

Refugee Social Services Program
Questions and Answers
November 13, 2013

Grant Applicants

- 1. Q. Can you publish the names of the current contractors?**
 - A. A list of current Refugee Social Services Program Providers is located on the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance website located at the following link
<http://otda.ny.gov/programs/bria/providers/default.asp?program=RSSP#result>
- 2. Q. Is an agency required to submit separate proposals if they desire to provide services in separate regions (an agency wishes to provide services in New York City and Syracuse)?**
 - A. Yes. Applications in each area of the state are scored against each other, so separate applications would be necessary.

Required Documentation

- 3. Q. Does the Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire (VRQ) need to be submitted with the proposal if an agency has already registered in the Vendor Responsibility System?**
 - A. No. Please send in proof of registration with the OSC through the VenRep System within the last 12 months. However, if your agency has not registered in the last 12 months, then a new VRQ must be submitted with the proposal.
- 4. Q. If an applicant has been prequalified through Grants Gateway are the Board of Directors Profile, Certificate of Incorporation and Audited Financial Reports required to be submitted with the proposal?**
 - A. No. If Not-For-Profit applicants are prequalified in Grant Gateway and their vault includes the required forms that are listed on pg 65 of the RFP, they are not required to resubmit the forms.
- 5. Q. Do all MWBE forms have to be submitted with the application?**
 - A. Yes. All MWBE Forms must be submitted with the application, as listed on page 65 of the RFP.

Program Narrative

- 6. Q. What are the format requirements for submission?**

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- A. The narrative and summaries must be in Times New Roman, 12 point font and typed double-spaced.
- 7. Q. What is the page limit? Are charts and payment point summaries included in the limit?**
- A. There is a 10 page limit, excluding all charts and payment point summaries.
- 8. Q. Does the work plan happen after contract?**
- A. The narrative in the application becomes the work plan of the application.
- 9. Q. Are letters of support or letters of collaboration with partner agencies accepted? If so, do they have a favorable impact on the rank and scoring of the proposal?**
- A. Although letters of support will be accepted with submitted proposals, they are not reviewed and therefore have no impact on the rank and score of the proposal.
- 10. Q. Are agencies allowed to have subcontractors? If so, are for-profits allowed to be a subcontractor?**
- A. Agencies are allowed to have subcontractors; however, direct services must be delivered by not for profits. Vendors such as suppliers, maintenance companies, etc may be for profit agencies/companies.
- 11. Q. Are payment schedules for budget periods 2-5 submitted upon the submission of the proposal?**
- A. No. Payment schedules for budget periods 2-5 are to be submitted when each subsequent budget period award is made.
- 12. Q. Can agencies serve a subset of refugees (e.g., those who also meet the criteria for Domestic Violence and/or Trafficking)?**
- A. There is no prohibition to serving subsets of refugees as they fall within the eligible target population, but it is BRIA's intent to serve all populations within a specific area.
- 13. Q. Are budget narratives required with the submission of the 9 month and 60 month payment schedules?**
- A. No. As performance based contracts, there is no budget narrative. There will be a work plan and payment schedules.

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Funding and Selection Process

14. Q. How much money is available through this RFP?

A. BRIA estimates that approximately \$19,000,000 is the anticipated amount for the 5 year term. \$3,000,000 will be available for the first 9 month budget period and it is expected that up to \$4,000,0000 will be available for each of the 4 remaining 12 month budget periods.

15. Q. Are there a maximum number of awards that OTDA/BRIA will make in response to this opportunity?

A. No.

16. Q. In areas where there is more than one provider, can an applicant request more than 50% of the amount award for that area?

A. Yes. An applicant is not limited to 50% of the award amount. Agencies can request what they believe they can achieve and are encouraged to consult with their fiscal departments to determine the amount to request.

17. Q. If 4 proposals were received in an area, could all 4 agencies be funded?

A. Yes. It is possible.

18. Q. How did BRIA determine the percentage of funding allocations that are listed in the RFP for the Rest of State Area? Can the State consider increasing the percentage of funding allocated for any given area in the Rest of State region?

A. The initial distribution of funds is based on the each area's percentage of the State's refugee resettlement population plus the other eligible immigration statuses served for FFY 11 and FFY 12. The Rest of State funding is further divided by resettlement areas based on each resettlement area's percentage of the Rest of State total refugees resettled plus the other eligible immigration populations served for FFY 11 and FFY 12. Those percentages will not be changed.

19. Q. What constitutes a viable proposal?

A. A viable proposal is one that is fiscally sound and programmatically appropriate.

20. Q. Do we have to list all our agency funding on the "Funding Agency Contact" Form, or just our division's share?

A. Applicants must indicate the funding for the entire agency.

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21. Q. Not-for-profits are not required to submit Audited financial Statements, according to the application checklist. Does that mean that for non-profits, the 25 points detailed in the evaluation section will be awarded based on the Payment Schedules alone?

A. No. The 25 points will be based on the Payment Schedules and the Audited Financial Statement.

Employment Preparation

22. Q. For the Employment Preparation payment point, are you limited to provide only one service or can an agency provide a mix of services?

A. Agencies are not limited in the number of services that they choose to provide and can provide as many of the services that are listed in the RFP. In fact, BRIA encourages a wide range of services.

Job Placement 1 & 2

23. Q. If a participant is placed in a temporary employment agency, will the payment points be the same as if the participant was working directly for a specific employer?

A. Yes. Please note that a temporary employment agency is considered an employer in instances where the employer only uses temporary employment agencies to do their hiring.

24. Q. Can an agency claim 2 Job Placements for the same individual at the same time or are both Job Placements considered to equal only 1 Job Placement?

A. Yes. As long as they are two separate jobs both meeting the description of full time employment. If two part time jobs are found, and the hours and wages add together to meet the definition of full time employment, then they would together count as 1 full time placement.

25. Q. For the Job Placement 2 payment point, how will the prerequisite of One Employment Preparation payment point be documented?

A. Documentation must be a detailed case note entry of services that were provided to the participant.

90- Day Retention

26. Q. In order to achieve a 90 Day Retention payment point is the client required to actually work 30 hours a week or an average of 30 hours?

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A. The client must be actually working at least 30 hours a week.

27. Q. If a participant loses his job one day and begins a new job the very next work day, will the 90-Day Retention period be considered interrupted?

A. No. If a participant is temporarily laid off, the 90-day period will be interrupted by the lay off period but may resume the day the participant returns to the same job.

Transitional Supports

28. Q. How do I count assisting clients with applications for the Affordable Care Act?

A. Applications for health benefits under the Affordable Care Act will be claimed under the Completion and Submissions Applications for Public Benefits service of the Transitional Supports payment point.

29. Q. What does “date of completion” for legal services (adjustment of status I-485) mean?

A. Date of completion means the date the completed application was mailed to the appropriate entity.

30. Q. Can you add I-90 replacement card as an available service under the Transitional Supports payment point?

A. Any applicant can add this service in their proposal under “other services as approved by OTDA. If approved it will be an available service in your contract.

31. Q. Is there guidance on BRIA’s expectations for percentage of award in each payment point category?

A. No. There is no guidance on the percentages. They will vary from area to area. However, applicants should be mindful that the purpose of the program is job placement and self-sufficiency.

32. Q. Is vocational training an allowable service under the Transitional Supports payment point?

A. No, not under the Refugee Social Services Program.

33. Q. Is ESL considered an allowable service?

A. ESL is an allowable service under the Transitional Supports payment point.

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- 34. Q. Please clarify that, based upon Article 28-C of the New York General Business Law, that services do not have to be provided directly by an attorney or BIA Accredited Representative, but, may be provided by someone under the supervision of an attorney or BIA Accredited Representative, or an employee of the Not- For-Profit as defined in section (b) of the law?**
- A.** BRIA has made it a program requirement that the specific immigration services referenced in the RFP must be provided by an attorney admitted to practice law in NY, a BIA Accredited Representative, any person(s) working directly under the supervision of such attorney or BIA Accredited Representative, or other appropriate immigrant assistance service provider falling within the scope of Article 28-C. These individuals may be independent or employed by a not-for-profit service provider.
- 35. Q. How much detail are you expecting on each payment point summary?**
- A.** BRIA expects that each payment point summary contain detailed descriptions of activities and services proposed under the payment point. It is not enough to say that you will deliver a service without describing how that service will be delivered, why its part of the overall plan and who will deliver it.

Self-Sufficiency

- 36. Q. Does a provider have to get a person a job within one year of arrival to claim a Self-Sufficiency payment point?**
- A.** No. A focus of the program is new arrivals, but that does not preclude working with refugees during the full 60 months.
- 37. Q. Does BRIA require documentation from the local district to be contained in the application if the self sufficiency standard in that county is lower than the 125 % of poverty level?**
- A.** Yes. It is important to document in the application if the applicant is asking for a reduced self sufficiency standard.