

# RFP 20-002 Speech-Language and Bilingual Speech-Language Personnel Development Center (SLPDC)

## Questions and Answers

### Program Questions

1. For tuition costs, requirement 6, please define whether the request covers two semesters per year (spring and fall) or three semesters per year (spring, fall and summer).

Deliverable 3 (and the related Mandatory Requirement 6) requires the bidder to provide scholarships or tuition reimbursement for at least one course per semester. Program expectations, including whether students will be expected to complete their program within a specific timeline or on a specific schedule should be defined in the bidder's technical proposal and should be aligned with specific expectations of any Institute of Higher Education (IHE) program included in the proposal. For example, if the bidder refers to candidate enrollment in a specific IHE program that requires students to take classes in three semesters each year, then scholarships should be provided for the identified candidates for three semesters each year.

2. We reference the following text from the RFP: *Provide scholarships to cover the cost of at least one 3-4 credit course per semester, or tuition reimbursement for courses successfully completed – for semesters in which candidates remain in good standing – for at least 15 candidates who commit to obtaining Speech and Language Disabilities certification and providing speech-language services for two years in NYC Public Schools for every year or partial year in which a scholarship is awarded or tuition reimbursement is provided.*

- a. What are the budget parameters for this proposal?

Please see Fiscal Questions 3 and 4 below.

- b. For “scholarships to cover at least one 3-4 credit course” (p.6, #3 under deliverables), who funds the scholarships? Is this the bidder or is this money we would include in our proposal?

Mandatory Requirement 6/Deliverable 3 requires that funding for scholarships be included in the bidder's cost proposal.

- c. If we are awarded this RFP, can we continue to support students with another DOE scholarship we are eligible to offer?

Yes. There is nothing in the RFP that would restrict the bidder from providing support to students receiving other scholarships.

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- d. **Can we include money for scholarships to fully fund candidates in our proposal?**

Scholarships to fully fund candidates are permissible assuming the requirement outlined in Deliverable 3 for providing scholarships to cover the cost of at least one 3-4 credit course per semester for at least 15 candidates is met.

3. **We reference this portion of the RFP for the set of questions that follows: *Describe how the bidder will assure that students who are enrolled in the current SLPDC graduate program at Long Island University (LIU) Brooklyn at the start of the contract can complete their coursework leading to certification in Speech and Language Disabilities and Speech and Language Disabilities certification with bilingual extension. It is expected that there will be approximately 80 students enrolled in LIU's SLPDC master's degree program in Speech-language Pathology as of January 1, 2020 (27 students are expected to graduate by December 2020, 32 students are expected to graduate in May 2021 and approximately 23 students are expected to graduate in May 2022).***

- a. **Can we assume the 80 LIU Brooklyn students would enroll full-time in our graduate program starting in January 2020? Are they all full-time students? Are any of the 80 currently full-time speech-language pathologists?**

A bidder's technical proposal should include a plan for allowing candidates who are currently enrolled in the SLPDC at LIU Brooklyn to complete their coursework leading to certification in Speech and Language Disabilities and Speech and Language Disabilities with bilingual extension. There is no guarantee that all 80 students from the current SLPDC at LIU Brooklyn will enroll full-time in another graduate program starting in January 2020. However, if desired, your plan could include enrolling interested students full-time in a graduate program starting in January 2020.

Most candidates who are enrolled in the current SLPDC at LIU Brooklyn attend full-time; however, candidates do have the option to attend part-time if they so choose.

All candidates in the current SLPDC at LIU are working toward certification in Speech and Language Disabilities and would not, therefore, be working as speech-language pathologists in public schools. Some candidates may be working full-time in public schools in other capacities. Approximately five (5) candidates in the current SLPDC at LIU had initial Teacher of Students

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with Speech and Language Disabilities (TSSLD) certification at the time of last reporting.

- b. Of the 80, how many Brooklyn students are planning on working in the NYC Public Schools? How many Brooklyn students are bilingual candidates?**

NYSED does not have information on how many candidates in the current SLPDC at LIU are planning on working in NYC public schools. Candidates in the current SLPDC at LIU who receive scholarships sign a commitment to seek and accept employment with the New York City Department of Education (DOE), however not all candidates in the current SLPDC at LIU receive scholarships. In 2018, 22 candidates received scholarships.

Approximately 40 candidates in the current SLPDC at LIU were identified as candidates for bilingual extension at last reporting.

- c. Can the NYSDOE supply us with transcripts from LIU for the 80 candidates?**

No. The New York State Education Department does not have candidate transcripts.

- d. Can we limit inclusion of LIU Brooklyn students to those who meet our admission/retention criteria?**

The purpose of this RFP is to increase the number of New York State (NYS) certified teachers of students with speech and language disabilities (TSSLDs) and TSSLDs with bilingual extensions for employment in NYC public schools. NYSED expects each bidder's technical proposal to include a plan for allowing candidates who are currently enrolled in the SLPDC at LIU Brooklyn to complete their coursework leading to certification in Speech and Language Disabilities and Speech and Language Disabilities with bilingual extension. If the bidder's plan includes specific admission criteria required for acceptance into an identified IHE program that might result in candidates in the current SLPDC at LIU losing support from the SLPDC, it must also include a plan for how those candidates will complete their coursework.

- e. If LIU Brooklyn students do not meet our admission/retention requirements and we are required to include them, can this inclusion be provisional dependent upon their successful completion of our course requirements and retention criteria?**

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As noted in responses to Question 3a. and 3d. above, each bidder's technical proposal should include a plan for allowing candidates enrolled in the current SLPDC at LIU to complete their program. If a bidder's plan includes a transfer of enrollment from LIU to an identified IHE, the technical proposal should clearly describe any specific criteria that admitted students must meet to remain in that IHE program.

- f. **If students want to complete their TSSLD through the ASHA Pathway and not through our college's TSSLD state-approved program, is that permissible?**

This RFP seeks eligible bidders to provide coursework leading to initial and/or professional NYS certification in Speech and Language Disabilities. No distinction has been made regarding a preferred pathway to certification.

4. **We reference this portion of the RFP for the set of questions that follows: *Recruit a minimum of 40 additional candidates, over the 30 months of the contract, who enroll in coursework leading to initial or professional NYS certification in Speech and Language Disabilities and who are committed to working in NYC Public Schools.***

- a. **For these 40 additional candidates, can we recruit from the current population we have on campus, i.e., our existing graduate students?**

Your plans for recruitment should be clearly described in your technical proposal. There are no restrictions on who can be recruited other than the requirement for bilingual candidates outlined in Deliverable 1a.

- b. **For the 40 candidates, can we recruit speech-language pathologists working in the public schools who would like to complete their bilingual extension?**

No. Deliverable 4 requires that the bidder enroll students in graduate coursework leading to eligibility for certification in Speech and Language Disabilities. Recruiting speech-language pathologists who are seeking a bilingual extension to their certification would not meet the expectations of this RFP.

- c. **Must the 40 candidates complete the program prior to the end of the 30-month contract?**

No. The 40 candidates must be enrolled in coursework leading to initial or professional NYS certification in Speech and Language Disabilities.

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### 5. Regarding Speech-Language Faculty/Clinical Supervisors and Additional Faculty/Clinical Supervisors and Clinical Field Supervisors:

- a. **Are we permitted to hire clinical educators/clinical field supervisors from within our current program?**

Yes. IHE bidders may fill clinical educator and clinical supervision positions with current employees. Bidders that are not IHEs must partner with an IHE to provide clinical educators/clinical field supervisors.

- b. **Can we assume that on hiring additional staff to teach/supervise that we would have the liberty to assign our existing staff to teach the LIU Brooklyn students and new staff to teach our current students if need be?**

This would be up to the bidder to determine. There is nothing in the RFP that would prohibit this.

## Fiscal Questions

1. **Can the clinical faculty noted in requirement 4 be employed by the IHE but be paid from the contractor as a contracted service -- as educational consultants?**

All Faculty/Clinical Supervisors and Clinical Field Supervisors must be employed by an IHE and must be qualified to provide clinical supervision. The bidder may choose to fund these positions through a subcontract with an IHE for Clinical Supervision or Clinical Field Supervision. Please see the response to Fiscal Question 2 for additional clarification on subcontracting requirements.

2. **Can you please clarify the 40% subcontracting and what that can or must include. If an entity other than an IHE bids on the contract, it would be difficult to attain only that 40% status given the requirements of the two FTE positions of Faculty/Clinical Supervisors as well as the additional faculty needed (1-1.5 FTE) for clinical supervision. Given they must be employed by the IHE that seems to be a financial amount that would be well over the 40% subcontracting.**

As stated on page 8 of the RFP: For the purposes of this RFP, tuition assistance, scholarships and staff expenses for any partner IHEs providing required services should be included in the Purchased Services budget category, but are not considered subcontracting and are, therefore, not subject to the subcontracting

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limit. Beyond that, subcontracting is defined as non-employee direct personal services and related incidental expenses, including travel, and purchased services include consultant services.

- 3. In reading through the RFP announcement we cannot find any information on budget parameters. We'd like more information on what type of dollars are available and what expenses are allowable. Are we allowed to cover some or all of the instructor salaries?**

There is no funding floor or cap. However, all proposed costs will be reviewed for reasonableness. Allowable expenses are outlined in the cost proposal, including salaries/benefits for staff and cost of subcontractors and consultants under the Purchased Services category. Bidders can pay all or part of salaries for instructors or clinical supervisors, depending on their agreement with the IHE(s). See the answer to Fiscal Question #2 for more about subcontracting.

- 4. Is there an estimated budget for the new RFP program that can be shared?**

There is no funding floor or cap. However, all proposed costs will be reviewed for reasonableness. Please also keep in mind that this RFP employs a "best value" method of procurement, with 30 percent of the overall points awarded based on cost. (See "Criteria for Evaluating Bids" section of the RFP for additional information). Bidders are encouraged to submit budgets that are cost effective.

- 5. What was the annual budget of the current grant?**

The current five-year contract was for more than \$3.35 million, with an annual range of \$657,515 to \$689,313. The contract resulting from this RFP will span 30 months.

## M/WBE Questions

- 1. We reference the following text from the RFP for the set of questions that follows: *For purposes of this procurement, NYS Education Department hereby establishes an overall goal of 30% of the total contract amount for M/WBE participation, 17% for Minority-Owned Business Enterprises ("MBE") participation and 13% for Women-Owned Business Enterprises ("WBE") participation based on the current availability of qualified MBEs and WBEs.***
- a. Can we include scholarship money for minority and women recipients toward the 30% participation?**

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No. Money allocated for scholarships cannot count toward M/WBE goals. To count toward the M/WBE participation goals, funds must go directly to M/WBE certified firms.

- b. Can we include funds for Project Directors, Faculty/Clinical Supervisors and Clinical Field Supervisors who are women or minorities toward this 30%?**

Employees of the prime contractor do not count toward the M/WBE participation goal; however, if these staff are employed by a subcontractor under the contract and that subcontractor is a certified MWBE firm, then the funds budgeted for that subcontractor will count toward the MWBE goal. Please keep in mind that there is a 40% limit on subcontracting under this contract.

- c. What defines the businesses? Do they have to be incorporated or can they be individuals (i.e. Clinical Field supervisors paid directly through our usual means). How is this status verified?**

Only firms certified by Empire State Development's Division of Minority and Women's Business Development, and listed in the public [Directory of Certified Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises](#), will count toward the MWBE participation goals on this contract.