**STATE OF MAINE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**RFP AMENDMENT #2 AND**

**RFP SUBMITTED AND BIDDERS CONFERENCE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SUMMARY**

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| **RFP NUMBER AND TITLE:** | RFP# 202312252 - FY 25-27 Competitive Grant Application for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) (WIOA, sec 231) |
| **RFP ISSUED BY:** | Department of Education |
| **BIDDERS CONFERENCE LOCATION:** | Zoom |
| **BIDDERS CONFERENCE DATE/TIME:** | February 5, 2024 |
| **SUBMITTED QUESTIONS DUE DATE:** | February 9, 2024, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time |
| **AMENDMENT AND QUESTION & ANSWER SUMMARY ISSUED:** | February 22, 2024 |
| **PROPOSAL DUE DATE:** | March 7, 2024, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time |
| **PROPOSALS DUE TO:** | proposals@maine.gov |
| **Unless specifically addressed below, all other provisions and clauses of the RFP remain unchanged.** |
| **DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES IN RFP (if any):**Appendix J -General Budget Information- corrected typoAppendix G has been amended to provide clearer instructions on what data should be submitted by individual consortium members and which data should be submitted by the consortium. There are now 3 versions of Appendix G1. For those previously funded by Title II
2. For those NOT previously funded by Title II
3. For those proposing corrections services
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| **REVISED LANGUAGE IN RFP (if any):**Appendix J -General Budget Information:Refer to **PART II SCOPE OF SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED** for specific guidance on allowable and unallowable expenses.3 versions of Appendix G1. For those previously funded by Title II
2. For those NOT previously funded by Title II
3. 3.For those proposing corrections services

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**Provided below are submitted written questions received and the Department’s answer.**

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| **1** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Pg. 23-25 | What is the required format for proposal submissions? (eg. PDF, Word, Excel?) |
| **Answer** |
|  PDF is the preferred format. Word is also an acceptable format, and Excel where indicated. |

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| **2** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
|  | Will applicants be notified if they do not pass the pre-screening? |
| **Answer** |
| All applicants will be notified via the award process outlined in Part V section F (pg.29).  |

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| **3** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
|  | Is there an updated State Unified Plan? The one available on the State website expired in 2023? |
| **Answer** |
| Updated State Plan will be released after the RFP due date. Applicants should use the current State Plan to guide planning.  |

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| **4** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
|  | What is the source of data that is being used to fill Table 5 if Table 5 is reporting on individuals who have exited? |
| **Answer** |
| For previously funded Title II applicants’ NRS Table 5 WIOA sec. 116 data can be found in the Schoology MaineSTARS Data Group. Table 5 data should be Hub/consortium data and not individual program data.   For those not previously funded, this would be based on local data. |

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| **5** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
|  | Can the vendor be virtual? |
| **Answer** |
| Applicants should submit a proposal that demonstrates how they will deliver services outlined in Part II Scope of Services to be Provided for the service area for which they are applying. |

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| **6** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
|  | Will you accept submissions from companies out of state? |
| **Answer** |
| Applicants should submit a proposal that demonstrates how they will deliver services outlined in Part II Scope of Services to be Provided for the service area for which they are applying. Only Eligible Providers of Past Demonstrated Effectiveness will be considered for funding. |

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| **7** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
|  | Are you required to fulfill all components requested, or can you offer just one or some? Our tutoring company offers foundational reading and math instruction as well as GED prep. |
| **Answer** |
| Applicants should submit a proposal that demonstrates how they will deliver services outlined in Part II Scope of Services to be Provided. |

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| **8** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
|  | Is AEFLA funding now available for Family Literacy? |
| **Answer** |
| Please refer to the Purpose and Background and Scope of Services in the RFP. |

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| **9** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| page 43 of the RFP in Appendix G | High School Completion Programming Outcomes, “Percent of students in HSC programming who earned a high school diploma or equivalency,” would the percentage be calculated using the total number of students in HSC program, or the number of students in HSC programming enrolled with 12 hours or more of instruction?  (We are looking for the denominator in this calculation) |
| **Answer** |
| Previously funded Title II applicants should use the number of NRS eligible participants as a denominator. New Title II applicants should calculate the rate using the number of participants served.  |

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| **10** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| page 43 of the RFP in Appendix G | NRS Table 5 WIOA sec. 116, Primary Indicators of Performance – Is the data for this section available from the Maine Department of Education data match report to verify employment and postsecondary activity? Are there other official sources of data available, or should this be based on local program data? |
| **Answer** |
| For previously funded Title II applicants’ NRS Table 5 WIOA sec. 116 data can be found in the Schoology MaineSTARS Data Group. Table 5 data should be Hub/consortium data and not individual program data.   For those not previously funded, this would be based on local data.   |

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| **11** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix C, pg. 34 | Eligible Provider Form is the "Applicant's Organization Name" the individual member of a consortium or the Fiscal Agent of the consortium?   AND, please clarify if the Name of the "Consortium Member Organization" is the Fiscal Agent name or the individual organization within the consortium? |
| **Answer** |
| Each consortium member must complete Appendix C and Appendix G.  |

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| **12** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix G, pg. 47 | Across multiple programs, Table 5 reports are missing data points. Where should we look to find this information? Specifically, we are not showing anything in; number of participants who exited achieving outcomes or median earnings value |
| **Answer** |
| For previously funded Title II applicants’ NRS Table 5 WIOA sec. 116 data can be found in the Schoology MaineSTARS Data Group. Table 5 data should be Hub/consortium data and not individual program data.   For those not previously funded, this would be based on local data.  |

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| **13** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix E, pg. 41 | Is a list of litigation needed for all consortium members? Does this expectation apply to only the departments applying for the grant, or to the umbrella organizations? (Ex. Adult Ed. Department vs. whole RSU or school district?) |
| **Answer** |
| Information of Litigation applies to the Lead organization or the Fiscal Agent. |

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| **14** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix E, pg. 41 | Are the balance sheets requested intended to be a formal report from a state-approved system such as ADS/Profund, or a document generated in-house? Is the profit/loss statement request referring to revenue reports and operating expenses across the entire department? If not, then what is being requested? |
| **Answer** |
| Applicants must complete Section I: Organization Information and Overview of Appendix E (Application) and provide all attachments as described in the form |

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| **15** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix J, pg. 57 | Under General Budget Information we are told to refer to part I and ‘ERROR! Reference source not found’ for specifics on allowable and unallowable expenses. What is the ‘error’ portion supposed to be? |
| **Answer** |
| Text should read: Refer to PART II SCOPE OF SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED as corrected Amendment #2.  |

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| **16** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix J, budget form download | Does ‘hours’ mean hours worked that are paid specifically by AEFLA, or total hours for the position? |
| **Answer** |
| Total hours  |

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| **17** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix H, IET Programming Download | In column F, what is ‘component’ referring to? |
| **Answer** |
| Please refer to the definition of IET listed in the RFP or the Bidders Conference Slides (16-17) |

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| **18** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendices A-J, pp. 32-53 | Which appendices need to have a copy submitted by each member of a consortium, and which only require a single copy for the entire consortium? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to Part IV Proposal Submission requirements (pg. 24,) and the answer to question 11 above.  |

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| **19** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix E, Section I, pp. 37-38 | In Section I of the grant application, which questions require an individual response from each member of the consortium? |
| **Answer** |
| Questions C, D and E ask for information from the fiscal agent. |

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| **20** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix J, p. 52 | What is the actual reference for the text “Error! Reference not found.”? |
| **Answer** |
| Answered above -refer to question #15  |

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| **21** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| N/A | Do consortium members need to have begun the application process for IETs before March 7th to include them in the proposal? |
| **Answer** |
| No |

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| **22** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II.E (pp 19-20); Part V.E (p. 29) | If an applicant believes that “the cost limits described in subsection (a) are too restrictive to allow for the activities described in subsection (a)(s),” allowing for a negotiation, does this take place after the applicant’s proposal has been accepted? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes |

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| **23** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II.E (pp 19-20); Part V.E (p. 29) | If a successful applicant has included costs that it deems necessary in excess of the limits described above, and the Maine DOE ultimately disagrees during negotiation that the costs are necessary, will the applicant be able to propose another allowable use for those same funds, would those funds be stricken from the budget, or are there other possible outcomes? |
| **Answer** |
|  | The Maine DOE reserves the right to negotiate with the successful Applicant(s) to finalize a contract at the same rate or cost of service as presented in the selected proposal. Such negotiations may not significantly vary the content, nature or requirements of the proposal or the Maine DOE’s Request for Proposals to an extent that may affect the price of goods or services requested. |

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| **24** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix I (p. 51) | Are titles for relevant positions sufficient, or should applicants include staff names when possible? |
| **Answer** |
| Include staff names when possible. |

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| **25** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix I (p. 51) | Do questions regarding amounts budgeted and weeks contracted refer to a position in its entirety, or solely to the portion of the position that are proposed to be funded with AEFLA funds? |
| **Answer** |
| Appendix, I Personnel, should be personnel in your consortium who will be funded with AEFLA. |

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| **26** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix C & G, p 14, 34, & 42  | page 14 indicates that each consortium members must complete Appendix C & G. On Appendix C there is a line for the Applicant’s Organization Name and a second line for Consortium Member’s name and it seems clear we are to submit a separate form for each consortium member for Appendix C. There is only a line for Applicant’s Organization Name at the top of page 42 Appendix G, which seems to be used for the fiscal agent throughout the application. Are we submitting just one Appendix G with applicant’s data separated and identified on the one form or are we submitting one Appendix G for each consortium member? In either scenario, how do you want us to identify each consortium member? |
| **Answer** |
|  Each consortium member must complete Appendix C and Appendix G.  |

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| **27** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix G p 43 | NRS Table 5 WIOA Sec. 116 – Is each member to report data in this section or supply aggregated data for the HUB in light of the fact Table 5 is not reporting employment data?  |
| **Answer** |
| For previously funded Title II applicants’ NRS Table 5 WIOA sec. 116 data can be found in the Schoology MaineSTARS Data Group. Table 5 data should be Hub/consortium data and not individual program data.   For those not previously funded, this would be based on local data.  |

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| **28** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix E Section d. p 38 | Section d. Financial Viability requests balance sheets and income statements for each of the past three tax years.  If FY23 is not yet complete, as fiscal agent may we submit the last three completed years (FY20, FY21, and FY22) to satisfy this section? We changed accounting systems in January 2023 resulting in auditors needing additional time to complete their work for YE 23.If the last three years completed are not acceptable, will two years be accepted with a statement from our central office that year 2023 is in progress or a statement from auditors that YE 2023 is in progress? |
| **Answer** |
| Send the last 3 completed years |

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| **29** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part III page 22 | Part III, B. Questions 1. a. states that parties should use Appendix E for submitted questions rather than Appendix K. Knowing how exact Warrant votes have to be, does this need correction? |
| **Answer** |
| Appendix K is the submitted questions form to be used by Bidders to submit questions.  |

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| **30** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix I | Do we include personnel who will be providing in-kind match services under the grant or just those personnel who will actually be paid under the grant? For example: HiSET Examiner/Advisor would be providing career orientation and HiSET Examining services towards fulfilling match requirements but is also the Director and will not be paid under the grant. |
| **Answer** |
| Appendix, I Personnel, should be personnel in your consortium who will be funded with AEFLA |

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| **31** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix G; RFP page 42 | Is an Educational Functioning Level and Measurable Skill Gain the same? Is earning a high school credential documentation of the moving an educational functioning level or is that only documented with a CASAS post-test? Confused as programs encouraged to use achievement of a measurable skill gain and yet impacts documented effectiveness for this grant application. Perhaps only captured in second chart is sufficient. |
| **Answer** |
| In Appendix G an Educational Functioning Level and Measurable Skill Gain are not the same. Educational Functioning Level gain in Appendix G is measured through a pre and post test . |

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| **32** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix C, p. 34 | Is just one Appendix C submitted per grant application or does each program/member within the consortium have to submit an Appendix C? |
| **Answer** |
| Each consortium member must complete Appendix C.  |

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| **33** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part III, Submitting Proposal, p. 22 | Is there a page limit to Appendix E: Application` |
| **Answer** |
| The Maine DOE seeks detailed yet succinct responses that demonstrate the Applicant’s qualifications, experience, and ability to perform the requirements specified throughout the RFP. |

**Provided below are questions asked and the responses given at the Bidders Conference.**

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| **1** | **Question** |
| Does the program submitting the application need to be the fiscal agent? |
| **Answer** |
| The fiscal agent is the lead applicant, but any consortium applicant can submit the application.  |

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| **2** | **Question** |
| Can we make Appendix G into a fillable PDF? |
| **Answer** |
| No  |

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| **3** | **Question** |
| Will you accept submissions for online services?  |
| **Answer** |
| Applicants should submit a proposal that demonstrates how they will deliver services outlined in Part II Scope of Services to be Provided for the service area for which they are applying |

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| **4** | **Question** |
| Requested in the RFP are records related to any litigation the applicants have been involved in. Does this refer solely to an adult education department specifically, or are you needing litigation data related to the RSU or school department as a whole? |
| **Answer** |
| Information of Litigation applies to the Lead organization or the Fiscal Agent. |

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| **5** | **Question** |
| It says in the RFP. That each program within the consortium has to complete that separately. Can we create our own excel or tables, so that we're not doing all of this by hand on those? |
| **Answer** |
| Applicants should use appendix G, in the form that is included in the RFP. |

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| **6** | **Question** |
| On pg. 19 (top) there are slightly different priority areas than pg. 19 middle. On the top of the page when it references digital equity- there is no reference to rural. Question: is the digital equity piece only for rural areas or in general? |
| **Answer** |
| A grant amendment has been submitted in reference to the three priority areas. The three priority areas are serving multilingual learners, digital equity and integrated education and training workplace activities leading to a measurable skill gain. |

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| **7** | **Question** |
| It looks like we need a min of one IET. Is this accurate? Are there specific qualifications/register of the IET?  |
| **Answer** |
| Yes, one IET at a minimum. Definition of IET is included in the RFP and Bidders Conference slides (16-17.) |

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| **8** | **Question** |
| In past grants, IET's were difficult. Is there more information coming out in the next week or so? |
| **Answer** |
| Information regarding IET’s is widely available at <https://lincs.ed.gov/state-resources/federal-initiatives/advance-iet> and information regarding the State application and resources can be found either in the IET Technical Assistance Schoology group or by request to Steven.Airoldi@maine.gov |

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| **9** | **Question** |
| Appendix I: Personnel- should we be listing the key personnel of the lead applicant or are we listing personnel across the consortium? Do we need to list names of specific teachers? |
| **Answer** |
| Appendix, I Personnel, should be personnel in your consortium who will be funded with AEFLA. |

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| **10** | **Question** |
| Are you saying there is not a State Priority for equal access across rural areas? |
| **Answer** |
| The three priority areas are serving multilingual learners, digital equity and integrated education and training workplace activities leading to a measurable skill gain. |

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| **11** | **Question** |
| If applying as a hub, but some programs do not choose to participate in AEFLA, is the program applying responsible for covering the other programs in the Hub? |
| **Answer** |
| The RFP is asking for proposals to serve the entire service area for which they are applying |

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| **12** | **Question** |
| Can we simultaneously apply for State Office approval for IETs and include in the AEFLA application the proposed IETs? |
| **Answer** |
| IET’s included in the RFP should conform to the definition of IET and the Bidder Conference IET slides (16-17.) The application process is a separate process.  |

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| **13** | **Question** |
| Do you have to be approved for IET before including it in the grant application |
| **Answer** |
| No. |

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| **14** | **Question** |
| Does a provider of Occupational Skills training for an IET training need to be a member of the consortium? |
| **Answer** |
| No. |

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| **15** | **Question** |
| Is Workready a must for IETs? |
| **Answer** |
| Proposals should demonstrate how they will deliver the services as outlined in Part II Scope of Services to be Provided. |