

Refugee School Impact Program

Q&A

- 1) **Does the term educational institutions include public school districts also known as LEAs?**
 - a) LEAs may apply, however, per pages 30 and 33 of the RFP, the applicant must describe in detail [their] agency's planned partnership with the local school district or refugee resettlement agency(ies) and submit at least one letter of support demonstrating collaboration and partnership between the local school district and refugee resettlement agency(ies).
- 2) **It looks like the money is already allocated geographically. Is a Long Island district with high numbers of refugees eligible to apply?**
 - a) Per page 9 of the RFP, OTDA intends to fund projects located in Erie, Monroe, Onondaga, Oneida and Albany counties and New York City. An applicant with a proposed project in Long Island would not be scored.
- 3) **Is food an allowable expense under the RSIP Grant? Can the purchase of food/nutritious meals and snacks be covered under this grant?**
 - a) Per page 10 of the RFP, contracts resulting from this procurement will be performance-based, and therefore, contractors will not be reimbursed for line-item expenses. Compensation is directly tied to the completion of the documented deliverables defined on pages 11-14 and described the Work Plan of the Contract. Providing daily nutritious meals and snacks for students attending the Refugee Academy and Refugee Mini-Academy are required in order to complete those deliverables and be compensated.
- 4) **Are translation services meant to be done only at the student level, or can academic coaches translate documents meant to be distributed at the school or district level? If at the school/district level how are those services to be counted in BIN?**
 - a) Per page 14 of the RFP, the Translation and Interpretation deliverable is defined as services provided to the student, their family and/or school staff that benefit the child's education and transition to school. Contractors are able to submit claims for properly documented Translation and Interpretation deliverables according to how the deliverable is defined in the approved Work Plan of the contract.
- 5) **Can academic coaches provide services outside the award county? For example, could an awardee in Erie County provide services to eligible clients or provide professional development trainings for school staff in Niagara or Chautauqua Counties? Can an awardee in Erie County provide services to clients living outside of Erie County (ie in Niagara Falls?) either client specific or group events (like staff training).**
 - a) Client specific services must be provided to students (and their families) that **attend** the school district identified in the application as the applicant or the partner of the applicant. That school district must be within one of the six impacted areas listed in the RFP on page 10. There is no requirement that a client **reside** in a particular county in order to be eligible for services.

School Staff Orientations are also intended for the staff of the school district identified in the application as the applicant or the partner of the applicant. Staff from

other school districts may be invited to and attend school staff training, however, staff from the applicant/partner school must be the target audience and be in attendance.

- 6) Should a service provided to a family (for example in-home orientation, or transportation assistance for a family with multiple children) count as one deliverable per child? Or only as a deliverable for one child in the family?**
- a) Compensation for deliverables is directly tied to the completion of the documented deliverables defined on pages 11-14 and described by the contractor the Work Plan of the Contract. Per page 12 of the RFP, providing one allowable service to the student, family and/or school staff, as described in the contractor's Work Plan, allows a contractor to claim one Academic Coaching (Individual) deliverable.

- 7) How many children make a "group" for group academic coaching? What is the minimum number of students an organization is required to serve? How many individuals/families would 1 coach should or need to serve?**
- a) BRS does not define the minimum number of students required for the Academic Coaching (Group) deliverable, however, the intention is for the activity to be open and offered to multiple eligible students. Applicants must define the who, what, where, when, how for providing all deliverables in the Work Plan of their application.

The expectation is for the applicant to propose how many services will be provided under the program according to the need that is described in the application and to request a funding amount that is proportionate to that.

- 8) Can group events (parent orientation / staff trainings) be provided remotely? Can group events (parent orientation / staff trainings) be provided asynchronously (via recorded and interpreted videos)?**
- a) Per pages 14 and 15 of the RFP, BRS will exercise flexibilities in order to minimize in-person contact due to COVID-19, including allowing remote events. That being said, School Staff Orientation, Family Orientation and Family Activities are defined on page 13 as "events" that should occur live in order to allow attendees to interact with one another and also have questions and concerns asked and addressed in real time. These events may include recorded and interpreted videos, but the events must be instructor-led and held at a specific date and time, whether remotely or in-person.
- 9) Grant awards: average award/allocation per year of the grant term? Maximum request amount per year? How many awards will be made state-wide? Will each county/region listed in the RFP receive an award?**
- a) Per page 10 of the RFP, OTDA intends to fund one project in Erie, Monroe, Onondaga, Oneida and Albany counties and New York City. \$1,838,109 is available for the first year. For the first budget period, no one applicant will be awarded more than 25% of the funds available. The application must be completed for the annual grant funds requested for the first budget period.

- 10) Is there a preference for CBO or school district as lead applicant?**

a) No.

- 11) Definition of eligible participants, page 9 of the RFP, is very detailed. Any additional information to share? May students not included in target population for the RSIP program attend certain offerings?**

a) BRS understands that students ineligible for RSIP may be in attendance for RSIP events and offerings. For client-specific deliverables, contractors may not submit claims for

reimbursement for services to students who do not meet the definition of eligible participants.

12) Is it advantageous for a proposed program to offer the refugee academy to more than 45 students and to offer more than one academy? What is preferred?

- a) No, the evaluation criteria described on page 15 of the RFP does not instruct reviewers to award more points to applicants who propose to serve more than the required 45 students or hold more than one academy per year.

13) Does the required 50 hours of the refugee academy include mealtimes?

- a) Yes

14) Can students participate in more than one refugee academy or mini academy within the grant term? Within the same year?

- a) The intent of the Refugee Academy is to be a positive first experience for newly arrived refugee children entering the American school environment. Per page 10 of the RFP, Contractors should prioritize services to youth who have been in the United States for one year or less.

Alternative ways to assist children who may need additional assistance after attending one Refugee Academy would be the Mini-Academy, which is primarily for students who arrived since the school year began but also for any other refugee students who would benefit from extra assistance or academic coaching which is intended for students who need additional supportive services such as individual orientation, mentoring, guidance and tutoring.

15) May the mini academy be offered during after school hours? Or must it be offered during a school break or on weekends?

- a) Children should not miss regular school to attend the Refugee Mini-Academy. The Refugee Mini-Academy must occur during the school year (not the summer) over long weekends, holiday breaks or during after school hours.

16) What kind of services may be planned under 3.7 Academic Coaching (individual) Immunizations/physical assistance? Does that include immunization record keeping, translation of the refugee student's medical records from another country, and other activities related to the required immunization records? Please describe in detail what can be offered under this task. If those activities cannot be included under 3.7, may they be included under 3.14 Academic Coaching, Other services or activities that have been approved by OTDA in writing?

- a) Per page 7 of the RFP, the academic coach may assist refugee students to comply with school requirements for immunizations and physicals and obtain their resulting immunization records and health certificates. Applicants must define in detail in their Work Plan what they will offer under each task in order to achieve each deliverable.

17) Under 3.7 Academic Coaching, Homework assistance/tutoring (individual), can this task include services to help refugee students access remote learning in order to complete homework and to learn how to log-in to remote educational services?

- a) Using guidance from Section VII. Service Strategy, applicants must define in detail in their Work Plan what they will offer under each task in order to achieve each deliverable.

18) According to the RFP, most deliverables require a copy of the refugee child's immigration status documentation as described in the ORR Policy Letters 16-01 and 22-02. School districts however are legally restricted in what documentation they may request from students who enroll in educational services. Please see this letter with a directive from NYSED:

<http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/oag-sed-letter-ice-2-27-17.pdf> Please advise and describe the rationale and legal basis for requiring this documentation if deliverables are offered by a public school district.

a) Federal Authority for the program is located on page 5 of the RFP. Documentation that demonstrates a child's eligible immigration status is a federal requirement of the program. This is why partnership between the school district and resettlement agency is essential to the operation of this program.

19) There's no mention of Matching Funds in the RFP, is matching funds a requirement for this grant? And if not, will our application be more competitive (receive extra points) if we have match funds or secure match funding for it?

a) Matching Funds are not a part of this grant, and that portion of the budget should be \$0. Please follow the instructions on page 30 of the RFP to complete the budget screens in the application.

20) The contract requires the participation of MBE and WBE- a goal of 30% of MWBE participation. If we partner with a business that is certified for both (being both minority and women-owned business), would that be acceptable, or do you require that we partner with 2 separate businesses with these statuses?

a) The MWBE requirements are specific to a contractor's award and will be negotiated at the time of contract development.

21) Is there an MWBE goal? If so - can you share the participant list from today's call so that we can network with possible prime vendors? Potential grant applicant is a WBE specializing in customized training - however we assume that not-for-profits will be responding and would like to connect to seek possibly partnering?

a) There is an overall goal of 30% for MWBE participation, 15% percent for New York State-certified Minority-owned Business Enterprise ("MBE") participation and 15% percent for New York State-certified Women-owned Business Enterprise ("WBE") participation (based on the current availability of MBEs and WBEs). Entities seeking to register as an MWBE may do so at: <https://esd.ny.gov/doing-business-ny/mwbe>.

The participant list may be obtained by submitting a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request.

22) The Procurement Schedule/Submission Guidelines included on RFP p.5 lists anticipated contract start date as 1/1/2022, however the award notification timing is 2/23/22; will the contract be back-dated (or is this a mis-print)?

a) The contract start date is retroactive to 1/1/22.

23) OTDA requires that each Refugee Academy serve at least 45 students (p.6): Can the 45 encompass all grade levels (i.e. elementary, middle and high school), or must each grade level served serve a minimum 45 students?

a) 45 students total.

24) Can we exclude certain age group (elementary school students, for example) in the Refugee Academy if we're unable to recruit them to the program or there's not a need in that age group in our area?

- a) The intent is to serve all newly arrived eligible students in a school district with the Refugee Academy deliverable. It is up to the provider's discretion as to the scale (whether group or individual) those services are provided.

25) Please define "Refugee" for this RFP. Only those legally defined through ORR?

- a) Page 9 describes in detail each eligible immigration status. Per page 4 of the RFP, eligible participants as defined on pages 9 and 10 are referred to as "refugees" throughout the document.

26) Is there a minimum number of allowable services recommended for Academic Coaching (individual) Academic Coaching (group) and School Staff Orientation, Family Orientation and Family Activities?

- a) No, however, 25 points of the evaluation criteria are attributed to the budget section, in which proposals will be rated based on the BP 1 funds requested, divided by the proposed units of Academic Coaching (individual).

27) What kind of documentation if any is recommended for the task "immunization verification"?

- a) The intent of the immunization verification task under the Refugee Academy deliverable is to review a refugee academy attendee's immunization record to ensure the children can begin school on time or as soon as possible. Each Refugee Academy will directly provide or arrange for all eight required tasks during the course of the Refugee Academy. See page 11 for Refugee Academy documentation requirements.

28) Also, is the expectation that each coach be a fulltime employee and if so, is there a salary range you recommend and qualifications?

- a) Per page 7 of the RFP, OTDA expects each contractor to have at least two academic coaches. The expectation is two FTE.

29) Does the budget score use the total of individual and group academic coaching deliverables? Or just individual?

- a) Individual only

30) Can you define one unit of Academic Coaching is? Is a unit a minimum amount of contact hours with a minimum # of students?

- a) Using guidance from Section VII. Service Strategy, applicants must define in detail in their Work Plan what they will offer under each task in order to achieve each deliverable.

31) Are the unit calculations for deliverables aligned with a specific number of students, staff or family members served?

- a) The electronic line-item budget (E-budget) is used to develop the rates per deliverable for your proposal. Data from each worksheet will populate on to the Summary Sheet and once complete, will tabulate the "Rate Per Unit" for each deliverable that will be used to complete the Performance Budget in your RSIP application.

32) Denis mentioned that the Translation and Interpretation Deliverable is the only one not required. Does that mean the other four are all required for eligibility? Or could one provide some of the list of four?

- a) All required deliverables are required to be part of the applicant's work plan. Failure to include all required deliverables will result in a lower score. See page 11 to 14 of the RFP where it indicates whether deliverables and their Tasks are required or allowable.

33) Can all services be delivered at the student's school and for lunch to be provided by the school?

- a) All services are not required to be provided at the student's school. Please refer to Section VII. Service Strategy and Section X. Program Information for deliverables.

34) All services are not required to be provided at the student's school. Please refer to Section VII. Service Strategy and Section X. Program Information for deliverables. Can tracked completion of e-learning modules for teachers working with refugee students (developed by our agency) be considered school staff orientation?

- a) No, e-learning modules may not be considered School Staff Orientation. School Staff Orientations are defined on page 13 of the RFP as "events" that should occur live in order to allow attendees to interact with one another and also have questions and concerns asked and addressed in real time. These events may include recorded and interpreted videos, but the events must be instructor-led and held at a specific date and time, whether remotely or in-person.

35) Does the refugee academy required to serve all grade bands, meaning, elementary, middle, and high school, or is it acceptable the academy serves 45 middle school students only?

- a) BRS requires Refugee Academy and Refugee Mini-Academy to be divided into elementary, middle and high school classrooms.

36) Is the contractor required to keep enrollment records with students Personal Identifiable Information (PII) and turn this info to your agency?

- a) The contractor must maintain required documentation to support the claims for deliverables claimed under the contract. Records must be retained and accessible for a period of six years from the end of the contract or last payment or last contract transaction. OTDA shall have access to any records relevant to the project for audits, examination, transcripts and excerpts. Additionally, the BRS Information Network, which is the claiming and reporting database for RSIP requires PII in order to complete and submit claims for reimbursement. Please refer to page 17 of the RFP for additional information regarding record keeping.

37) For translation and interpretation, is this a service we can include in the budget to be able to hire a translator?

- a) Per page 10 of the RFP, contracts resulting from this procurement will be performance-based, and therefore, contractors will not be reimbursed for line-item expenses. Compensation is directly tied to the completion of the documented deliverables defined on pages 11-14 and described the Work Plan of the Contract. Translator and/or interpreter salaries or hourly wages may be a budget expense.

38) Can academic coaching take place virtually?

- a) Per pages 14 and 15 of the RFP, BRS will exercise flexibilities in order to minimize in-person contact due to COVID-19, including allowing remote events.

39) Regarding student's authorization, when you say authorization from the parent and agency- is the agency the school district?

- a) The Agency is the contractor who has been awarded a RSIP contract as a result of this procurement.

40) So does that mean that the academy and mini-academy is also a unit?

- a) Refugee Academy and Refugee Mini-Academy are deliverables. The “number of units” column on the B-2 performance budget is the number of deliverables that the applicant is proposing to provide during the first budget period of the contract. Payment for deliverables is derived from unit rates proposed in each application. The rates are formulated by completing the E-Budget. The applicant’s award request is calculated by multiplying the rates for each deliverable by the units to be achieved per deliverable.

41) About the academies being units: I am trying to understand how the calculations are being made and I am used to per student calculations for afterschool activities for example.

- a) The electronic line-item budget (E-budget) is used to develop the rates per unit for each deliverable for your proposal. See page 25 of the RFP for instructions. The E-Budget worksheet is in the pre-submission uploads.