eligible Expenditures portion of a Grant Contract awarded pursuant to this RFA will be 15% for Minority-Owned Business Enterprises ("MBE") participation and 15% for Women-Owned Business Enterprises ("WBE") participation (based on the current availability of qualified MBEs and WBEs and outreach efforts to certified M/WBE firms). A Grantee awarded a Grant Contract pursuant to this RFA must document good faith efforts to provide meaningful participation by M/WBEs as subcontractors or suppliers in the performance of the Grant Contract and Grantee will agree under the terms of its Grant Contract that NYSDOH may withhold payment pending receipt of the required M/WBE documentation required by the Department or the OSC. For guidance on how NYSDOH will determine "good faith efforts," refer to 5 NYCRR §142.8."

The 30% M/WBE participation goal is mandatory per the RFA requirements specified above. By submitting an Application, each Applicant and potential Grantee agrees to complete an M/WBE Utilization plan (Form #1) as directed in **Attachment 6** of this RFA. If an applicant and potential Grantee does not think they can meet these mandatory requirements, they can submit a MWBE Utilization Waiver Request form (Form #2) for the Department's review as directed in **Attachment 6** of this RFA.

Question 57: During our procurement efforts for vendors that provide the type of healthcare educational services referenced in this RFA-20529, are applicants required to adhere to their own procurement policy, or is there an additional procurement policy established by NYS-DOH, Office of Healthcare Workforce Innovation to follow?

Answer 57: Applicants must adhere to the requirements set forth in this RFA. Grantees must adhere to the requirements set forth in this RFA and in the subsequent State of New York Contract for Grants.

Question 58: Most of our staff are covered by union contracts which stipulate travel expenses. Are we required to utilize federal per diem rates for any planned travel/conferences or can we use rates determined by the Union contracts when they are less that federal per diem rates? And, if hotel rates are higher than per diem as part of the conference, can we still use those rates?

Answer 58: The amount set by the State would be the maximum allowable amount. Any amount less would still be allowable.

Question 59: Is there an anticipated award notification date?

Answer 59: Award and non-award letters are anticipated to be sent out by Summer 2025.