Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance

Notice of Funding Opportunity:
Washington Migrant and Asylum-Seeker Support Project
Questions and Answers
June 3, 2024

1. **Question:** On participant eligibility: Are eligible program participant those who are currently in removal proceedings or those who have ever been in removal proceedings?

2. **Answer:** Participants must currently be in removal proceedings.

3. **Question:** Is Spokane County intentionally left out of the list of target counties?

   Answer: ORIA unintentionally excluded Spokane County. DSHS updated the NOFO.

4. **Question:** On page 8, it states that "both public and private entities, including city and county governments and other organizations" can submit applications. However, the list of minimum criteria states that contract holders must be registered as a nonprofit. Can you clarify?

   Answer: Section 8. b. indicates all organizations (public or private) must <u>either</u> "be registered as a nonprofit charitable organization with a 501(c)3 status <u>or</u> have a federal employer tax identification number."

5. **Question:** Can you confirm the correct email address for proposal submission on page 13 (clever-ORIA@dshs.wa.gov or ORIAnofo@dshs.wa.gov)?

   Answer: Yes. The correct email address is ORIAnofo@dshs.wa.gov

6. **Question:** Several providers are operating emergency housing to shelter asylum seekers presently on grants that are going to expire in the next few months. Will ORIA take that in consideration when issuing awards to make sure asylum seeker families do not lose their current housing as local funds run out? Will ORIA expedite some awards to triage these situations? Thank you!

   Answer: ORIA anticipates prioritizing applications for emergency housing and make those contracts available soon.

7. **Question:** Can bidders submitting for the Hub component submit a budget in a format different than Attachment C to reflect budget requirements more accurately such as the development and implementation of a technology solution?

Answer: Yes, that would be acceptable if all the components are included, and it is easy to compare with other application submitted. You need to make sure the budget is clear and easy to understand.

8. **Question:** If a proposer is not a new contractor with DSHS, are they required to submit the New Contractor Intake Form as part of their proposal submission?

   Answer: All applicants must submit all documentation for their application to be considered complete.

9. **Question:** The NOFO states that "All applicants must submit a completed Cover Sheet with the minimum contents, which include all of the required acknowledgments and information." Is that where proposers should include information confirming that they meet each of the minimum qualifications outlined in Section 8 of the NOFO.

   Answer: While no single question asks for all the eligibility criteria, Bidders should include the information confirming the minimum qualifications within the answers to the various questions about experience.

10. **Question:** For proposers applying for the Hub component, will their bid still be eligible if, together with a subcontractor, their team fulfills all the minimum requirements (e.g., prime bidder does not have physical service location and space accessible to migrants, but their subcontractor does)?

    Answer: If the combined proposal meets all the requirements, DSHS will consider the application eligible for review by the evaluation panel.

11. **Question:** Attachment D: applicant narrative form section 2. there are two options small business and women owned business I am curious if we as a city under which category we would be if we apply for this funding opportunity?

    Answer: If it doesn't apply to your organization, please enter "Not Applicable" in that section.

12. **Question:** Information sharing is expected to be fluid across partner, is there a release of information or consent that clients would sign at the start of the journey?

    Answer: All organizations that enter a contract with DSHS to support the Washington Migrant and Asylum Seeker Support Project will need to follow clear confidentiality and data sharing protocols, including the following:

    - All contractor or subcontractor staff or volunteers will sign a DSHS 03-374D ESA Nondisclosure of Confidential Information Agreement.

    - Prepare a consent form ([DSHS 14-012](#)) for each participant who must sign the form. The form gives the Contractor and DSHS permission to share personal information as it relates to contracted services. This form can cover a period of more than a year. It is available in English and multiple languages. This form is available at the [Electronic DSHS Forms website](#).

13. **Question:** How do you fill out attachment D. no more than 25 pages but how should be the best way to fill this form? Should we keep questions and put answer, what is the correct way?

    Answer: Please respond to each question in the text box below the question.

14. **Question:** Section 3A Newcomer Reception and Navigation Hub of the NOFO indicates that "Services offered through the Hub will be available virtually and in-person, 24 hours a day, seven days a week." Can that expectation be met by having available Hub services either virtually or in-person 24/7, or are in-person resources and support expected to be available 24/7?

    Answer: That depends on the model proposed by each bidder. At a minimum, virtual services should be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If your organization can provide services in person 24/7 in person that would be great. DSHS is looking to build a system for the client to be able to contact the HUB immediately either in person, virtually, or over the phone.

15. **Question:** For the Hub component, can DSHS confirm that data should be accessible only to contractors selected as approved Spoke providers? Are any components of the Hub intended to be open to the public?

    Answer: The Newcomer Reception and Navigation Hub will be the central repository for all data captured through the Washington Migrant and Asylum Seeker Support Project. That data will be accessible to DSHS and other contracted service provider. No client data will be available and open to the public.

16. **Question:** If an organization is a subcontractor to serve as a satellite hub for the Hub project component, are they also eligible to apply as a Spoke provider?

    Answer: That depends on the model proposed and the geographic region. Organizations applying to serve as part of the Newcomer Reception and Navigation Hub should only apply for other spoke services if there is a gap in services in the geographic region.

17. **Question:** Can emergency shelter providers apply to serve only pregnant persons and families with children under 18? or must they also be able serve single individuals?

    Answer: The Washington Migrant and Asylum-Seeker Support Project prioritizes emergency shelter and other services for pregnant individuals, families with children under the age of 18, and people with significant medical conditions.

18. **Question:** Can case management providers utilize some of the rewarded funds for client support service costs not related to housing and immigration?

    Answer: Bidders should include reasonable costs within their budget proposals. Providing additional support services is not prohibited. Allowance for additional services will depend on the overall amount of funding available.

19. **Question:** Typically, emergency homeless shelters segment single adults and families. For shelters, can applicants apply to serve families specifically?

Answer: The Washington Migrant and Asylum-Seeker Support Project prioritizes emergency shelter and other services for pregnant individuals, families with children under the age of 18, and people with significant medical conditions.

20. **Question:** Is it possible for "spoke" organizations to partner together for a variety of services, such as legal & housing? Is it better to apply separately and state a desire to have a closer cooperative relationship, or should everything go through the hub?

    Answer: Applicants may be interested in applying for more than one service or applying as a consortium. DSHS is looking for organizations that can build and strengthen capacity to provide services quickly within a specific service area and geographic region. To do this effectively, DSHS recommend that applicants submit one application. All selected organizations will be expected to participate and collaborate with the hub and spoke organizations.

21. **Question:** Can referrals for legal services work both ways? For example, can we screen eligible individuals directly for immigration legal services and receive referrals from the Hub?

    Answer: The WA Migrant and Asylum-Seeker Support project will have a "no wrong door" policy and will accept referrals both ways. All services provided under this model will be connected back to the Newcomer Reception and Navigation Hub.

22. **Question:** Does ORIA have a target for the total number of migrants it hopes to serve through the HUB, or other "spokes" such as emergency housing, legal services, etc.?

    Answer: ORIA has information about projected numbers based on public benefits data, but we have not identified targets.

23. **Question:** Is there a maximum amount to request for each category of work to be done?

    Answer: Yes. In the notice of funding under the funding section on page 6, DSHS estimates the proposed range of funding for each section. ORIA anticipates investing approximately $20,000,000 through this notice of funding opportunity.

24. **Question:** The hub will collect all immigration documentation; do we have to collect (spoke) if the client does not go through the hub and goes directly to the provider do we refer to the hub? How does that work?

    Answer: All providers will be expected to collect intake information and immigration documentation to verify eligibility for the program.

25. **Question:** Can I provide video testimonials from our organization?

    Answer: Proposal evaluators will only evaluate materials that fit within the elements of the application and answer the specific questions.

26. **Question:** Is the HUB organization going to be selected first, and then inform who the other providers (such as housing, healthcare, services, etc.) will be selected? Does the HUB organization decide how different organizations selected for the grant will partner together?

    Answer: ORIA will be evaluating and considering all the organizations at the same time.

27. **Question:** Do the small business and MWBE extra points also not applicable to non-profit organizations, as non-profits don't have ownership? Or do majority women/minority led organizations count as MWBE?

    Answer: To qualify as a Washington small business, the applicant must meet three requirements:

    a. *Location.* Applicant's principal office/place of business must be located in and identified as being in the state of Washington. A principal office or principal place of business is a firm's headquarters where business decisions are made and the location for the firm's books and records as well as the firm's senior management personnel.
    b. *Size.* Applicant must be owned and operated independently from all other businesses and have either: (a) fifty (50) or fewer employees; or (b) gross revenue of less than seven million dollars ($7,000,000) annually as reported on Applicant's federal income tax return, or its return filed with the Washington State Department of Revenue over the previous three consecutive years.
    c. *Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises*. Is certified with Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises under Chapter 39.19 RCW.
    d. *WEBS Certification.* Applicant must have certified its Washington Small Business status in Washington's Electronic Business Solution (WEBS).

28. **Question:** Does ORIA have an estimated number of migrant/asylum-seekers that would be served in the first year? Is there available data of locations in WA state where these populations are currently living?

    Answer: ORIA does not currently have an estimated number of people to be served within the first year. Currently, there is no publicly available data of where these populations are living.

29. **Question:** If we are currently providing shelter and housing for asylum seekers and receive funding through this NOFO for these units, how will we coordinate information sharing and services for our clients?

    Answer: One of the questions on the narrative ask about other funding that you are potentially receiving and how you will leverage that information. We ask that you share in your response how you propose to coordinate these funds and provide services to clients. The intent is to be collaborative.

30. **Question:** Can one org. apply for housing including all that applies to housing, and also apply for legal services? If yes, should it be 2 different applications?

    Answer: Organizations can only submit one application. While it is possible to submit one application for multiple services, ORIA is recommending that organizations submit the strongest service that can quickly be established to meet the need. While organizations may apply for multiple services, ORIA may only fund one service in your proposal.

31. **Question:** Is there an expectation that the Hub and the lead organization for immigration legal services will share a database for making and scheduling referrals? If we decide to apply as the lead immigration organization, we are wondering if we should set aside funding for a database that can communicate with the Hub.

    Answer: There is an expectation that all legal services providers will share a schedule to assist with making referrals. The lead immigration organization may be able to share a database with the Hub. Please include all recommendations in your proposal for discussion in collaboration with contract negotiations.

32. **Question:** Is it possible for an organization to apply to be the central hub as well as an organization to provide services?

    Answer: No. The Hub should focus on providing the Reception and Navigation Services.

33. **Question:** Will you select one provider or multiple for legal services?

    Answer: DSHS ORIA is looking to fund multiple providers for immigration-related legal services and one lead organization to conduct an immigration needs assessment and scheduling and referral system.

34. **Question:** Attachment E Contractor Intake Form requests additional attachments. Should the application combine those additional attachments with attachment E to submit as a single document, or should those attachments be submitted as separate documents in the application email?

    Answer: Organizations may submit the documents as one attachment or individual files.

35. **Question:** Can you say more about what ORIA hopes the geographic distribution of services will look like? E.g., do you expect a larger number of services in the I-5 Corridor vs. central or E. WA?

    Answer: DSHS ORIA is looking for a geographic diversity to support migrants and asylum-seekers across the state. Based on historical and public benefits data, would expect that Puget Sound region would receive a higher concentration or percentage of the funding.

36. **Question:** The application asks us to list specific locations of where we propose to offer services. If we have some shelter and housing sites that have not yet been acquired, can we just list the number of units and the potential area where they will be located?

    Answer: Yes, DSHS recommends that your organization include in your proposal the timeline that it will take you to acquire the housing sites.

37. **Question:** Can we say we want to serve specific language groups?

    Answer: Organizations may articulate their success in providing culturally responsive and linguistically appropriate services to a specific culture or community.

38. **Question:** Section 3G of the Applicant Narrative Form requests the following, "Briefly describe the experience, qualifications, and the roles and responsibilities of all staff (or proposed staff). Please include all direct client service, administrative and supervisory staff and indicate the proposed FTE for

each employee." For economy of space in our proposal, can this section include experience and qualifications from key personnel from our team and our subconsultants as opposed to all staff who would provide services for our proposed project component? We will be sure to include all staff and their proposed FTE as requested in the budget (Attachment C).

Answer: Yes, that would be acceptable.

39. **Question:** Are subcontracted satellite hubs eligible to apply to provide spoke services as well?

    Answer: That depends on the model proposed and the geographic region. Organizations applying to serve as part of the Newcomer Reception and Navigation Hub should only apply for other spoke services if there is a gap in services in the geographic region.

40. **Question:** Since there will be one lead organization for immigration-related legal services, could the Hub agency or a subcontracted satellite hub agency also serve as one of the other legal service providers offering legal orientation, education, and direct client assistance?

    Answer: That depends on the model proposed and the geographic region. Organizations applying to serve as part of the Newcomer Reception and Navigation Hub should only apply for other spoke services if there is a gap in services in the geographic region.

41. **Question:** Since an agency can submit only one application, can the application contain multiple scattered sites for shelter and housing?

    Answer: Yes.

42. **Question:** Can funding be used to continue use of an existing hotel or housing where subsidies are running out?

    Answer: It may be possible.

43. **Question:** Will applications be judged on cost effectiveness like per unit cost?

    Answer: Cost effectiveness will be considered in evaluation and awarding of contracts.

44. **Question:** How will households be referred to the shelters & housing?

    Answer: The Washington Migrant and Asylum-Seeker Support Project will utilize a "no wrong door" approach to helping people get access to the services needed. Most referrals will come from the Newcomer Reception and Navigation Hub, but others may be direct referrals. All referrals must meet eligibility criteria and be approved by DSHS.

45. **Question:** If not enough agencies propose leasing hotels for emergency stays how would you ensure a sufficient number of beds will be available?

Answer: DSHS ORIA continues to partner with many jurisdictions and organizations to establish a coordinated system to provide shelter for people who qualify for services and who meet the prioritization criteria.

46. **Question:** Who will match up shelters/housing resources with providers of culturally responsive case management services?

    Answer: DSHS will work with the Newcomer Navigation and Resource Hub to establish a system for ensuring all program participants are connected to case management services.

47. **Question:** Who will match up people in the shelters/housing with legal assistance?

    Answer: All selected partners will participate in a coalition of organizations to ensure effective coordination across all spoke sectors.

48. **Question:** Is the intent of ORIA to seek funding in the next legislative session to continue the program? Or do we have to include plans at the end of the year to shut down programs and lay off staff and exit people from housing? Should those costs be included in the budgets?

    Answer: The Washington State Legislature has provided funding for State Fiscal Year 2025. All contracts will terminate on June 30, 2025, unless additional funding is appropriated by the legislature.

49. **Question:** Will an electronic signature be accepted for the submission of the NOFO documents?

    Answer: Yes. However, DSHS experiences technical challenges accepting documents with DocuSign. Please use Adobe Acrobat PDF versions.

50. **Question:** Would ORIA please confirm the request in 1a is to identify only those who were previously Washington state employees that would have a proposed role in providing services under a contract awarded through this project?

    Answer: No. Please list all former state employees.

51. **Question:** Would ORIA please confirm what the awarded contract type will be (e.g. time and materials, firm fixed price, etc)?

    Answer: Selected bidders will receive a client services contract that is cost-reimbursement and performance-based.

52. **Question:** How many in person hub/centers are expected, and can these be with existing resettlement partners?

    Answer: This depends on the model proposed and the understanding of the existing landscape of services and capacity within those community partners.

53. **Question:** Would ORIA consider having pop-up in-person centers?

    Answer: Yes.

54. **Question:** Can in-person centers be regular business hours with 24 x 7 for virtual contact centers?

    Answer: Yes, that could be a model.

55. **Question:** Per the conference, it was mentioned that go-live is expected to be 8/1/2024. Will you confirm this is a 30-day transition in for services?

    Answer: ORIA expects contracts to be executed by Aug. 1, 2024. Services may require additional timing to be implemented.