

RFP # 23-009

Teaching in Remote/Hybrid Learning Environments (TRLE) Phase 3

Questions and Answers

General

Q1: The submission instructions ask for a bid – does this mean that we are required to bid on this, rather than submit an application for funding?

A1: Yes. This is an RFP, so we are requesting proposals, which we are interchangeably referring to as "bids". Please see the submission instructions in the RFP.

Q2: Is there a limit on funding that can go to a single applicant?

A2: No. However, all proposed costs will be reviewed for reasonableness. Bidders are encouraged to submit budgets that are cost-effective.

Q3: May an entity submit more than one proposal (to serve multiple regions)?

A3: Yes, an entity may submit multiple proposals, each for a different region. RFP pg. 17 - Each proposal submitted in response to this RFP should be clearly labeled with the region for that proposal.

Q4: Does an applicant have to write 10 separate proposals (1 for each region) or could one proposal cover all 10 regions?

A4: Yes, they will need to submit a separate proposal for each region. RFP - pg. 17, Each proposal submitted in response to this RFP should be clearly labeled with the region for that proposal.

MWBE

Q5: As a NYS Women-Owned Business Enterprises (WBE), we are 100% WBE. Do we also need to ensure that we subcontract with at least 17% MBE partners? If so, must these be identified by the time we submit the proposal to meet the 9/2 deadline?

A5: The goal is being met as a NYS certified prime vendor. Subcontracting would not be required.

Q6: In the debriefing session, we requested feedback on our response to Phase II. It was shared that M/WBE compliance is not reviewed until after the award is made to ensure that the Contractor can comply. Is it necessary to identify all of the potential partners at this time of proposal submission or can that happen at the time of award?

A6: M/WBE compliance is reviewed once the award is made. It is not necessary to identify all of the potential partners at the time of proposal but it is encouraged since the contract cannot be issued until there is M/WBE approval.

Applicants

Q7: It does not state who may be eligible to apply – I'm hoping our Community College may be able to apply for the school districts that operate within the counties that we service most – Ontario, Seneca, Yates and Wayne.

A7: There are no eligibility restrictions. Any entity is eligible to apply unless they are barred due to a conflict of interest. Per RFP page 18, if the bidder is a post-secondary institution, community-based organization, or other private entity seeking to train in-service or pre-service P-12 educators, scorers will take into consideration whether they have an existing partnership with one or more P-12 schools or districts in the region, including nonpublic and charter schools, who employ the target population of educators.

Q8: Can individual education consulting firms bid on this RFP (RFP # 23-009), or are you only accepting bids from public organizations across NYS (school districts, BOCES, etc.)?

A8: Yes, individual consulting firms may bid on this RFP.

Q9: Does a vendor have to have a physical presence in the region in which they apply (e.g., office, consultants in that region)?

A9: No, a bidder need not have a physical presence in the region in which they apply. However, as explained on RFP page 17, bidders should have a record of successfully designing and delivering courses focusing on the professional learning needs of educators in the target population(s) and region they propose to serve. Furthermore, bidders should clearly outline how they propose to substantively engage (partnership, promotion, outreach/recruitment, etc.) with educational institutions who employ the target population(s) of educators in the proposed regions.

Q10: Is it permissible for vendors involved in Phase 1 and/or Phase 2 to apply for Phase 3?

A10: Yes, with one exception: The TRLE evaluation partner and its affiliates may not bid.

Q11: Is the state looking to select a different provider for Phase III from the provider selected for Phase II? Or is this a required legal bid that may result in an award to the Phase II provider for the sake of continuity?

A11: As noted in the response to question 10, it is permissible for vendors involved in Phase 2 to bid under this RFP with one exception: The TRLE evaluation partner and its affiliates may not bid. As per RFP page 1 - NYSED intends to award multiple contracts--at least one for each of the ten (10) Economic Development regions in the State. NYSED is looking to select providers that can fulfill the contract requirements.

Services to be Performed--General

Q12: Given that the Phase II provider has produced the self-paced learning modules, is it correct that the Phase III provider is building courses using these materials that would be facilitated by an instructor either online or in person?

A12: Yes, the Phase 2 contractor under RFP #21-016A is developing the TRLE professional learning experiences (PLEs), and per RFP 23-009 pages 8 and 18, each Phase 3 Contractor will use the PLEs as their primary content to develop one or more sequential, articulated, cohesive courses of study that will be led by trained professionals--either remotely, hybrid, or in person.

Q13: Based on the Phase II RFP, the Phase II provider is developing and delivering courses and is required to generate enrollment, track progress, etc. The same requirements are listed in Phase III. Does that mean the Phase II provider's work will end and Phase III continues and expands upon this work?

A13: RFP 21-16A did not include enrolling educators in comprehensive courses of study; rather, it focused on the development and dissemination of professional learning experiences (PLEs) via a learning management system (LMS); wraparound services such as professional learning communities, peer-to-peer networks, coaching, and individualized supports; and turnkey training. The Phase 2 contractor's obligations continue through the end of the TRLE grant period. For example, the LMS provided in Phase 2 is required to track analytics regarding LMS users and must be freely accessible through the end of the TRLE grant period. The current RFP 23-009 does not duplicate these requirements; rather, it builds upon the work of Phase 2.

Services to be Performed—Target Audience

Q14: The courses are designated for a variety of roles (e.g., pre-service teacher, administrator, in-service teacher supporting pre-service teachers, teaching assistants, etc.). Are you looking for separate courses for each audience, or one course with aspects focusing on the different roles?

A14: Bidders should develop courses to address the needs of the audience(s) they choose to target. This could mean separate courses for different educator roles, or it could mean one course with aspects focusing on the distinct roles. Per RFP page 7 - Where appropriate, course(s) of study should address the documented needs of one or more specific population(s) of educators (e.g., high school teachers; ELL/MLL educators, etc.) related to teaching or delivering other education-related services in remote and hybrid learning environments.

Q15: Phase II was aimed at in-service teachers. Phase III focuses on pre-service teachers; however, it also says in-service teachers through graduate and leadership programs. Will that overlap with what the Phase II provider is offering?

A15: No. Per the RFP page 8, the intent of Phase 3 is to sustain the TRLE program and includes ensuring that qualified entities deliver the PLEs to in-service educators in the field, in addition to integrating best practices into pre-service programs. As indicated on pages 8-10, the intent of this RFP is for multiple entities to take the PLE (Professional Learning Experiences) sessions developed by the Phase 2 contractor and use them to create and deliver comprehensive courses that will be sustained and scaled up after the contract period.

Q16: Phase II has produced self-paced learning modules for each of the six competencies, with Module 1 available in draft form now. Phase II is targeted at in-service teachers. In Phase III, is the state seeking

content producers for modules on each of the six competencies but this time for pre-service teachers and those who mentor and train them at the collegiate level? Will the awarded entity still be producing and delivering facilitated courses for educators?

A16: Phase 2 is focusing on the development of professional learning experiences via a learning management system, as the questioner notes, as well as turnkey training for CTLE providers and wraparound services; some aspects of this work will be ongoing through the end of the TRLE grant period. As indicated on pages 8-10, the intent of this RFP 23-009 is for multiple entities to take the PLE sessions developed by the Phase 2 contractor and create and deliver comprehensive courses for in-service and/or pre-service educators - including teachers, teaching assistants, school leaders, pupil personnel service (PPS) professionals, and/or faculty who work with pre-service educators.

Services to be Performed—Course Content

Q17: Are you looking for courses such as "Individualized Learning in Remote/Hybrid Learning Environments" that would incorporate the six core competencies, or are you looking for courses that are named the same as the six core competencies, e.g., Shifting to Teaching Online, Engaging Families as Partners in Remote/Hybrid Learning, Meeting the Needs of Students with Disabilities Through Remote/Hybrid Learning, Meeting the Needs of English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners (ELLs/MLLs) Through Remote/Hybrid Learning, Integrating Culturally-Responsive Sustaining Education (CRSE) in Remote Learning Environments, and Integrating Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) in Remote Learning Environments?

A17: The TRLE PLE sessions can be used either individually or in any combination in courses of study under this RFP. Course title and design is to be determined by the Contractor, as appropriate for the target audience(s). Per RFP page 7 - The Contractor will develop courses that align to one or more of the six core competencies and lead to proficiency in, or mastery of, one or more aspects of teaching or delivering other education-related services in remote and hybrid learning environments.

Q18: What informational sources should vendors use to address the documented needs of one or more specific populations of educators?

A18: If the question is what constitutes appropriate documentation of the needs of a specific population of educators, the answer is that documentation of such information can take a variety of forms. On pages 17-18, the RFP lists examples such as school district professional learning plans and research studies. If the question is what informational content bidders should use to address educator needs, the answer (from pages 8 and 18 of the RFP) is that the TRLE PLE sessions should be the primary content, along with the QRT Framework.

Q19: The number of modules and the number of sessions per core competency are misstated on page 8 of the RFP.

A19: A total of 60 PLE sessions will be grouped into 8 Modules. The first one, titled "Module 0", is an orientation, with two sessions. Modules 1-6 will correspond to the six core competencies and will be comprised of 8 sessions each, except for Module 1, which has 10 sessions. Module 7 focuses on implementing the six core competencies from the leadership/ administrative perspective.

Q20: On pages 8, 17, and 18, the RFP incorrectly states that the six core competencies are included in the QRT. Where can I find them?

A20: The six core competencies can be found on our website, along with the QRT and other selected resources, at [Professional Learning Resources](#).

Q21: Regarding the course content, is there any specific content or course category that you are looking for? We have over 300 courses available across several categories (e.g., ENL, ESOL, Reading Intervention, Gifted and Talented, ESE & Special Education and General Education)

A21: Yes, per RFP pages 8-9 - The courses must be based on the TRLE PLE sessions, must align to one or more of the six core TRLE competencies, and must lead to proficiency in, or mastery of, one or more aspects of teaching or delivering other education-related services in remote and hybrid learning environments. Furthermore, as indicated on page 17, where appropriate, the course(s) of study should be designed to address the needs of one or more specific populations of educators in the region the bidder is serving (e.g., high school teachers; ELL/MLL educators, etc.).

Services to be Performed—Course Availability

Q22: Are you expecting all of the courses to be delivered online, with no in-person components?

A22: Courses may be delivered remotely, hybrid, or in person, depending on the needs and interests of the learner population(s).

Q23: Will courses that are developed in one region be available to educators in other regions? For example, if courses are asynchronous and/or remote where location in the State does not play a role in participation

A23: While bidders are expected to design courses to serve educators in their selected region and to recruit and serve educators in their selected region, they are not prohibited from making the course(s) available to educators in other regions--whether remote, hybrid, or in person.

Q24: Are we correct in thinking the Phase III provider will develop courses that will be uploaded into the platform selected/developed in Phase II, and the Phase III provider will not be responsible for developing or selecting the platform itself?

A24: There are no plans at this time for courses developed under this RFP to be uploaded into the learning management system provided by the Phase 2 contractor. Rather, Contractors under this RFP will utilize the content of the PLE sessions stored in that LMS (and/or on the TALE Academy website) as the basis for courses they will deliver online, hybrid, or in person.

Q25: Is it also correct that the courses would be available to schools, districts, BOCES, and other organizations that could offer them in addition to the Phase III provider also offering the courses?

A25: The TRLE PLEs being developed under RFP #21-016A will be freely available to other providers and individual New York educators via a learning management system (and, at least temporarily, via the TALE Academy website). The courses being developed under this RFP 23-009 are to be delivered by the Phase 3 Contractors to in-service and/or pre-service educators; NYSED does not envision that "schools, districts, BOCES, and other organizations [would] offer [the courses] in addition to the Phase III provider also offering the course."

Course Credit

Q26: Please clarify: does the department suggest that college course credit is a recognized metric of course completion (page 9) or is the department stipulating that it cannot be so recognized as the process for NYSED approval of registered program course modifications cannot be achieved within the project timeline (page 18)?

A26: Per page 18 of the RFP, college course credit is an acceptable recognition for course completion, provided that the course is identified as being part of a NYS registered program and the TRLE PLE course content is consistent with the program. Many NYS registered educator preparation programs include coursework aligned with the TRLE PLE core competencies.

Q27: Can we work with a college(s) to implement a 3-4 course of study that leads to a certificate without conflicts with the NYSED regulations governing IHE course registration?

A27: If a SUNY, CUNY, or Independent IHE develops a program (course of study) culminating in a certificate to meet the requirements of the RFP and wants the courses in that program to carry credit, the certificate program must be registered by the Office of College and University Evaluation (OCUE). If the program does not carry course credit, it does not have to be registered by OCUE. Proprietary IHEs must register for a program (course of study) culminating in a certificate with OCUE regardless of whether the courses carry credit. In the RFP, a credential earned through course completion based on instructional time cannot be called a micro credential. However, that credential can be called something else and not require registration (e.g., TRLE Badge).

Q28: The RFP calls for micro credentialing and CTLE credits for completion. Isn't that already built into the materials designed in Phase II that would be incorporated into these courses? Would there be additional completion requirements for the Phase III courses themselves?

A28: The PLEs being developed by the Phase 2 contractor are being designed in a flexible manner so that they can be implemented in diverse ways by multiple types of entities. The course completion requirements for this RFP are stated on page 8; i.e., the proposed course(s) of study must bear some form of formal recognition such as micro credentials, college course credit, and/or CTLE clock hours.

Q29: Is there a specific target for the number of participation hours required per educator (i.e., a minimum requirement for the educators to maintain their licensure status)?

A29: This RFP does not include any specific targets regarding participation hours per educator. Educators who are subject to New York CTLE requirements and who practice in an applicable school throughout their five-year registration period must complete 100 clock hours of acceptable CTLE. Further information may be found on NYSED's Office of Teaching Initiatives website: [Continuing Teacher and Leader Education \(CTLE\) Requirement](#).

Budget, Cost and Payments

Q30: If additional educators seek enrollment in a course (after vendor is approved to offer the course(s), can the budget be adjusted accordingly?

A30: Per RFP page 10, invoice totals cannot exceed the original bid amount. However, if the increased number of educators completing one course offsets a smaller than expected number of

educators completing another course, the budget can be adjusted to reflect that offset as long as the total does not exceed the original bid.

Q31: In Phase II, the cost of offering on-site wraparound services around the state increased the budget for our response, but the cost proposal here is driven solely by the number of PLE sessions and educators served. Are we interpreting that correctly?

A31: Per the RFP pages 10 and 20, the total proposed budget in the cost proposal is based on the number of educators who will complete each course of study and receive formal recognition, multiplied by the number of PLE sessions covered in those courses. The deliverables for this RFP do not call for wraparound services.

Q32: The cost proposal for the total bid amount will be calculated as the number of proposed educators to be served in the course x number of PLEs covered in the course x the price per PLE session. Is it recommended that the bidder use the numbers in Attachment 5: Regional Educator Counts?

A32: Per RFP page 9, the Contractor must enroll a minimum number of unique educators (inclusive of pre- and in-service educators and educator faculty) across all course(s) of study equivalent to 1% of the educators for their bidding region, as identified in Attachment 5. The Contractor may enroll more than the minimum but may not propose to enroll more than the total number of educators in the region (per Attachment 5) in any particular course. Please refer to the Cost Proposal Worksheet (posted with the RFP materials here: [RFP #23-009 Teaching in Remote/Hybrid Learning Environments Phase 3](#)) for calculations.

Q33: Phase III calls for the provider to develop "one or more" courses for "pre-service and/or in-service" educators. To ensure that our proposed pricing can be fairly evaluated against that of other candidates, do you suggest that we provide pricing per course?

A33: Pricing should be established according to the guidelines set forth in the RFP. Per RFP page 19 - Bidders will provide Number of PLEs covered in the Course (max. 60), Number of Educators to be served in the Course, and Price per PLE. See Cost Proposal Worksheet for calculations. The total bid amount will be calculated by (number of proposed educators to be served in the Course x number of PLEs covered in the Course) x the price per PLE. Please refer to the Cost Proposal Worksheet (posted with the RFP materials here: [RFP #23-009 Teaching in Remote/Hybrid Learning Environments Phase 3](#)) for calculations.

Q34: Is it accurate that the only avenue for payment of for services for a contractor is when a course has been completed by a learner by way of invoicing for that completion per the formula offered in the RFP for each PLE? Assuming this is accurate, the cost per PLE should then include all expenses incurred in the development and implementation of Courses (e.g., project management, evaluation and outreach activities, etc.).

A34: Yes, per the RFP page 10, the Contractor will submit invoices for payment based on the number of educators who complete a course of study and receive formal recognition, taking into account the number of PLEs covered in the course. The cost per PLE is based on all costs in the budget.

Data

Q35: Will there be any need for data reporting? If yes, will it need to be at the Program, Regional or County level?

A35: Per pages 9 and 11 of the RFP, the Contractor will report data to NYSED and the project evaluator on the following: Number of educator participants; number of educators who complete the course(s) and receive course completion recognition; attainment of learning objectives; perceived impact on educator practice and student outcomes (as indicated in the Contractor's Logic Model); and participant feedback regarding course design, content, and delivery. We anticipate that data will need to be reported in the aggregate at the state level for the contract.

Sustainability

Q36: The RFP also stipulates that the Contractor will include a preliminary plan to scale up successful courses of study to reach a wider audience (e.g., regional, state-wide, national). Is this regarding the cost to do so, or is this question referring to the process?

A36: Bidders are encouraged to address all aspects of planning for sustainability & scaling, including fiscal and other (i.e., non-fiscal) elements, as indicated on page 19 of the RFP.

Q37: The RFP stipulates that the Contractor will develop a "sustainability plan (financial and/or other forms of sustainability) for continuing to offer successful course(s) of study after the contract period." Is the agency seeking PLEs for potential additional topics for courses of study (more costly) or looking for the content to be delivered for an extended period (less costly)?

A37: The intent of this RFP is for the selected Contractors to continue to deliver, for an extended period, the successful courses of study they develop in response to this RFP.

Term

Q38: Is the optional one-year no-cost renewal offered to allow vendors additional time to complete project work scheduled during the initial term Jan. 1, 2023, to July 31, 2023?

A38: Per RFP page 1 - One optional one-year no-cost renewal may be granted dependent on approval from USDOE.

Per RFP page 12, Renewal for one additional up to 1-year period would be dependent upon:

- Satisfactory performance during the original contract term to date;
- USDOE approval of a corresponding no-cost extension for NYSED's ESF-REM grant award;
- Successful negotiation of a scope of continued services (which may simply be the continuation of the same services described in the original agreement);
- The mutual agreement of both parties; and
- Approval of a contract renewal agreement by the NYS Comptroller as described in section 3 of Appendix A, which is contained in the RFP document.

Bidders should propose project plans that align with the stated contract period (January 1, 2023 to July 31, 2023). Optional No Cost Renewals are at the discretion of the USDE and dependent upon satisfactory completion of the contract within the contract period.