

**Response to Questions: PDG B-5 RFP - Updated**

RFP #PDGB52019

Question	Answer
A “final clean dataset” is a deliverable under Component I but not Component II. Is this intentional, or is the dataset also a deliverable for Component II?	A final dataset is also a deliverable for Component 2 and falls under the Task #7 “Final Reports Delivered to DHS”
Could the State please provide access to Rhode Island’s successful PDG B-5 application for vendors to review?	Yes, please find the PDG B-5 application at this link: <a href="http://www.kids.ri.gov/documents/PDG%20B-5%20Grant%20Narrative.pdf">http://www.kids.ri.gov/documents/PDG%20B-5%20Grant%20Narrative.pdf</a> .
Could the State please provide guidance on the level of effort for each of the Components?	The level of effort is dependent on the effort necessary to coordinate and complete the list of deliverables required under each component. Also please refer to the evaluation section of each component for more guidance on the scoring of the applications.
Could the State please confirm that a Time and Materials (T&M) budget is acceptable?	The State requires a firm fixed price for the delivery of these services using the budget form provided in the RFP.
The 10% cap on indirect rates shown in Appendix B would preclude many professional services firms from bidding on this requirement. Would the State be willing to waive their “not to exceed” 10% cap on indirect rates shown in the form? Or, assuming a T&M budget is acceptable, would the State accept a T&M budget with indirect rates included in the labor rates?	DHS does not negotiate indirect cost rates. If a vendor does not have a federally recognized indirect cost rate, the entity may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC).

<p>Question Re: <u>Component V, Section V.3, Bullet 4</u>: Collaborate with other PD and TA work in the B-5 system, including but not limited to the other PDG PDTA. It is unclear what the expectation for cross agency coordination is for PDTA. Is there any guidance for how partner agencies should be collaborating (combined on-site T/A, weekly/monthly coordination meetings, case management, etc.) or is it assumed that coordination will operate as is and is on the onus of each individual agency? If the former, who will be coordinating this effort?</p>	<p>Cross agency coordination will be facilitated by the Preschool Development Grant Manager at the Department of Human Services. Individual agencies are encouraged to institute collaborative practice among partners independently; however, a more guided facilitated process will be developed upon awarding contracts.</p>
<p>Can the state provide definitions of professional development, technical assistance and coaching as related to this RFP?</p>	<p><u>Professional Development</u>: a continuum of learning and support activities designed to prepare individuals for work with and on behalf of young children and their families, as well as ongoing experiences to enhance this work.  <u>Technical Assistance</u>: non-financial assistance which may include sharing information and expertise, instruction, skills training, transmission of working knowledge, and consulting services.  <u>Coaching</u>: an interactive process of observation, discussion, and reflection in which the coach promotes the other person's ability to grow toward identified goals.</p>
<p>Component IV.3 refers to creating “lab experiences” for the entering workforce. Can the state define “lab experiences”?</p>	<p>“Lab experiences” can be defined by the applicant/bidder. State envisions lab experiences to include opportunities for students to observe and facilitate teaching experiences while engaged in coursework. Lab experiences can also include on-site coaching and modeling for the existing ECE workforce who aim to improve their practice.</p>

<p>Section IV.2 indicates that the Vendor should build upon the existing framework of professional development and technical assistance, can the State clarify who is delivering on the existing framework referenced?</p>	<p>Currently, both RI Department of Education and DHS contract with EDC, the Center for Early Learning Professionals, to operate as the Professional Development and Technical Assistance Hub for the early learning workforce in Rhode Island. RIDOH currently oversees all Professional Development and Technical Assistance activities for RIDOH programs.</p>
<p>In Component V., when the RFP references Early Learning Providers, is that specific to early childhood education centers only?</p>	<p>No. State defines Early Learning Providers as all members of the early learning workforce, including family child care providers and home visitors delivering curriculum and services to the B-5 population in Rhode Island.</p>
<p>Is a formal evaluation required in any of the Components?</p>	<p>Please refer to the scopes of work for each component for the responsibilities of the Component vendor in relation to evaluation. We will be developing and implementing an overall evaluation to ensure that children B-5 have the services and support they need to enter school educationally and developmentally ready to succeed. We also intend to have active contract management across all of the PDG B-5 activities to ensure that all vendors execute the initiatives in each component with excellence.</p>
<p>Vendors currently providing PDTA services through DHS contracts have recently responded to a survey indicating intent to bid on the next iteration of the PDTA system. Does the release of the RFP #PDGB52019 supplant DHS' plan to issue an RFP for the PDTA system? If not, how does the work identified in RFP #PDGB52019 intersect with the current PDTA system for the ECE community (Family Child Care, Centers, Head Start, Pre-K)?</p>	<p>No. These are separate funding streams, and bodies of work. The Preschool Development Grant is a one-time award which complements the existing PDTA system in Rhode Island.</p>
<p>Does the state intend to issue a separate RFP for PDTA services to the State Pre-K program?</p>	<p>A separate PD/TA RFP for State Pre-K may be released, but is not planned at this time.</p>

<p>Can the State share the amounts available for each component of the RFP?</p>	<p>Total anticipated budget ranges are listed below by Component. These ranges are subject to State revision.</p> <p>Component I: \$150,000-\$200,000  Component II: \$200,000-\$300,000  Component III: \$400,000-\$550,000  Component IV: \$200,000-\$300,000  Component V: \$200,000-\$300,000  Component VI: \$150,000-\$200,000  Component VII: \$650,000-\$750,000  Component VIII: \$30,000-\$50,000</p>
<p>In the Background section of Component VI, the RFP reads “the state may award more than one Vendor in this component to meet the needs of multiple target populations.” Does that imply that a vendor can submit a proposal for services to certain populations only? If yes, will proposals for services to the entire B-5 workforce score a higher number of technical points?</p>	<p>Yes, a vendor can submit a proposal for services that serve a certain target population. These will be scored on the same evaluation criteria set out in the RFP.</p>
<p>Is the ISBE for Rhode Island vendors only? Are Rhode Island vendors privileged?</p>	<p>Federal rules prohibit preferences for vendors based on location of home office. Please contact the Office of Diversity Equity and Opportunity for more information about ISBE.</p>
<p>Is there a limit on the number or length of appendices?</p>	<p>There is no limit.</p>
<p>Is it correct that the contract period will begin approximately March 15, 2019 and end 10 months later on January 15, 2020, with the possibility that the contract will be extended?</p>	<p>That is correct. The PDG is federally funded by Administration for Children and Families (ACF) for one year. Should ACF extend the grant period, contract extensions may be issued depending upon the vendor’s statement of work, etc.</p>
<p>The RFP says the contract is over 8 months, however the contract will begin approximately March 15, 2019 and the final report is due September 1, 2019; allowing for only 5.5 months. Which is correct?</p>	<p>The September 1, 2019 final report is a tentative target date included in the State’s grant proposal. We anticipate that the Component III vendor will plan to meet that deadline and continue work as defined in the scope of work beyond that deadline as needed up until the completion of grant period.</p>

Page 1 of the RFP states ‘This contract is NOT a state bid.’ Could the state elaborate on what this means?	This is a Request for Proposals, not a Request for Quotes. Responses will be evaluated on the basis of the relative merits of the proposal, in addition to cost; there will be no public opening and reading of responses received by the Department of Human Services pursuant to this solicitation, other than to name those offerors who have submitted proposals.
Does the State intend to issue a firm and fixed price contract for each component?	Yes.
Is the resulting contract considered a federal subaward in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200.92 - Subaward or is it considered a federal contract in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200.22 - Contract?	The resulting contracts are considered federal sub-awards.
If it is considered a Contract, is it permissible to use daily consulting rates that are inclusive of all costs such as federally approved GSA rates?	It is considered a federal sub-award.
Is it correct that submissions for each component, even if submitting for multiple components, should include a technical narrative, budget, and budget narrative?	That is correct. Each Component submitted will need its own technical proposal and cost proposal.
In addition to the components in the RFP, is the State looking for an outside evaluator?	No. The EOHHS Data Analytics team will lead the evaluation.
Assuming we want to survey each of these 7 subgroups in the target population, how many people total and in each target population do we expect to survey? Please provide guidelines around required sample sizes.	We anticipate that the sample size should be substantial enough to fulfill the goals of the study and follow any best practices for population level research. Please note that there are approximately 72,000 children ages 0-5 in Rhode Island.

<p>Please clarify the timeline for the needs assessments and other activities. What is required to finish within the 6 months? Are activities overlapping?</p>	<p>Please refer to the tentative timelines and key dates listed in the RFP. Activities are overlapping in timeline and the State will facilitate coordination among vendors to ensure relevant workstreams, data, and other activities are aligned and shared as needed. To better understand the timelines, please refer to the State’s PDG application at <a href="http://www.kids.ri.gov/documents/PDG%20B-5%20Grant%20Narrative.pdf">http://www.kids.ri.gov/documents/PDG%20B-5%20Grant%20Narrative.pdf</a>.</p>
<p>There is no ISBE designation for non-profits. Is there any way for non-profits to achieve the 6 bonus points?</p>	<p>No. Please reach out to Office of Diversity Equity and Opportunity for further questions on ISBE designation.</p>
<p>Can the State clarify the funding allocation or anticipated budgets for each of the components?</p>	<p>Total anticipated budget ranges are listed below by Component. These ranges are subject to State revision.  Component I: \$150,000-\$200,000  Component II: \$200,000-\$300,000  Component III: \$400,000-\$550,000  Component IV: \$200,000-\$300,000  Component V: \$200,000-\$300,000  Component VI: \$150,000-\$200,000  Component VII: \$650,000-\$750,000  Component VIII: \$30,000-\$50,000</p>
<p>For Component II, for the groups/consultants who want to help with the vendor that gets this contract, is there a way to apply to be a facilitator or to participate if you do not want to be the primary vendor?</p>	<p>As noted in the scope of work, the vendor will engage stakeholders in designing the assessment. The State is also dedicated to ensuring that the PDG B-5 grant activities are in partnership with the community. Opportunities will be made available for input and partnership.</p>
<p>For Component III, usually the development of strategic plans are coordinated with the leadership of the various state agencies involved. Is this required with this process?</p>	<p>Yes, the leadership of all agencies involved with the State’s B-5 system will be engaged in the strategic planning process.</p>

For Component III, are there other materials or reports related to blended funding and other strategic planning within the state of Rhode Island that you can share? National models for blended funding would also be helpful.	Links to existing strategic plans related to the B-5 space in RI can be found on page 23 of the RPF (Link: <a href="http://www.purchasing.ri.gov/RIVIP/ExternalBids/Grants/RIDHSBids/PDGB52019.pdf">http://www.purchasing.ri.gov/RIVIP/ExternalBids/Grants/RIDHSBids/PDGB52019.pdf</a> .)
Many of the RFP Components are synergistic with each other. Would the State hope to bring together vendors of different components to ensure synergy?	Yes, the State intends to ensure collaboration and coordination among all PDG B-5 activities as well as other activities in the B-5 space.
For Component IV, do you identify slots as an outcome, or just number of providers?	Please refer to page 30 of the RFP for key deliverables.
For Component V, if multiple vendors are selected, is there is a vision for how the vendors and existing vendors will coordinate?	The State intends to facilitate the cross-agency collaboration and expects vendors to allocate appropriate time to collaborate with other agencies and with non-PDG B-5 initiatives/agencies conducting aligned work in the B-5 space.
For Component V, please clarify the metrics around “additional slots available.”	This is a potential metric if a vendor proposes PDTA that would support the addition of slots - (see p.34 of the RFP).
For Component V, how far along will the evaluation component come in?	Please refer to the timelines in the RFP. As noted on page 35, vendors will be expected to conduct regular assessments of the impact of supports to guide their work.
For Component V and VI, how will budgets be shared if several vendors are awarded?	The State will engage with qualified vendors to determine the final budget amounts.
How can vendors demonstrate leveraged funding, or match funding? How should this be shown in the submitted budget?	Please include in the technical proposal narrative.
How does the PDTA RFI released by DHS and the RFP for PDG B-5 relate?	These are separate funding streams, and bodies of work. The Preschool Development Grant is a one-time award which complements the existing PDTA system in Rhode Island, mainly delivered by the Center for Early Learning

	Professionals, run by the Education Development Center (EDC).
Is it under the purview of DHS to coordinate the PD contracts and other contracts?	DHS, as well as a PDG Grant Manager, will be coordinating all contracts related to the grant.
For Component VII, is this component just to plan the data system, or to also build the system?	Component VII involves both planning for the data system and implementation of the plan. Note that there is already a system in place so it would be to plan out new requirements and then add/modify functionality of the existing system.
For Component VIII, is there a vision for number of organizations that might be awarded?	The number of organizations that would be awarded and overseen by the vendor for Component VIII will be determined by the grant criteria that will be developed as part of the scope of work. However, the State estimates that approximately 4-5 organizations could receive awards managed by the vendor, but this is subject to change.
For Component VIII, the work seems contingent on the family needs assessment. How does the timeline work? Should we get started on this component before we have the results?	Component VIII focuses on piloting and evaluating programming to support families of target populations. We intend to pair the lessons learned from Component VIII with the outcomes of Component I to support future decisions.
For Component VIII, the vendor applying for these funds should not be one who will actually provide services to parents/families, is this correct?	The intention is for the vendor to primarily facilitate awards to other organizations.
For Component VIII, what kind of expertise are you looking for in a vendor for this component?	The vendor should have experience with development, selection, management, and oversight of grant recipients as well as experience with financial management of State or Federal funding.
The timelines seem overlapping. Is there any flexibility to change the timeline?	The timeline for the grant activities was approved by the Federal government. Vendors may propose timelines in their work plans but are encouraged to align with the key dates. The

	State may seek a no cost extension from the federal government later in 2019.
Performance Evaluation: Is there a separate evaluation component that will be released in an RFP?	The EOHHS Data Analytics team will lead the evaluation.
If an organization does not have an ISBE and are not subcontracting through another organization, do we need a waiver?	No
On page 56, on technical proposal/cost proposal. Why do we need to submit a CDR that says “technical proposal, original proposal”?	Due to security protocols for the State, we ask for CD-Rs for electronic submission.
On page 57, in 2 different locations they talk about formatting. What is on the cover page? Is this different than the RIV page?	The RIVIP Bidder Certification Cover Form is a part of the bid package. Sign in with your vendor number and password under 'Vendor Center', then access the bid or RFP. The cover form will be the first several pages of document. The cover form referenced in the RFP document is this form. However, if you submit a proposal with an additional cover form, it will not be included in the numbering.
Where will the answers to the questions be posted?	They will be posted on the DHS Website, Children’s Cabinet website, and Purchasing website.
Will the questions be posted on the Purchasing/Other solicitations website?	Yes.
Page 5, Instructions and Notifications to Offerors #6 states that all pricing submitted will be considered to be firm and fixed unless otherwise indicated in the proposal. Appendix B Budget Form provides a grant or cost reimbursement type format. Please clarify what contract type the State is expecting to issue to the successful offerors (e.g. firm fixed price	The State requests a firm fixed price for the delivery of these services. Please use the appropriate Appendix form to submit the cost proposal.

<p>with payment based on completed deliverable).</p>	
<p>Can fee/profit be included in offeror’s pricing? If so, should offeror’s add a line under Total Costs on Appendix B Budget Form?</p>	<p>No. Please use the appropriate Appendix form to submit the cost proposal.</p>
<p>Will the State allow exceptions or alternate language to be proposed to the General Conditions of Purchase?</p>	<p>General Conditions of Purchase are not negotiable.</p>
<p>Will the State accept fixed inclusive rates for each category in Appendix B Budget Form? The fixed inclusive rate would include all direct labor, other direct costs, materials, and the Contractors Government approved indirect rates. Our federal approved indirect rates are company proprietary and disclosure of which will put us at a competitive disadvantage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● If the state will not accept fixed inclusive rates for each category in Appendix B Budget, Form, can the state define "Indirect/Administrative Costs"?</li> <li>● Does the 10% cap on indirects apply to contractors with federal approved indirects?</li> </ul>	<p>DHS does not negotiate indirect cost rates. If a vendor does not have a federally recognized indirect cost rate, the entity may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC).</p>
<p>The Component IV (for the FCC network) states that the grantee will work in partnership with SEIU 1199. Is that a union? And what is the expectation of the partnership?</p>	<p>SEIU 1199 is a union representing Family Child Care providers who serve CCAP children in the state of RI. The nature of the partnership will be to collaborate on development of the program, delivery of supports and services, and leveraging assets to best support providers in a coordinated system of professional development.</p>
<p>Does the Funds allow to pay the 3-4 FCC “ambassadors” a stipend as an incentive for serving as an ambassador?</p>	<p>Yes. All anticipated expenses should be detailed in your proposed budget.</p>

<p>Component I: Is there a deliverable associated with compiling the secondary data required on Page 9? If so, can DHS please describe the deliverable?</p>	<p>Bidders are encouraged to include all anticipated interim and final deliverables in their work plans. Compiling secondary data could result in an interim report and build understanding of gaps in knowledge and research.</p>
<p>Component I: In some cases, providing incentives to survey participants may help increase response rates. Are incentives permissible under this contract?</p>	<p>Yes. All anticipated expenses should be detailed in your proposed budget.</p>
<p>Component I: Page 11 asks for client references. How many client references does DHS require?</p>	<p>At least one, but more would be preferable.</p>
<p>Component I: Page 9 of the RFP indicates that the “consultant will also be prepared to support participating families in identifying and connecting with resources as possible.” Can DHS provide more information on what is expected of the consultant?</p>	<p>While we seek to learn more about families’ needs, we hope to use this engagement with families as an opportunity to also share information about available resources. We do not expect the vendor to be a resource or referral service, but we do expect that, should questions arise during conversations, the vendor is prepared to connect families to the Department or PDG Team so we can support follow-up as needed.</p>
<p>Component I: Page 9 of the RFP indicates that vendors are required to “participate in PDG B-5 related activities, including but not limited to the Strategic Planning data sessions, quarterly all-PDG vendor meetings and leadership meetings as needed.” Can DHS identify which of the meetings the vendor would be expected to participate in person?</p>	<p>We anticipate that at least 1 meeting per month will be in person.</p>
<p>Component I: Page 9 notes that “The consultant will develop plans to assess needs on a community and regional level.” Do findings need to be statistically representative at the community level, regional level or both?</p>	<p>Identifying regions and communities will be part of the planning process. However, a good model for identifying regions is used in the RI KIDS COUNT Factbook. Vendors should be prepared to capture data based on location.</p>

<p>Can DHS provide listings of regions and communities or provide the definition that DHS uses to identify regions and communities?</p>	
<p>Component I: Is this a fixed price or T&amp;M type contract?</p>	<p>The State requires a firm fixed price for the delivery of these services using the budget form provided in the RFP.</p>
<p>Component II: Does DHS maintain an updated early childhood workforce registry of staff who work in early childhood programs? If so, can DHS provide a summary of the data elements that could be extracted from the registry to inform the workforce needs assessment?</p>	<p>ECEDS (Early Care and Education Data System) has the ability to collect workforce information but is not a requirement. There is some data available based on a registry of users who have created accounts.</p>
<p>Component II: Do any of the early childhood data systems used by DHS – e.g., child care licensing system, data system – collect data on the teachers who work in early childhood programs that could be used to link individual teachers with licensed child care programs or classrooms?</p>	<p>ECEDS (Early Care and Education Data System) has the ability to collect workforce information but is not a requirement. The program portal has a section where classrooms are defined along with the teacher.</p>
<p>Component II: Page 18 indicates that vendors are required “participate in PDG B-5 related activities, including but not limited to the Strategic Planning data sessions, quarterly all-PDG vendor meetings and Leadership meetings as needed.” Can DHS identify which of the meetings the vendor would be expected to participate in person?</p>	<p>We anticipate that at least 1 meeting per month will be in person.</p>
<p>Component II: Is it expected that the vendor team will deliver the presentation for deliverable (4-b) in person?</p>	<p>We anticipate that a vendor would deliver the presentation at least once in person.</p>
<p>Component II: Is this a fixed price or T&amp;M type contract?</p>	<p>The State requires a firm fixed price for the delivery of these services using the budget form provided in the RFP.</p>

<p>Component VII: What state agencies or external vendors are currently responsible for maintaining and enhancing each of the current early childhood data systems, including: (1) the Early Care and Education Data System, (2) the Department of Education’s PK-12 Longitudinal Data System, (3) KIDSNET data system, (4) the EOHHS Data Ecosystem, and (5) early childhood workforce registry?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) ECEDS is currently maintained by RIDE.</li> <li>(2) Also maintained by RIDE</li> <li>(3) KIDSNET is maintained by RIDOH, and contracts with HLN.</li> <li>(4) The EOHHS Data Ecosystem is maintained by EOHHS. EOHHS also maintains Welligent, which is the data system for EI.</li> <li>(5) The early childhood workforce registry is a component of ECEDS</li> </ul>
<p>Component VII: On page 46, under Key deliverables, the RFP states that “Pending budget and upon mutual agreement, development and implementation of the near-term elements defined in the data system strategic plan.” Can DHS clarify whether this means that a subsequent budget would be developed to allow the vendor to implement the proposed changes or would the implementation of the changes need to be covered by the budget submitted in the original RFP response?</p>	<p>The implementation of initial changes would be covered by the original RFP response.</p>
<p>Component VII: Is this a fixed price or T&amp;M type contract?</p>	<p>The State requires a firm fixed price for the delivery of these services using the budget form provided in the RFP.</p>
<p>Component VII: For Web Applications Development, what security requirements or access requirements are there for outside contractors to work on <a href="http://Exceed.RI.gov">Exceed.RI.gov</a>?</p>	<p>Contractors would need to sign an agreement with the State that specifies data use, including but not limited to data distribution and security. Contractors will also need to sign an agreement regarding usage of the VPN.</p>
<p>For Component I, should the vendor plan on providing needs assessment materials in multiple languages? If so, which languages would RI like to be reflected in the materials?</p>	<p>Yes. English and Spanish would be expected at a minimum.</p>

For Component II, the scope of work includes arranging for translation and/or interpreter services. Which languages does RI expect to be included in this component?	English and Spanish would be expected at a minimum.
Is a recording of the Pre-Bid/Proposal Conference available for review for individuals who were unable to attend?	All questions asked at the bidder's conference have been included in these question and answers. Please contact <a href="mailto:kayla.rosen@ohhs.ri.gov">kayla.rosen@ohhs.ri.gov</a> for the recording.

Additional Responses to Formatting & Submission Questions – 2/27/19

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Responses</b>
When I pull up the RFP, there is only a one-page information cover sheet at the top of the RFP document (see attached). Is this the Bidder Certification Cover Form and the form we should submit with each component's proposal?	Please refer to the original RFP document for all formatting and submission criteria. Re the cover page, the external posting site has a different cover form from the central state purchasing site. One page is correct.
If we are not using any subcontractors, or not using a MBE/WBE subcontractor how do we complete and submit Appendix A? The FAQ response to our question said we did not have to file a waiver. However, I did not want to omit filing Appendix A as it appears to be a required element. For other bids, we have completed it, had it signed and in the section for the subcontractor information, simply written, not applicable. Is this an appropriate procedure for this RFP?	Please refer to the original RFP document for all formatting and submission criteria. Please note that this RFP process is the same as all State procurement processes, so submission formatting will not differ from other prior bids.
We are writing to respectfully ask if you would consider extending the submission time for a week.	Due to our federally approved timelines in the PDG Grant, we are unfortunately not able to extend the RFP response date.