

NOEP RFP Questions & Answers

Questions are organized according to the format of the RFP. Any questions received by Hunger Solutions New York by Monday, August 21, 2017 are addressed below.

****APPLICATION UPDATE:**

Should we use the Word document that is downloadable? The margins of the formatted box does not appear to have 1 inch margins.

The form does not allow you to hit a carriage return to move to a new line. Are you aware of problems with the form and are you going to fix them?

Hunger Solutions New York encourages bidders to use the downloadable Application Form when completing your application. It is acceptable for bidders to recreate the template following the guidelines articulated in Section M on Page 10. Hunger Solutions New York has provided all bidders with an updated Application Form that allows for proper formatting within text boxes. This updated form is downloadable at www.NOEPPrfp.org.

A) PURPOSE

Hunger Solutions New York did not receive any questions for this section.

B) DESCRIPTION OF HUNGER SOLUTIONS NEW YORK, INC.

Hunger Solutions New York did not receive any questions for this section.

C) THE NUTRITION OUTREACH AND EDUCATION PROGRAM

How should we interpret the requirement for one NOEP Coordinator who is solely devoted to performing NOEP-funded activities? These activities include work that typically our Outreach Specialists perform, but also include tasks that our program coordinators perform. Is the expectation that we hire one additional staff member to combine all these tasks and required expertise in one person, or can we dedicate 1 FTE of our current staff, but spread out over multiple staff positions?

Organizations that receive NOEP funds are required to employ at least 1, 100% NOEP-funded, full-time NOEP Coordinator who is solely devoted to performing NOEP funded activities.

If an applicant is proposing to serve 2 counties, MUST they hire 2 FT employees or could they hire 1 person to serve both? One county is very small.

Organizations that receive NOEP funds are required to employ at least 1, 100% NOEP-funded, full-time NOEP Coordinator who is solely devoted to performing NOEP funded activities in EACH county served.

Can you elaborate on the review process for outreach materials? We have developed messaging and calls to action that have proven to be very successful and result in high response rates. Would we be able to use our outreach materials?

Please refer to the last paragraph on Page 5: Prior to distribution, all outreach materials for the NOEP must be submitted for approval through the NOEP Outreach Approval Request Process. It is required that the 100% NOEP-funded position will develop and submit outreach materials for approval directly to Hunger Solutions New York. The NOEP Contract Manager will provide technical assistance as needed for developing outreach and ultimately approve the outreach for distribution. In order to ensure timeliness, consistency, and meet NOEP outreach criteria, subcontractors may need to make an exception to their internal communications/outreach development and approval process.

D) AGENCY ELIGIBILITY

If the applicant has an active contract with OTDA for T-SNAP outreach services, does that affect eligibility for NOEP funds? If so, how?

No. An organization's other contracts with OTDA does not affect eligibility for NOEP.

If a bidder organization has not previously had a full annual audit, but rather a review due to the agency's small size, can they still apply?

Per Section N, Item 4, on Page 10, an applicant is required to attach the most recently completed fiscal audit. If the organization has not had an audit, please attach a letter explaining why and include the fiscal review. In addition, please note that if awarded a NOEP contract, all subcontractors must meet the requirement in Appendix B, item 10, on Page 16.

E) OPEN COMPETITIVE PROCESS

We have been a NOEP provider successfully for the past 3 years and now we are applying. Are there any parts of the process that are already completed or is it an entirely new application? Is there a different process for current NOEP organizations?

Per Section E on Page 6, prior receipt of a NOEP contract does not guarantee nor prohibit an award under this RFP. All applicants should follow the instructions as articulated in the RFP.

F) PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

Hunger Solutions New York did not receive any questions for this section.

G) NOEP ACTIVITY GOALS

Are you able to provide guidance for setting goals for each of the program activities (Referring to NOEP Statewide Activity Goals on pg. 7)?

Please refer to Section G on Page 6 where it states that each organization awarded a contract through this RFP process will be required to commit to annual numerical targets for each service area. These numerical targets are subject to change annually. You will be assigned numerical targets for each of the goals on page 7.

How will you determine a grantees numerical targets for the NOEP Activity Goals listed on Page 7? Will agencies chosen for an award be able to negotiate the target numbers with Hunger Solutions?

Is there information available about historical contract targets for the minimum number of enrolled households, or other information to help new applicants understand the scale of these goals?

Once a subcontractor is selected for a county, there are five criteria we analyze at Hunger Solutions New York to determine a reasonable and achievable target for that county. Once completed, the Hunger Solutions New York Contract Manager enters into discussions and negotiations with the subcontractor to finalize those numbers.

For Agencies serving New York City will we be provided with and expected to distribute information about mybenefits.ny.gov or New York City's benefits site access.nyc.gov? Since NYC residents are required to use AccessNYC and are not allowed to use MyBenefits.gov for most programs including SNAP, would it not make sense to give NYC applicants AccessNYC information rather than MyBenefits.gov information?

NOEP is a statewide program under the administration of OTDA and management of Hunger Solutions New York. OTDA requires that NOEP outreach material includes information about MyBenefits.ny.gov. Everyone, including all NYC residents, can access the SNAP application through MyBenefits.ny.gov. One of the first questions asked in MyBenefits.ny.gov is the county of residence. Once a person identifies themselves as a NYC resident they are prompted with another question and automatically re-directed to AccessNYC. For that reason, most of the outreach we provide to our NOEP Coordinators includes myBenefits.ny.gov. In addition, NOEP Coordinators can customize outreach provided by Hunger Solutions New York and/or develop their own outreach that will go through the NOEP Outreach Approval Process.

H) PROJECT SCOPE, GEOGRAPHIC AREA, AND SPECIFIC TARGET POPULATIONS

If an organization's primary office is not handicapped accessible, but they can provide a secondary location that is accessible when needed, will that be acceptable?

All potential clients must be able to access NOEP services during business hours. All applicants must address how they will meet this requirement in Appendix E, Section C, Question 9, on Page 22 of this RFP.

Can a subcontractor assure daily physical presence in a handicapped accessible, confidential space in a variety of borrowed intake sites in the service area, while being based in an office in a contiguous county?

No, each subcontractor needs to have a physical location of their own, even if that is a co-location with another organization. They need an address where people will come and know they'll be able to see the NOEP Coordinator and leave things for them; even if the NOEP Coordinator is out doing outreach in the community. Please refer to Appendix B on Page 17, requirement #13.

We were not sure if we'd be able to apply based on the fact that:

- a) we currently don't operate outside of NYC, and**
- b) our phone-based model is different from my understanding of the in-person assistance model for NOEP counselors.**

Would you confirm if those two are, indeed, requirements for the program?

a. Please see section H on Page 8 which explains for New York City an eligible geographic area is all of NYC or only a part of NYC such as one or more boroughs or specific areas within one or more boroughs. Please review section H for more information about geographic areas.

b. Yes, the NOEP in-person assistance model is a requirement of the program. Please refer to Appendix B on Page 17, requirement #13 which states that you must maintain a daily presence and handicapped accessible office in each service area where clients can meet with the NOEP Coordinator face-to-face for confidential prescreening and application assistance.

Can companies from outside the US apply for this RFP and perform the required tasks from outside the US?

No. Please refer to Section H on Page 8 which states that all proposals must be for projects to be conducted at the local level.

Our program serves all 62 counties, but virtually - phone, email, online chat. We also have virtual offices across NYS. Can we employ one NOEP person for virtual assistance?

No, please refer to Appendix B on Page 17, requirement #13 which states that you must maintain a daily presence and handicapped accessible office in each service area where clients can meet with the NOEP Coordinator face-to-face for confidential prescreening and application assistance.

What if the target population is homebound individuals, do we still need a physical location?

While home visits are an acceptable activity (See Appendix A, bullet #6 on page 13 of the RFP), all NOEP subcontractors must also satisfy the requirement articulated in Appendix B on Page 17, requirement #13 which states that you must maintain a daily presence and handicapped accessible office in each service area where clients can meet with the NOEP Coordinator face-to-face for confidential prescreening and application assistance.

If we are located in Kings County and have been just addressing Kings County and now wish to expand to Staten Island, do I submit a separate application for this area but it is the same organization applying?

If we are funded as Kings County, how do we request funding for Staten Island? Can we submit a separate proposal?

No, please refer to Section H, on Page 8, **For New York City** an eligible geographic area is all of NYC (i.e. all five boroughs) or only part of NYC (i.e. one or more boroughs or specific areas or neighborhoods within one or more boroughs). Therefore, an application to serve Kings County (Brooklyn) and Richmond County (Staten Island) would be considered 1 application.

Can an organization located in Kings County apply for a grant in Rockland County?

Yes. Applications to serve multiple counties are acceptable. Please refer to instructions for submitting an application to serve multiple counties outside of NYC.

I) DURATION OF CONTRACT PERIOD AND EXPECTED FUNDING LEVELS

a. **The annual funding level for services in a county in the rest of the state is expected to be approximately \$65,000. For organizations outside of New York City proposing to serve more than one county, the annual funding level is expected to be approximately \$55,000 for each additional county to be served. Based on this statement we currently serve six counties so would that mean we would count \$65K for the first county and \$55K for the remaining five counties or should it be \$55k times the six counties?**

b. **We have one question that pertains to funding. I would like to confirm that if we are proposing to serve 4 counties outside of New York City the available funding would be \$230,000 (\$65,000 + 3 x \$55,000).**

c. **The RFP states the annual level of funding is \$75,000; is that the average or is that the max for each NYC group, such that our proposal budgets should only be \$75,000?**

Answer to a, b, & c:

Please refer to Section I on Page 8 for the expected funding levels per geographic area type.

- The expected funding level for New York City is approximately \$75,000. An eligible geographic area is all of NYC or only a part of NYC.
- The expected funding level for Long Island, (Nassau or Suffolk County), is approximately \$75,000 for one county. If the applicant proposes to serve more than one county, the annual funding level for each additional county is \$55,000.
- The expected funding level for applicants outside of NYC and Long Island, is approximately \$65,000 for one county. If the applicant proposes to serve more than one county, the annual funding level for *each additional* county is \$55,000.

What is the amount of funding for 2018-22 and please compare it to the amount of funding dispersed in 2014-18.

The amount of funding for each geographic area type (NYC & Long Island, Rest of State, additional multi-county) has increased by \$5,000 per tier. For example, the NYC/Long Island funding level was \$70,000 in 2014-2018 and is now \$75,000 for 2018-2022.

I have a question about the expected funding levels for contracts awarded pursuant to this RFP. If a subcontractor bids for, and is awarded 2 NOEP Coordinators in a region outside of NYC, what is the expected award amount?

There are no instructions in the RFP to submit an application for two NOEP Coordinators in one service area/county. Therefore applicants should submit an application for only one NOEP Coordinator per service area, including subcontractors that currently have two NOEP Coordinators for a service area. Hunger Solutions New York reserves the right to negotiate with successful bidder in order to modify or add a second NOEP Coordinator to the bidder's terms, and additional funding will also be negotiated accordingly.

Is the award doubled to accommodate the 2 NOEPs, or is the agency expected to cover the salaries of both NOEPs in the award amount listed on page 8 of the RFP?

Please see Section H on Page 8, for all projects, last sentence, Hunger Solutions New York reserves the right to enter into a contract to fund more than one NOEP Coordinator position in a service area if there is a very high need or a high concentration of a specific target population, or at its sole discretion. If awarded an additional NOEP Coordinator in a county, per section T on Page 12, Hunger Solutions New York reserves the right to negotiate with successful bidder in order to modify, add, delete, accept, and approve the bidder's terms. There are no instructions in the RFP to submit an application for 2 NOEP Coordinators in one service area/county.

How should we bid if our area currently has 2 NOEP coordinators, and we would like to employ both?

See above response. We cannot advise you as to how you should submit your bid to this RFP.

Because total funding does not always cover travel cost to bi-annual, multi-day conferences, is Hunger Solutions considering a reduction in the days or number of mandatory conferences? Would there be any consideration for seasoned NOEP Coordinators who have been in the position and attending conferences for 5+ years?

Travel expenses for required bi-annual meetings and conferences should be incorporated into your NOEP budget. Please refer to Appendix B on Page 17, requirement #17.

Will there be an opportunity to adjust the annual budget during the contract period to reflect increases in wages &/or other expenses due to increase in min wage, mileage, etc.?

Yes. Hunger Solutions New York will engage each organization awarded a contract in an annual budget development process. During the course of each contract year, NOEP organizations will also be able to submit budget modifications throughout the year. The budget development process is completed at the beginning of each contract year.

When submitting this application, we used to receive additional funding from COLA...can we submit a higher bid to include COLA funds if they become available during the new contract period?

COLA funds have become available to the NOEP contract in prior years. However, it is not a guarantee that COLA funds will be available in the future. If COLA funds become available, allocation of these funds is at the discretion of the Hunger Solutions New York Board of Directors and subject to guidance provided by the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. We cannot advise you as to how you should submit your bid to this RFP. The expected funding levels are detailed in Section I.

Can you be more specific regarding COLA funding....even if we don't request it during this proposal process. We can still be awarded COLA if it becomes available at the discretion of the EXECUTIVE Director of Hunger Solutions...

If COLA funds become available, allocation of these funds is at the discretion of the Hunger Solutions New York Board of Directors and subject to guidance provided by the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. We cannot advise you as to how you should submit your bid to this RFP. The expected funding levels are detailed in Section I.

Can you risk losing the whole proposal by asking for more funding than what was recommended in the RFP?

We cannot advise you as to how you should submit your bid to this RFP. The expected funding levels are detailed in Section I.

J) LETTER OF INTENT TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

Is a letter of intent required?

No. Please refer to section J, failure to submit a letter of intent by the due date does not prohibit a bidder from submitting a proposal in response to this RFP.

K) ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS RFP

Hunger Solutions New York did not receive any questions for this section.

L) ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Hunger Solutions New York did not receive any questions for this section.

M) SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL FOR FUNDING

To confirm, Sections B, C and D are answered for every county for which we apply and each county has a four page maximum?

Yes, for multi-county applicants outside of NYC, please respond to sections B, C, & D with a separate, complete set of responses for each of the counties you are proposing to serve. Please refer to Section M on Page 10, For multi-county proposals outside of NYC, a completed Proposal Form for one county must not exceed 12 pages; each additional county proposed in the application will require up to 9 separate pages per additional county for sections B, C, & D; please follow the individual section page limits for sections B, C, and D.

N) REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

Will letters of support beyond the local department of social services be considered in scoring the application?

No. The only letter taken into account for scoring appears on Page 21 in Appendix E, section B, question #6 for the LDSS/HRA letter of support.

May we submit additional documents along with our proposal? For example, program-specific partnership agreements, letters of support, etc.

Additional documents beyond the required documents articulated in Section N on Page 10 of this RFP are not required. Additional documents will not be considered in scoring.

The RFP asks applicants for a list of names and contact info for all funding sources over \$65K. Does this include both government and foundation sources?

Yes. Please include all funding sources over \$65K. Please refer to Appendix C on Page 18 of this RFP.

Another question about the funding sources over 65K - Should the contact information provided be from the program or fiscal side?

Please provide a contact for the funding source that would be able to answer general questions about the nature of your relationship and/or direct us to the proper person on the program or fiscal side, if necessary.

Another question about the funding sources over 65K - Is an email address sufficient for contact info?

Yes

We have government fund contact info easily accessible. Private funders over \$65,000 could include corporate, individual and foundation donors. Do you want individual and all program officer contact info?

Please provide contact information from all funding sources over \$65,000.

What if a donor over \$65K specifies remaining anonymous? In that case how do we handle notifying you of contact person?

Please provide contact information from all funding sources over \$65,000. If a donor has specified to remain anonymous, please indicate such in your response.

O) PROPOSAL DUE DATE

Can we submit the proposals via email?

Please refer to Section O on Page 11; completed proposal packages must be received at the Hunger Solutions New York offices by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 29, 2017. No faxed or e-mailed proposal packages will be accepted.

P) PROPOSAL PRESCREENING

“high need” points to be determined for each county in the state as described in Section P of the RFP (Page 11 of 26):

How many of the six listed criteria must be met in order for a county to qualify as high need and receive high need points?

Do you award a portion of total high need points for each criterion met?

Are the six criteria weighted equally? If not, would you share the point values for each?

Please provide a list of New York’s counties and their high need points.

Response to high need questions:

In accordance with legislative direction, the high needs analysis is a requirement of the RFP process for Hunger Solutions New York. There are six criteria that Hunger Solutions New York must consider when developing the high need analysis as explained in Section P on Page 11 of this RFP. Each county will receive high needs points based on the criteria examined; all applications from an individual county will receive the same number of high needs points related to that specific county. The criteria for high needs points are weighted equally. Although some priority will be given to areas of highest need in NYS, it is clear that every area of NYS has a need for NOEP services.

What data resource is being used to determine the high need criteria for each county-is there a specific website?

There is no one specific website used to determine high need criteria. Hunger Solutions New York utilizes a variety of sources which include data from: NYS Department of Health, US Census Bureau, NYS Department of Labor, NYS Education Department, NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance.

Q) SCORING

Hunger Solutions New York did not receive any questions for this section.

R) REFERENCE CHECKS

Hunger Solutions New York did not receive any questions for this section.

S) AWARD DETERMINATIONS

Hunger Solutions New York did not receive any questions for this section.

T) TERMS AND CONDITIONS GOVERNING THIS RFP

Hunger Solutions New York did not receive any questions for this section.

U) OTHER:

Regarding the budget are the costs of rent and utilities (other than communications) for the NOEP Coordinator included in the 15% cap for overhead? Would we be able to go over the 15% if those costs were given In-Kind? Certain areas of the state have higher rent and utilities costs and when you also include indirect costs it may be difficult to come in under the 15% limit.

Yes, the Space and Utilities expense should be included in Overhead which does have a 15% Cap. Projects are limited to this 15% Cap for any Overhead expenses charged to the NOEP contract. In-Kind contributions to your project may exceed the Cap. Please refer to Proposed Budget Form on Page 23 of this RFP.

Regarding In Kind funding, are there any restrictions on where the In-kind funds can stem from? For example: no Federal or State funding sources - Would we be able to use a grant where the funding stems from federal CSBG funding to cover part of our In Kind contribution?

Applicants are encouraged to source in-kind funds for their NOEP project. Please refer to Appendix B on Page 16, requirement #8, which states that a project must ensure that NOEP funds are not comingled with any other funds from other sources including other nutrition programs or outreach funds. Subcontractors are encouraged to identify in-kind funds in their contracts. Please refer to your source of in-kind funds for any restrictions of their use.

Would we be allowed to use or own CRM system to educate, screen, and apply clients for benefits, or do we need to use your system?"

Yes, you may use your own system for intake purposes, tallying data, and tracking purposes. Hunger Solutions does require agencies awarded a NOEP contract to utilize NOEP prescreening tools and the NOEP Online reporting system for reporting data.

On page 17, #13 we are required to have an office for the NOEP coordinator to meet with clients. Why is space considered an overhead cost and not a direct cost to the contract?

It is a requirement of the contract that space expense is allocated to overhead.

How should we figure out which part of the requested funds are state only, for the purpose of determining allowable activities? Should we take 2.5% of our total budget?

For current NOEP contracts, the portion of state-only funds is 2.5%. Hunger Solutions New York cannot advise you as to how you should submit your bid to this RFP.

Where in the RFP can I learn more about the state funding at 2.5%

The RFP does not state the specific amount of state-only funding within the NOEP contract. For current NOEP contracts, the portion of state-only funds is 2.5%. Please refer to Section C on Page 5, paragraph 2, which states that the small portion of state funds that is not federally matched may be used for certain other activities including outreach for child nutrition programs. As stated in that paragraph, see Appendix A for a list of NOEP activities allowable with state and federal matching funds (Appendix A, page 13) and a list of activities allowable with state-only funds (Appendix A, page 14).