

New York State Department of Health  
AIDS Institute  
*Center for Program Development, Implementation, Research and Evaluation*

**Request for Applications (RFA)**  
**SFS #s: REGA2026 (Component A), REGB2026 (Component B)**

**SFS Event Names: RFA #20721: Research and Evaluation Grants - CompA**  
**RFA #20721: Research and Evaluation Grants - CompB**

**Research and Evaluation Grants**  
**RFA #20721 / Internal Program #24-0005**

This is a procurement which encompasses (2) Components.

*Component A: Research and Evaluation Mini Grants*

*Component B: Inform and Scale-up Intervention to Increase HIV Pre-Exposure  
Prophylaxis Uptake*

**In order to apply for this Request for Applications, eligible applicants must be prequalified in the Statewide Financial System and must submit an application via the Statewide Financial System.**

**KEY DATES**

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|---|--|
| <b>Release Date:</b>  | <b>November 13, 2025</b>               |
| <b>Questions Due:</b>                                       | <b>December 3, 2025, by 4:00 PM ET</b> |
| <b>Questions, Answers and Updates Posted: (on or about)</b> | <b>December 17, 2025</b>               |
| <b>Applications Due:</b>                                    | <b>January 14, 2026, by 4:00 PM ET</b> |

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**IMPORTANT – PLEASE NOTE: Applications MUST be submitted in the Statewide Financial System as one (1) complete PDF document including the Application and all required Attachments in response to Bid Factor Question 01.**

Applicants may apply for each Component of the Request for Applications. Organizations may submit more than one (1) application for each Component in response to this Request for Applications. However, Component A applications must each include a different Principal Investigator and Component B applications must each include a different Principal Investigator and intervention. If more than one (1) application is submitted by the same Principal Investigator in each Component in response to this Request for Applications, the first application that is received will be reviewed and considered for funding. All other applications will be rejected.

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# I. Introduction

The New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute (AIDS Institute), Center for Program Development, Implementation, Research and Evaluation announces the availability of New York State funds to provide research and evaluation support to bring understanding to the research and evaluation questions described in the [New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute's Research Agenda](#) and to inform and scale-up evidence-based interventions to increase HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) uptake among Black and Brown communities in New York State. The intent of the Request for Applications is to fund \$575,000 **annually** for three (3) years.

## A. Background/Intent

The Request for Applications focuses on addressing prioritized research and program evaluation questions to inform AIDS Institute programming, practice, and policy and to increase pre-exposure prophylaxis uptake in communities of color. The purpose of this funding is to identify organizations to serve as contractors and conduct research and evaluation projects in response to questions guided by the AIDS Institute. These research and evaluation projects will advance progress towards ending AIDS as an epidemic in New York State and to support the AIDS Institute's mission to build upon a foundation of health equity to prevent new infections, improve the health and well-being of persons living with HIV, sexually transmitted infections, and hepatitis C, and improve lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender health, and drug user health.

The AIDS Institute is committed to ensuring funded programs and partners are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and expertise to adequately address health equity and the social determinants of health. Health equity means everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be healthy, where no one is limited in achieving optimal health because of who they are or where they live. In a world where health equity is the norm, everyone has fair and just access to these conditions, and therefore, has a fair and just opportunity to achieve optimal health. The social determinants of health include socioeconomic status, education, employment, housing, transportation, food/nutrition, health literacy, social supports, and stigma/discrimination.

The AIDS Institute is also committed to the implementation of new and tailored approaches to address the challenges faced by communities with a disproportionate burden of disease, including people who use drugs and the LGBTQ+ community, Black/Brown, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, and all people impacted by HIV, Hepatitis C, and sexually transmitted infections. Programs are expected to deliver services in accordance with the following health equity principles:

- Be explicit when identifying targeted communities and populations facing inequities.
- Identify evidence-based, tailored solutions and approaches.
- Create an internal organization-wide culture of equity.
- Respect and involve impacted communities.
- Measure and evaluate progress in reducing health disparities

In January 2022, the AIDS Institute completed development of the [New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute's Research Agenda](#). The Research Agenda was developed to further a commitment to innovative, mission-driven research and is comprised of research and program evaluation activities. It prioritizes questions and knowledge gaps within the focus areas of the

New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute: HIV, hepatitis C, sexually transmitted infections, drug user health, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender health, and cross-cutting issues identified as New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute priorities including achieving health equity. The New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute has commissioned three (3) rounds of research and evaluation mini-grants. The first two (2) rounds were designed to address Ending the Epidemic-related knowledge gaps and more closely align the research and HIV prevention and health care provider communities. The most recent round, in 2022-2023, supported the AIDS Institute's Research Agenda. This Request for Applications also seeks to address research and evaluation knowledge gaps identified in the 2022-2024 Research Agenda and by the AIDS Institute through future Research Agendas.

To further data-driven programming in support of Ending the Epidemic goals, this Request for Applications also seeks to address disparities in HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis uptake in communities of color through scale-up of an established intervention. There are pronounced disparities in HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis uptake specifically among non-Hispanic Black and Hispanic populations, among women, and at the intersection of these groups as compared to their non-Hispanic white counterparts. For example, nearly 60% of all New Yorkers on HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis in 2021 were non-Hispanic white males (n=25,807), a group that has already exceeded its 2030 HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis target by 7,000 persons. In contrast, the percentage of 2030 HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis target achieved by non-Hispanic Black males (21%), non-Hispanic Black females (10%), Hispanic males (20%) and Hispanic females (7%) was just a fraction of that realized by non-Hispanic white males (161%). In fact, less than 14,000 Black and Brown persons were on HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis in New York State in 2021, representing just 18% of the 2030 HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis target of 75,000 for these groups. Moreover, this disparity has likely been exacerbated by the differential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Black and Brown communities. New initiation of HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis decreased far more among non-Hispanic Black and Hispanic individuals during the first six months of the COVID-19 pandemic in New York State than it did for non-Hispanic white individuals.<sup>1</sup> There are many barriers to PrEP uptake, including patient awareness, individual perceived risk or need for PrEP, and healthcare providers' attitudes towards PrEP. However, several evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions have shown success at improving PrEP uptake and may be leveraged through this Request for Applications to scale-up interventions to reach communities of color within New York State.<sup>2</sup>

In June 2014, New York State announced a three-point plan to end the AIDS epidemic in New York State.<sup>3</sup> This plan provided a roadmap to significantly reduce HIV infections to a historic low by the end of 2020, with the goal of achieving the first ever decrease in HIV prevalence. The plan also aimed to improve the health of all HIV positive New Yorkers and was the first jurisdictional effort of its kind in the U.S. The three points highlighted in the plan are:

- 1) Identify persons with HIV who remain undiagnosed and get them linked to care;
- 2) Link and retain persons diagnosed with HIV in health care to maximize viral suppression; and

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<sup>1</sup> O'Grady TJ, Tesoriero JM, Yuan Y, et al. Evaluation of Trends in Preexposure Prophylaxis Prescriptions During the First 6 Months of the COVID-19 Pandemic in New York State. *JAMA Netw Open*. 2022;5(3):e224065. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.4065

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/HIV/Compendium/SearchInterventions>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/ending\\_the\\_epidemic/index.htm](https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/ending_the_epidemic/index.htm)

### 3) Increase access to pre-exposure prophylaxis for persons who are HIV negative.

New York State was on track to end the epidemic by the end of 2020, achieving the state's first-ever decrease in HIV prevalence in 2019. However, the State and providers on the frontline spent the majority of 2020 and early 2021 responding to an unprecedented pandemic. Providers adapted to the new landscape and found innovative ways to deliver services and support clients. Still, the public health emergency has delayed the achievement of End the Epidemic goals. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been increases in HIV cases in certain parts of the state, significant reductions in HIV testing and reporting of diagnoses, and decreases in the number of persons accessing pre-exposure prophylaxis. Persistent challenges remain and are often rooted in unequal access to care, social determinants of health, and stigma. As a result, New York State is revising the Ending the Epidemic timeline and pledges to reach Ending the Epidemic goals and end the epidemic by the end of 2024, with outcomes measuring Ending the Epidemic progress available by December 2025. Achieving health equity, recognizing the impact of social determinants of health, and addressing racial disparities will be the center of focus as we move forward.

The Ending the Epidemic Blueprint continues to guide all Ending the Epidemic efforts. The Ending the Epidemic Addendum Report is a written report that provides an overview of the past five (5) years of New York State's Ending the Epidemic initiatives, as well as a summary of the community feedback sessions that were conducted in 2020 to assist in identifying areas of focus for Ending the Epidemic beyond 2020.

The Ending the Epidemic Blueprint and the Ending the Epidemic Addendum Report are available on the New York State Department of Health website at:

[www.health.ny.gov/endingtheepidemic](http://www.health.ny.gov/endingtheepidemic)

This Request for Applications specifically addresses these Ending the Epidemic Blueprint recommendations:

BP11: Undertake a statewide education campaign on pre-exposure prophylaxis and non-occupational post-exposure prophylaxis;

BP12: Include a variety of statewide programs for distribution and increased access to pre-exposure prophylaxis and non-occupational post-exposure prophylaxis; and

BP29: Expand and enhance the use of data to track and report progress.

In November 2021, New York State released its [plan](#) to eliminate hepatitis C as a public health problem in New York State by 2030. To achieve the goal of hepatitis C elimination, concerted efforts are needed to ensure access to timely diagnosis, care and treatment for all people with the hepatitis C. New York State plans to eliminate hepatitis C by:

- Enhancing hepatitis C prevention, testing and linkage to care services for people who inject drugs, people who are incarcerated, men who have sex with men, and other populations disproportionately impacted by hepatitis C infection;
- Expanding hepatitis C screening and testing to identify people living with hepatitis C who are unaware of their status and link them to care;
- Providing access to clinically appropriate medical care and affordable hepatitis C treatment without restrictions and ensure the availability of necessary supportive services for all New Yorkers living with hepatitis C;

- Enhancing New York State hepatitis C surveillance, set and track hepatitis C elimination targets, and make this information available to the public; and
- Addressing social determinants of health (SDOH).

Other relevant resources are the National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS) and the New York State Prevention Agenda. The National HIV/AIDS Strategy is a five-year plan that details principles, priorities, and actions to guide our collective national response to the HIV epidemic.<sup>4</sup> Information on the National HIV/AIDS Strategy and updates to the strategy through 2025 can be found at: <https://www.hiv.gov/federal-response/national-hiv-aids-strategy/national-hiv-aids-strategy-2022-2025>. The New York State Prevention Agenda is the blueprint for state and local action to improve the health of New Yorkers in five (5) priority areas and to reduce health disparities for racial, ethnic, disability and low socioeconomic groups, as well as other populations who experience them.<sup>5</sup> The New York State Prevention Agenda can be found on the following website: [https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/prevention\\_agenda/2019-2024/](https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/prevention_agenda/2019-2024/).

## B. Available Funding

### **Component A**

Up to **\$375,000** in New York State funding is available annually for three (3) years to support programs funded through Component A of this Request for Applications.

Funding will be allocated as stated in the chart below. Annual awards will not exceed \$75,000.

| <b>Component A New York State<br/>Department of Health Region</b> | <b>Annual Award<br/>Amount</b> | <b>Number of<br/>Awards</b> |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Statewide   | \$75,000                       | 1-5                         |

### **Component B**

Up to **\$200,000** in New York State funding is available annually for three (3) years to support programs funded through Component B of this Request for Applications.

Funding will be allocated as stated in the chart below. Annual awards will not exceed \$200,000.

| <b>Component B New York State<br/>Department of Health Region</b> | <b>Annual Award<br/>Amount</b> | <b>Number of<br/>Awards</b> |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Statewide   | \$200,000                      | 1                           |

**Applicants may apply for each Component of the Request for Applications.**

**Organizations may submit more than one (1) application for each Component in response to this Request for Applications. However, Component A applications must each include a different Principal Investigator and Component B applications must each include a different Principal Investigator and intervention.** If more than one (1) application is submitted by the same Principal Investigator in each Component in response to this Request for Applications, the first application that is received will be reviewed and considered for funding. All other applications will be rejected.

- Awards will be made to the highest scoring applicants in each region, up to the minimum

<sup>4</sup> National HIV/AIDS Strategy

<sup>5</sup> Prevention Agenda 2019-2024: New York State's Health Improvement Plan

number of awards indicated for that region.

- If there is an insufficient number of acceptable applications (scoring 70 or above) received from any region, New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute reserves the right to:
  - Fund an application scoring in the range of (60-69) from a region; and/or
  - Apply unawarded funding to the next highest scoring applicant(s) in other region(s) until the maximum number of awards per region is met.
- If there is an insufficient number of fundable applications in a region, the maximum number of awards may not be met for that region. New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute reserves the right to re-solicit any region where there are an insufficient number of fundable applications.
- If funding remains available after the maximum number of acceptable scoring applications is awarded to each region New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute reserves the right to exceed the maximum number of awards. Remaining funding will be awarded to the next highest acceptable scoring applicant(s) from any region until the remaining funding is exhausted or awards have been made to all acceptable scoring applicants.
- New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute reserves the right to revise the award amounts as necessary due to changes in availability of funding.
- New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute reserves the right to shift funding from one Component of the Request for Applications to another Component should there be an insufficient number of fundable applications received in any Component.

Should additional funding become available, the New York State Department of Health may select an organization from the pool of applicants deemed not funded, due to limited resources. If it is determined that the needed expertise/services are not available among these organizations, the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute reserves the right to establish additional competitive solicitations.

Applicant are instructed to include **Attachment 1 - Statement of Assurances** signed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Designee to certify the organization meets all criteria listed on Attachment 1 and include it as part of their full Application submission. (Both Components of the RFA).

## II. Who May Apply

### A. Component A Minimum Eligibility Requirements

All applicants must meet the following Minimum Eligibility Requirements:

- Applicant must be prequalified in the New York Statewide Financial System (SFS), if not exempt, on the date and time Applications in response to this Request for Applications (RFA) are due as specified in the “Key Dates” set forth on the Cover Page of this Request for Applications.

- Applicant must be a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, including community-based organizations, tribal organizations, counties, and government entities; or an Article 28 licensed facility (Awards will not be made to individual, unaffiliated researchers).
- Applicant must be located in and conduct business in New York State.
- The Principal Investigator affiliated with the organization must have at least three (3) years of experience with conducting public health research and/or evaluation projects as demonstrated in Component A. Community and Agency Description- Program Specific Question (PSQ) 2l). Experience conducting public health research and/or evaluation should include conceptualization, methodology, analysis, interpretation of results, and writing.

## B. Component B Minimum Eligibility Requirements

All applicants must meet the following Minimum Eligibility Requirements:

- Applicant must be prequalified in the New York Statewide Financial System (SFS), if not exempt, on the date and time Applications in response to this Request for Applications (RFA) are due as specified in the “Key Dates” set forth on the Cover Page of this Request for Applications.
- Applicant must be a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, including community-based organizations, tribal organizations, counties, and government entities; or an Article 28 licensed facility (Awards will not be made to individual, unaffiliated researchers).
- Applicant must be located in and conduct business in New York State.
- The Principal Investigator affiliated with the organization must have at least three (3) years of experience with conducting public health research and/or evaluation projects as demonstrated in Component B. Program Abstract - Program Specific Question (PSQ) 1h). Experience conducting public health research and/or evaluation should include conceptualization, methodology, analysis, interpretation of results, and writing.
- Applicant for Component B must submit a completed **Attachment 2 – Intervention Eligibility Criteria - Component B** to ensure the proposed intervention meets required eligibility criteria. Applicants are instructed to include **Attachment 2** as part of their full Application submission.

## III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes

### A. Program Model Description

#### **Component A: Research and Evaluation Mini Grants**

The purpose of this funding is to support contracted research and evaluation projects that bring understanding to the research and evaluation questions described in the [AIDS Institute's Research Agenda](#) and identified through future Research Agendas. Research Agenda focus areas align with the primary focus areas of the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute: HIV, hepatitis C, sexually transmitted infections, drug user health, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender health, and cross-cutting issues identified as New

York State Department of Health AIDS Institute priorities including health equity.

The New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute will identify one-year research and evaluation projects under selected annual focus areas which will be addressed by selected contractors. Contractors will then work with New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute staff to develop the study design and conduct the research or evaluation needed to answer the research or evaluation question. Contractors funded under Component A can opt out of subsequent years' funding if they do not choose to work on the selected topic. Contractors will be encouraged to involve the priority populations throughout the research and evaluation process, where feasible.

Project oversight should be provided by a Principal Investigator with a minimum of three (3) years of experience with conducting public health research and/or evaluation projects. Principal Investigators are expected to provide the scientific and technical leadership necessary to conduct the proposed research throughout the entire contract period and to participate in quarterly meetings with AIDS Institute. Applicants should demonstrate their ability to conduct qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods research and/or evaluation projects and disseminate findings in the areas of hepatitis C, sexually transmitted infections, drug user health, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender health. Applicants should also demonstrate their ability to incorporate principles of health equity in design of research and evaluation.

### **Component B: Inform and Scale-up Intervention to Increase HIV Pre-exposure Prophylaxis Uptake**

The purpose of this funding is to support one (1) three-year research and evaluation project that scales up an evidence-based intervention to increase HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis uptake among Black and Brown communities in New York State in an effort to reduce disparities in pre-exposure prophylaxis uptake.

Although the primary objective of this project is to scale-up and evaluate an existing evidence-based intervention, the first twelve (12) months of the project (Phase 1) may be used to inform the scale-up of the intervention.

More specifically, the first twelve (12) months may be used to ensure that the following standards are in place prior to implementing the intervention:<sup>6</sup>

- A readiness assessment for the scale-up has been conducted.
- The scale-up effort is implemented in a setting that supports the adoption, implementation, and sustained use of the intervention.
- Materials that specify the activities to be carried out and optimal methods of delivery are available to the implementers.
- Training is provided for implementing the core components of the intervention.
- Technical assistance is available throughout the duration of the scale-up.
- Fidelity monitoring tools are available to those implementing the intervention.
- A system for documenting adaptations to core components is in place and any significant adaptations should be addressable through real-time ongoing technical assistance activities.

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<sup>6</sup> Standards were drawn from those detailed in: Standards of Evidence for Efficacy, Effectiveness, and Scale-up Research in Prevention Science: Next Generation [Standards of Evidence for Efficacy, Effectiveness, and Scale-up Research in Prevention Science: Next Generation - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#).

- Desired levels of implementation are clearly defined and shared with those implementing the intervention. Monitoring tools to assess those levels are in place.
- An evaluation plan and data collection system are in place to evaluate the scale-up. The plan must include an assessment of whether or not the immediate effect of increased HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis uptake is observed among the population selected for scale-up. The research design for this evaluation should be the strongest possible given the nature of the intervention and the institutional framework within which the scale-up occurs.

Phase 2 of the project should be at least 24 months. This phase is to scale-up the intervention, evaluate the effectiveness of the scale-up, and create the necessary documentation of the scale-up for the AIDS Institute and others to use for future replication of project. For purposes of this Request for Applications, “scale-up” is defined as delivery of the evidence-based intervention at a sufficient level to produce a sustained, target-population-wide improvement in HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis uptake among Black and Brown New Yorkers.

The scale-up must be applied to a setting that meets one (1) or more of the following conditions:

- A healthcare setting, including, but not limited to, a hospital, urgent care, or community health center setting or network/system reaching at least 10,000 Black and Brown New Yorkers annually.
- A community-based organization reaching at least 5,000 Black and Brown New Yorkers annually. Community-based organizations should have established relationships for HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis linkage with at least one (1) healthcare setting, including, but not limited to, a hospital, sexual health provider, or a community health center.
- An internet environment reaching at least 50,000 Black and Brown New Yorkers annually.
- Any other environment reaching at least 10,000 Black and Brown New Yorkers annually.

The purpose of this project is to “scale-up” an evidence-based intervention to address the disparity that exists for Black and Brown New Yorkers. If the chosen intervention engages medical providers, those providers should have a proven record of working effectively with communities of color.

Applicants are instructed to select one of the evidence-based interventions described in **Attachment 2 – Intervention Eligibility Criteria- Component B** or describe an alternative evidence-based intervention for proposed scale-up. Alternative evidence-based interventions must meet the criteria outlined in **Attachment 2 – Intervention Eligibility Criteria - Component B** and should include a description of the existing evidence base and rationale for selection of this intervention to increase HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis uptake among Black and Brown communities in New York State. Contractors will be encouraged to involve the priority populations throughout the research and evaluation process, where feasible, including both Phases 1 and 2.

Project oversight should be provided by a Principal Investigator with a minimum of three (3) years of experience with conducting public health research and/or evaluation projects and should have a history of working effectively with communities of color. Principal Investigators are expected to provide the scientific and technical leadership necessary to conduct the

proposed research throughout the entire contract period and to participate in quarterly meetings with AIDS Institute. Applicants should also demonstrate their ability to conduct quantitative or mixed methods research and/or evaluation projects, disseminate findings, and incorporate principles of health equity in design of research and evaluation.

Applicants for both Components of this Request for Applications may subcontract components of the scope of work up to 50% of the total contract amount. For those applicants that propose subcontracting, it is preferable to identify subcontracting agencies during the application process. Applicants that plan to subcontract are expected to state in the application the specific components of the scope of work to be performed through subcontracts. Subcontracting agencies will not be allowed to conduct the majority of the research or provide primary scientific or technical leadership on the projects. Applicants should note that the lead organization (contractor) will have overall responsibility for all contract activities, including those performed by subcontractors, and will be the primary contact for the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute. All subcontractors should be approved by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute.

## **B. Requirements for the Program**

**All applicants selected for funding will be expected to:**

1. Adhere to Health Literacy Universal Precautions (<https://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/quality-patient-safety/quality-resources/tools/literacy-toolkit/index.html>).
2. Adhere to all objectives, tasks and performance measures as listed in **Attachment 3: Component A Work Plan / Attachment 4: Component B Work Plan**.
3. Participate in a collaborative process with the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to assess research and evaluation outcomes and provide monthly narrative and aggregate data reports describing the progress of the research and evaluation with respect to:
  - a. implementation,
  - b. participant recruitment (as relevant),
  - c. success in meeting the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis Intervention Standards as shown in Component B Program Model (**Component B selected applicant only**),
  - d. significant accomplishments achieved, and
  - e. barriers encountered and plans to address noted problems.
4. Address and assess the specific social and/or structural determinants of health and engage the priority population throughout the research and evaluation process, including as members of the research team, where feasible. The unequal distribution of social and/or structural determinants can lead to disparities and ultimately inequities in health and health outcomes. Strategies should prioritize those populations that are most impacted, negatively, by social and structural determinants of health. Research and evaluation methodologies should address social and structural determinants of health, as relevant based on the questions assigned by the AIDS Institute. Please see **Attachment 5 for Health Equity Definitions and Examples** of social and structural determinants of health.
5. Participate in a collaborative process with the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to develop study methods to ensure translatability of findings to AIDS Institute programming. Selected applicants for Components A and B will submit

proposed detailed research/evaluation methodology for AIDS Institute input within one (1) month of contract initiation.

6. Participate in (quarterly) meetings with representatives from the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to provide updates on the projects, including but not limited to progress made and challenges encountered.
7. Submit annual reports of the project summarizing the research performed, complete with the problem statements, study methods, major findings, and recommendations.
8. **Applicant selected for Component B funding *only*** will be required to submit a report that specifies a roadmap for replication and scale-up of the intervention across New York State.
9. Participate in an annual meeting with AIDS Institute staff at the end of the funding period and provide a presentation on their project results.

## IV. Administrative Requirements

### A. Issuing Agency

This RFA is issued by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute (hereinafter referred to as NYSDOH AI, or the Department), Center for Program Development, Implementation, Research and Evaluation. The Department is responsible for the requirements specified herein and for the evaluation of all Applications (refer to Section V.C. Review and Award Process).

### B. Question and Answer Phase

All substantive questions by Applicants with respect to any aspect of the RFA must be submitted in writing to Shu-Yin John Leung, NYSDOH AI, Center for Program Development, Implementation, Research and Evaluation, at the following email address: [researchrfa@health.ny.gov](mailto:researchrfa@health.ny.gov). This includes Minority and Woman-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) Requirements questions and related forms. Refer to Section IV.K. Minority and Woman Owned Business Enterprise Requirements. Questions of a technical nature related to formatting or other minor details related to preparation of an Application may also be addressed in writing to the email address noted above. Questions are of a technical nature if they are limited to how to prepare your Application (e.g., formatting) rather than relating to the substance of the Application.

To the degree possible, each question submitted by a potential Applicant pursuant to the terms of this RFA should cite the RFA section and paragraph to which it refers. Written questions will be accepted until the date posted on the Cover Page of this RFA.

Some helpful links for questions of a technical nature are below. Questions regarding specific opportunities or Applications should be directed to the Department contact listed on the cover of this RFA.

- On-Demand Statewide Financial System Training Videos: On-demand training focused on using the new grants management features in SFS is available by logging in to the SFS Vendor Portal and clicking the SFS Coach icon available on the homepage. Additional questions? Contact the SFS Help Desk listed below:
- Statewide Financial System Technical Support Help Desk

Phone: 1-877-737-4185 toll-free / 518-457-7737  
Hours: Monday thru Friday 8am to 8pm  
Email: [helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov](mailto:helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov)

Prospective Applicants must submit all requests for clarifications of, or exceptions or changes to, the terms, conditions or provisions of this RFA or the State of New York Contract for Grants during the Question and Answer Phase, which will end on the “Questions Due” date specified on the Cover Page of this RFA. An Applicant must clearly indicate the clarification, exception or change in the RFA or the State of New York Contract for Grants the Applicant is requesting. All questions, answers, and requests for clarification, exception or change will be published by the Department at [SFS Public Portal Homepage](#) to ensure equal access and knowledge by all prospective Applicants, on or about the date specified on the Cover Page of this RFA.

This RFA has been posted on the NYS Statewide Financial System website at: [SFS Public Portal Homepage](#) and additionally, via a link provided on the Department’s public website at: <https://www.health.ny.gov/funding/>.

Questions and answers, as well as any updates, addendums to, and/or other modifications of this RFA, will be posted on these websites. All such questions and answers, updates addendums to, and other modifications to this RFA will be posted by the date identified on the Cover Page of this RFA under “Key Dates”.

**All Questions must be received by the date and time specified on the Cover Page of this RFA, under “Key Dates”, opposite the heading “Questions Due”.**

**All questions submitted by email should state the RFA Title and Number set forth on the Cover Page (RFA #20721, Research and Evaluation Grants) in the subject line of the email.**

### **C. Letter of Interest**

A Letter of Interest is not requested for this project.

### **D. Applicant Conference**

An Applicant Conference will **not** be held for this project.

### **E. How to File an Application**

Applications must be submitted online via the Statewide Financial System by the date and time posted on the Cover Page of this RFA under “Key Dates”.

Reference materials and videos are available for Applicants to funding opportunities on the NYS Statewide Financial System. Please visit the Statewide Financial System website at the following web address: [SFS Public Portal Homepage](#) and click the “Search for Grant Opportunities” tile. There is also a more detailed “Statewide Financial System: Vendor User Guide” available in the documents section under Training & Guidance; For Grant Applicants located in SFS Coach. Training webinars are also provided by the Grants Management Team. Dates and times for webinar instruction can be located at the following web address: [Live Webinars | Grants Management \(ny.gov\)](#)

To submit an Application an Applicant must:

1. Log into the [Statewide Financial System Vendor Portal](#) .
2. Click the Grant Management Tile. Next, Click the Bid Event Search tile.
3. Enter the applicable search criteria in the Search Criteria Fields. Locate an opportunity; search by Funding Agency (DOH01) or enter the Grant Opportunity name into the Search by Grant Opportunity field: **RFA #20721: Research and Evaluation Grants – CompA** (for Component A) or **RFA #20721: Research and Evaluation Grants – CompB** (for Component B). You can also filter search by Status such as “available” which filters to include only the bid events that are published and open for potential bid response.
4. Click on “Search” button to initiate the search.
5. Click on Event ID link to initiate a bid response.
6. Please review the Grantee User Manual found in SFS Coach for additional steps on how to respond to various types of Bid Events.

Once the Application is complete, a prospective Applicant is **strongly encouraged** to submit their Application at least **48 hours prior to the** Application’s due date and time specified on the Cover Page of this RFA. This will allow sufficient opportunity for the Applicant to obtain assistance and take corrective action should there be a technical issue with the submission process. **Failure to leave adequate time to address issues identified during this process may jeopardize an Applicant’s ability to submit their Application.** SFS staff are available to answer an Applicant’s technical questions and provide technical assistance prior to the Application due date and time. Contact information for the SFS Help Desk is available under Section IV.B. Question and Answer Phase of this RFA.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Although the Department and SFS Help desk staff will do their best to address concerns that are identified less than 48 hours prior to the due date and time for the submission of an Application, there is no guarantee that they will be resolved in time for the Application to be submitted on time and, therefore, considered for funding.

During the Application process, please pay particular attention to the following:

- Not-for-profit Applicants must be prequalified, if not exempt, on the date and time Applications in response to this Request for Applications are due as specified in the “Key Dates” set forth on the Cover Page of this RFA. Be sure to maintain prequalification status between funding opportunities. **NOTE:** Three of a not-for-profit’s essential financial documents - the IRS990, its Financial Statement, and its Charities Bureau filing - expire on an annual basis. If these documents are allowed to expire, the not-for-profit’s prequalification status expires as well, and it will not be eligible for State grant funding until its documentation is updated and approved, and prequalified status is reinstated.
- Only individuals with the role of “Bid Response Submitter” can submit an Application on behalf of an Applicant.
- Prior to submission, the Statewide Financial System will automatically initiate a global error checking process to protect against an incomplete Application. An Applicant may need to attend to certain parts of the Application prior to being able to submit the Application successfully. An Applicant must be sure to allow time after pressing the submit button to clean up any global errors that may arise. (Vendor User Guide).
- Applicants should use numbers, letters, and underscores when naming their uploaded files. There cannot be any special characters in the uploaded file name. Also, be aware

of the restriction on file size (20 MB) when uploading documents. Applicants should ensure that any attachments uploaded with their application are not “protected” or “passworded” documents.

The Applicant’s Delegated Administrator is able to assign, modify, and remove roles for the Applicant in SFS. Please see SFS Vendor Portal Access Reference Guide, [SFS Vendor Portal Access Reference Guide.pdf \(ny.gov\)](#), for additional information on roles. **Bid Response Initiator** and **Bid Response Submitter** are the **necessary roles for applying to a Bid Event in SFS**. If you are a not-for-profit you will also need Prequalification Processor for Prequalification purposes.

**PLEASE NOTE: Waiting until the last several days to complete your Application online can be risky, as you may have technical questions or issues that will take time to resolve. Beginning the process of applying as soon as possible will produce the best results.**

**Applications will not be accepted via fax, e-mail, paper copy, or hand delivery.**

**LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

## **F. Department of Health’s Reserved Rights**

The Department of Health reserves the right to:

1. Reject any or all Applications received in response to this RFA.
2. Withdraw the RFA at any time, at the Department’s sole discretion.
3. Make an award under the RFA in whole or in part.
4. Disqualify any Applicant whose conduct and/or Application fails to conform to the requirements of the RFA.
5. Seek clarifications and revisions of Applications, in the Department’s sole discretion.
6. Use Application information obtained through site visits, management interviews, and the State’s investigation of an Applicant’s qualifications, experience, ability, or financial standing, and any material or information submitted by the Applicant in response to the Department’s request for clarifying information in the course of evaluation and/or selection under the RFA.
7. Prior to Application opening, amend the RFA specifications to correct errors or oversights, or to supply additional information, as it becomes available.
8. Prior to Application opening, direct Applicants to submit proposal modifications addressing subsequent RFA amendments.
9. Change any of the scheduled dates.
10. Waive any requirements that are not material.
11. Award more than one contract resulting from this RFA.

12. Negotiate with successful Applicants within the scope of the RFA in the best interests of the State.
13. Conduct contract negotiations with the next responsible Applicant, should the Department be unsuccessful in negotiating with the selected Applicant.
14. Utilize any and all ideas submitted with the Applications received, at the Department's sole discretion.
15. Unless otherwise specified in the RFA, every offer in an Applicant's Application is firm and not revocable for a period of 60 days from the Application opening.
16. Waive or modify minor irregularities in Applications received after prior notification to the Applicant.
17. Require clarification at any time during the procurement process and/or require correction of arithmetic or other apparent errors for the purpose of assuring a full and complete understanding of an Applicant's Application and/or to determine an Applicant's compliance with the requirements of the RFA.
18. Eliminate any term of this RFA that can be complied with by none of the Applicants.
19. Award grants based on geographic or regional considerations to serve the best interests of the State.

## **G. Term of Contract**

Any Contract resulting from this RFA will be effective only upon approval by the New York State Office of the Comptroller.

It is expected that contracts resulting from this RFA will have the following time period:  
November 1, 2026 – October 31, 2029.

Continued funding throughout this three-year period is contingent upon availability of funding and state budget appropriations and the Grantee's continued satisfactory performance of its obligations under the Contract. The Department also reserves the right to revise the award amount as necessary due to changes in the availability of funding.

A sample New York State Master Contract for Grants can be found at [https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2025/01/mcg\\_tandc\\_january\\_2025.pdf](https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2025/01/mcg_tandc_january_2025.pdf)

*To view the following Department of Health specific State of New York Contract for Grants documents, follow the instructions in Section VI. Attachments.*

All funded contracts will be held to the following contract language:

- Attachment A-1: Agency-specific Terms and Conditions (**RFA Attachment 6**)
- Attachment A-2: Program-specific Terms and Conditions (HIV/AIDS Clause) (**RFA Attachment 7**)

- Attachment E-1: AIDS Institute Policy on Personal Health Related Information (**RFA Attachment 8**)
- Attachment M: Participation by Minority Group Members and Women with Respect to State Contracts: Requirements and Procedures (**RFA Attachment 9**)

## H. Payment & Reporting Requirements of Grant Awardees

1. The Department may, at its discretion, make an advance payment to a successful not-for-profit grant Applicant under this RFA (a “Grantee”) in an amount not to exceed 25% percent of the annual grant provided for under the Grantee’s Contract.
2. The Grantee will be required to submit invoices and required reports of expenditures based upon the terms for payment set forth in Attachment A-1 to its Grant Contract to the State's designated payment office (below) or, if requested by the Department, through the Statewide Financial System:

New York State Department of Health  
[AIDS.Institute.Admin@health.ny.gov](mailto:AIDS.Institute.Admin@health.ny.gov)

A Grantee must provide complete and accurate billing invoices in order to receive payment of the grant funding provided for under the terms of its Grant Contract. Invoices submitted to the Department must contain all information and supporting documentation required by the Contract, the Department, and the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC). Payment for invoices submitted by the Grantee shall only be rendered electronically unless payment by paper check is expressly authorized by the Commissioner of Health, in the Commissioner's sole discretion, due to extenuating circumstances. Such electronic payment shall be made in accordance with OSC’s procedures and practices to authorize electronic payments. Authorization forms are available at OSC’s website at: <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/epay/index.htm>, by email at: [epayments@osc.state.ny.us](mailto:epayments@osc.state.ny.us) or by telephone at 855-233-8363. Each Grantee acknowledges that it will not receive payment on any claims for reimbursement submitted under its Grant Contract if it does not comply with OSC’s electronic payment procedures, except where the Commissioner has expressly authorized payment by paper check as set forth above.

Payment of claims for reimbursement by the State (Department) shall be made in accordance with Article XI-A of the New York State Finance Law. Payment terms will be:

- Grantee will be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred as allowed in the Contract Budget and Work Plan.
3. The Grantee will be required to submit the following reports to the Department at the address above or, if requested by the Department, through the Statewide Financial System:
    - A monthly narrative addressing program implementation, barriers and accomplishments.
    - Monthly aggregate reports on relevant research milestones.

All payment and reporting requirements will be detailed in “Attachment D: Payment and Reporting Schedule”, of the final State of New York Contract For Grants.

## I. Procurement Requirements

### 1. General Requirements

The Grantee may procure various goods and services in connection with the grant-funded project ranging from routinely purchased goods or services to those that involve substantive programmatic work. The procurement of such goods or services, however, must be conducted in an equitable and competitive manner to promote equal treatment, efficiency, and economy in grant-funded activities.

Any Grantee that is a State entity (i.e., a State agency or political subdivision of the State) must follow the same policies and procedures it uses for procurements from its general funds. All other Grantees (private companies, not-for-profit-organizations, etc.) must have a sufficient and documented procurement process that maintains records to detail the history of procurements associated with any awarded grant project. These records shall include, but are not limited to, rationale for the method of procurement (e.g., micro-purchase, small purchases, sealed bids, request for proposals, noncompetitive/sole source), the selection of a contract type, contractor selection and/or rejection, and the basis of a contract price.

The Grantee's documented procurement process must conform with any applicable federal, State and local laws and regulations. As part of the required procurement procedures, a Grantee must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflict of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award, and administration of contracts. The standards of conduct must provide for disciplinary actions to be applied for violations by officers, employees or agents of the Grantee. Such standards shall provide, at a minimum, that no employee, officer, or agent of the Grantee will participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by grant funds if a conflict of interest, real or actual, is involved. Such conflicts may arise when:

- The employee, officer, or agent, or
- Any member of such individual's immediate family, or
- Such individual's partner, or
- Any organization which employs, or is about to employ the selected contractor, has a financial or other interest in or receives or stands to receive a tangible personal benefit from a firm being considered for a contract.

The standards of conduct shall also cover organizational conflicts of interest. Organizational conflicts of interest arise where an entity is or appears to be unable to conduct an impartial procurement action due to relationships with a parent company, affiliate, or subsidiary organization.

### 2. Bid Protest Procedures

Any contractor, subcontractor, or aggrieved party has the right to protest actions before or after the award of a contract utilizing grant funds. The Grantee alone will be responsible, in accordance with good administrative practice and sound business judgement, for the settlement of all contractual and administrative issues arising out of procurement contract solicitations and awards.

Grantees shall have written protest procedures, which may be analogous to those set forth in Part 24 of Title 2 of the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations, in order for effective due

process to be achieved. A Grantee's specific protest procedures shall be outlined in all bid requests, request for proposals, request for applications, etc. issued by or on behalf of the Grantee concerning any grant-funded projects. In summary, Grantees are responsible for handling all contract activity protests. Except in matters of direct State or possibly Federal concern (in cases involving federally funded grants), the Department will not substitute its judgement for that of the Grantee.

### 3. Procurement Contract Language

Any contract concerning a grant-funded project must be a written agreement between the Grantee and the third party providing specific goods and/or services. Whether with a contractor, subcontractor, consultant or vendor, the contract must as appropriate state the activities to be performed; the time schedule; the policies and requirements that apply to the contractor, subcontractor consultant or vendor, including the above procurement requirements; and any other terms and conditions of the grant and the New York State Contract for Grants.

### **J. Assurances of No Conflicts of Interest and/or Other Detrimental Effects**

The Grantee as well as any subgrantees, contractors, subcontractors or consultants engaged by the Grantee to provide goods or services in connection with the grant-funded project shall attest that their performance of any contracted services does not and will not create a conflict of interest with nor position the Grantee to breach any other contract it currently has in force with the State of New York.

The Grantee as well as any subgrantees, contractors, subcontractors or consultants engaged by the Grantee to provide goods or services in connection with the grant-funded project shall disclose any existing or contemplated relationship with any other person or entity, including relationships with any member, shareholder of 5% or more, parent, subsidiary, or affiliate organization, which would constitute an actual or potential conflict of interest or appearance of impropriety, relating to other clients/customers/agents of the Grantee, subgrantees, contractors, subcontractors, consultants or former officers and employees of the State and its affiliates, in connection with the providing of goods or rendering of services related to the grant-funded project. The Grantee shall have procedures in place for alerting the State of any such actual or potential conflicts as well as procedures to resolve the same.

### **K. Minority & Women-Owned Business Enterprises**

Pursuant to New York State Executive Law Article 15-A, the Department recognizes its obligation to promote opportunities for maximum feasible participation of New York State-certified Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises (MWBES) and the employment of minority group members and women in the performance of Department contracts.

In 2006, the State of New York commissioned a disparity study to evaluate whether Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises had a full and fair opportunity to participate in state contracting. The findings of the study were published on April 29, 2010, under the title "The State of Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises: Evidence from New York" ("Disparity Study"). The report found evidence of statistically significant disparities between the level of participation of Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises in state procurement contracting versus the number of Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises that were ready, willing and able to participate in state procurements. As a result of these findings, the Disparity Study made recommendations concerning the implementation and operation of the

statewide certified

Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises program. The recommendations from the Disparity Study culminated in the enactment and the implementation of New York State Executive Law Article 15-A, which requires, among other things, that the Department establish goals for maximum feasible participation of New York State Certified Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises (“MWBE”) and the employment of minority groups members and women in the performance of New York State contracts.

### **Business Participation Opportunities for MWBEs**

For purposes of this solicitation, the Department of Health hereby establishes a goal of **30%** as follows:

- 1) For Not-for-Profit Applicants: Eligible Expenditures include any subcontracted labor or services, equipment, materials, or any combined purchase of the foregoing under a contract awarded from this solicitation.
- 2) For-Profit and Municipality Applicants: Eligible Expenditures include the value of the total amount of the Budget provided for the Work Plan in the Grant Contract entered into pursuant to this RFA.

The goal on the Eligible Expenditures portion of a Grant Contract awarded pursuant to this RFA will be 15% for Minority-Owned Business Enterprises (“MBE”) participation and 15% for Women-Owned Business Enterprises (“WBE”) participation (based on the current availability of qualified MBEs and WBEs and outreach efforts to certified M/WBE firms). A Grantee awarded a Grant Contract pursuant to this RFA must document good faith efforts to provide meaningful participation by M/WBEs as subcontractors or suppliers in the performance of the Grant Contract and Grantee will agree under the terms of its Grant Contract that NYSDOH may withhold payment pending receipt of the required M/WBE documentation required by the Department or the OSC. For guidance on how NYSDOH will determine “good faith efforts,” refer to 5 NYCRR §142.8.

The directory of New York State Certified M/WBEs can be viewed at:

<https://ny.newnycontracts.com>. The directory is found on this page under “NYS Directory of Certified Firms” and accessed by clicking on the link entitled “Search the Directory”. Engaging with firms found in the directory with like product(s) and/or service(s) is strongly encouraged and all communication efforts and responses should be well documented by a Grantee to evidence its good faith efforts to encourage M/WBE participation in the performance of its obligations under its Grant Contract.

By submitting an Application, each Applicant and potential Grantee agrees to complete an **M/WBE Utilization Plan** as directed in **Attachment 10** of this RFA. NYSDOH will review the M/WBE Utilization Plan submitted by each Grantee. If a Grantee’s M/WBE Utilization Plan is not accepted, NYSDOH may issue a Notice of Deficiency. If a Notice of Deficiency is issued, Grantee agrees that it shall respond to the Notice of Deficiency within seven (7) business days of receipt. NYSDOH may disqualify a Grantee as being **non-responsive** under the following circumstances:

- a) If a Grantee fails to submit a M/WBE Utilization Plan;
- b) If a Grantee fails to submit a written remedy to a Notice of Deficiency;
- c) If a Grantee fails to submit a request for waiver (if applicable); or
- d) If NYSDOH determines that the Grantee has failed to document good-faith efforts to meet

the established NYSDOH M/WBE participation goals for the procurement.

In addition, Grantees will be required to certify they have an acceptable Equal Employment Opportunity policy statement.

#### **L. Vendor Identification Number**

Effective January 1, 2012, in order to do business with New York State, you must have a vendor identification number. As part of the Statewide Financial System (SFS), the Office of the State Comptroller's Bureau of State Expenditures has created a centralized vendor repository called the New York State Vendor File. In the event of an award of a grant to a successful Applicant pursuant to the terms of this RFA and in order to initiate a Grant Contract with the Department, a Grantee must be registered in the New York State Vendor File and have a valid New York State Vendor ID.

If already enrolled in the Vendor File, the Applicant should include the Vendor Identification number in your organization information. If not enrolled, to request assignment of a Vendor Identification number, an Applicant should please submit a New York State Office of the State Comptroller Substitute Form W-9, which can be found on-line at:

<https://www.osc.state.ny.us/files/vendors/2017-11/vendor-form-ac3237s-fe.pdf>

Additional information concerning the New York State Vendor File can be obtained on-line at: [http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendor\\_management/index.htm](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendor_management/index.htm), by contacting the SFS Help Desk at 855-233-8363 or by emailing at [helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov](mailto:helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov).

#### **M. Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire**

The Department strongly encourages each Applicant to file the required Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire online via the New York State VendRep System. The Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire must be updated and certified every six (6) months. To enroll in and use the New York State VendRep System, see the VendRep System Instructions available at <https://www.osc.state.ny.us/state-vendors/vendrep/file-your-vendor-responsibility-questionnaire> or go directly to the VendRep system online at <https://www.osc.state.ny.us/state-vendors/vendrep/vendrep-system>.

An Applicant must provide their New York State Vendor Identification Number when enrolling. To request assignment of a Vendor ID or for VendRep System assistance, contact the Office of the State Comptroller's Help Desk at 866-370-4672 or 518-408-4672 or by email at [itservicedesk@osc.ny.gov](mailto:itservicedesk@osc.ny.gov).

Applicants opting to complete online should complete and upload the **Vendor Responsibility Attestation (Attachment 11)** of the RFA. The Attestation is located under the SFS Attachments Section and once completed should be uploaded to the applicable PSQ/Bid Factor.

Applicants opting to complete and submit a paper questionnaire can obtain the appropriate questionnaire from the VendRep website, [www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep), and upload it with their Application in response to the applicable PSQ/Bid Factor.

#### **N. Vendor Prequalification for Not-for-Profits**

Each not-for-profit Applicant subject to prequalification is required to prequalify prior to having the ability to submit an Application in the NYS Statewide Financial System.

Pursuant to the New York State Division of Budget Bulletin H-1032, dated July 16, 2014, and revised on December 9, 2023, the new Prequalification Policy became effective as of January 16, 2024. The updated policy requires that not-for-profit organizations register and prequalify in the SFS using the updated Prequalification Application. The updated Prequalification Application and New York State Prequalification Manual for Grantees can be found on the Grants Management website at: <https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/get-prequalified>.

**An Application cannot be submitted/received from a not-for-profit Applicant that (a) has not Registered in the NYS Statewide Financial System and (b) has not Prequalified in the Statewide Financial System by the Application's due date specified on the Cover Page of this RFA.**

Below is a summary of the steps that must be completed to meet registration and prequalification requirements. The Vendor User Manual within the Statewide Financial System Website details the requirements and job aids walk users through the process.

## 1) Register for the Statewide Financial System

- Applicants will first need to be registered in SFS and the Grants Management portion of the system. Applicants that need to register their organization should submit the required form(s) found at the following link: [Register Your Organization in SFS | Grants Management](#). Any questions related to current and previously existing SFS accounts should be sent to the SFS Help Desk ([HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov](mailto:HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov)).
- If you have previously registered and do not know your Username, please email [helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov](mailto:helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov). If you do not know your Password, please click the "I Forgot My Password" link from the main log-in page and follow the prompts.

## 2) Complete your Prequalification Application

- Log in to the Statewide Financial System.
- Applicants will first need to create an account in SFS. Applicants that need to create an account should do so at the following link: <https://www.osc.ny.gov/state-vendors/portal/enroll-vendor-self-service-portal>. Any questions related to SFS accounts should be sent to the SFS Help Desk ([HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov](mailto:HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov)).
- Instructions for SFS Prequalification can be found on Page 20 of the SFS Grantee User Manual entitled, "Grantee Processing in SFS". This user manual is accessible to organizations with an SFS account under the SFS Coach Tile/Button in the SFS Vendor Portal. Select "Handbook: User Manual with Screenshots" from the Training Type drop down to locate the manual. If you have any problems accessing the manual please contact [HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov](mailto:HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov). Please see the section entitled, "Enter and Submit a Prequalification Application", located on page 20 of the SFS Grantee User Manual, for complete instructions on how to complete and submit an SFS Prequalification in the NYS Statewide Financial System.
- Specific questions about the prequalification process should be referred to your primary New York State agency representative. The representative specific to the NYS Department of Health can be reached at: [vendorresponsibility@health.ny.gov](mailto:vendorresponsibility@health.ny.gov).

3) **Add SFS Roles to Submit a Bid and to Add a signatory or “Grant Contract Approver” to your Account**

- **To start, review, and submit an Application to this Bid Event in SFS, Applicants will need to acquire the following SFS Security Roles:**

| <b>SFS Security Role Name</b> | <b>Description</b>     | <b>Access Provided</b>  |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| NY_GM_VENDOR_EVENT_INITIATE   | Bid Response Initiator | Allows the vendor user to initiate a bid response to a bid event but not submit the bid response to the agency. |
| NY_GM_VENDOR_EVENT_INQUIRY    | Bid Event Inquiry      | Allows a vendor user the ability to review bid events. This is a view-only role.                                |
| NY_GM_VENDOR_EVENT_SUBMIT     | Bid Response Submitter | Allows a vendor user to both initiate a bid response and submit a bid response to the agency.                   |

- In order to have your designated signatory (known in SFS as Grant Contract Approver) sign a contract and have their name appear on the contract agreement you have to add the Grant Contract Approver’s name to your SFS Vendor Profile. The Delegated Administrator for your organization can add the Signatory’s Name by following the instructions found on page 17-20 of the SFS Grantee User Manual entitled, “! Grantee Processing in SFS”. This user manual is accessible to organizations with an SFS account under the SFS Coach Tile/Button in the SFS Vendor Portal. Select “Handbook: User Manual with Screenshots” from the Training Type drop down to locate the manual. If you have any problems accessing the manual please contact [HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov](mailto:HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov).

**All potential Applicants are strongly encouraged to begin Statewide Financial System Registration and Prequalification process as soon as possible in order to participate in this opportunity.**

**O. General Specifications**

1. By submitting the "Application Form" each Applicant attests to its express authority to sign on behalf of the Applicant.
2. Grantees will possess, at no cost to the State, all qualifications, licenses and permits to engage in the required business as may be required within the jurisdiction where the work specified is to be performed. Workers to be employed in the performance of any Contract awarded pursuant to this RFA will possess the qualifications, training, licenses, and permits as may be required within such jurisdiction.

3. Submission of an Application indicates the Applicant's acceptance of all terms and conditions contained in this RFA, including the terms and conditions of the State of New York Contract for Grants. Any exceptions the Applicant would like considered by the Department relating to the terms and conditions of this RFA and/or State of New York Contract for Grants must have been raised during the Question and Answer Phase of this RFA (See, Section IV.B.).
4. An Applicant may be disqualified from receiving an award if such Applicant or any subsidiary, affiliate, partner, officer, agent, or principal thereof, or anyone in its employ, has previously failed to perform satisfactorily in connection with public bidding or contracts, in the State of New York or otherwise.
5. Provisions Upon Default
  - a. The services to be performed by [the][a] successful Applicant pursuant to the terms of the Grant Contract entered into with the Department shall at all times be subject to the direction and control of the Department.
  - b. In the event that the Grantee, through any cause, fails to perform any of the terms, covenants, or promises of any Contract resulting from this RFA, the Department acting for and on behalf of the State, shall thereupon have the right to terminate the Contract by giving notice in writing of the fact and date of such termination to the Grantee.
  - c. If, in the judgment of the Department, the Grantee acts in any way which is detrimental to, or does or is in any way likely to impair or prejudice, the interests of the State, the Department may terminate the Grant Contract awarded pursuant to this RFA. In such case, the Grantee may receive equitable compensation for all services as shall, in the judgment of the State Comptroller, have been satisfactorily performed by the Grantee up to the date of the termination of the Contract.
6. Gender-Based Violence and the Workplace Certification

New York State Finance Law [§139-M](#) requires Applicants on competitive state procurements to certify that they have a written policy addressing gender-based violence and the workplace and that such policy meets the minimum requirements outlined on **Attachment 16**. Applicants should review, sign, date and include as part of their submission **Attachment 16**.

## V. Completing the Application

### A. Application Format/Content

Please refer to the Statewide Financial System: Vendor User Guide for assistance in applying for this procurement through the NYS Statewide Financial System. This guide is available by logging into the Statewide Financial System and searching under SFS Coach.

Applicants are instructed to respond to each of the following statements and questions under "Program Specific Questions (PSQ)/Bid Factors." Your responses comprise your application. Number/letter your narrative to correspond to each statement and question in the order presented below. When responding to the statements and questions, be mindful that Application

reviewers may not be familiar with your agency and its services. Your answers should be specific, succinct, and responsive to the statements and questions as outlined. Please be aware that the value assigned to each section described below indicates the relative weight that will be given to each section of your Application when scoring your Application.

An **Application Checklist (Attachment 15)** has been included to help ensure that submission requirements have been met. Applicants should refer to this Attachment before and after writing the application. In assembling your application, please follow the outline provided in the **Application Checklist: Attachment 15**.

The Application Narrative should not exceed ten (10) double-spaced pages, using a 11-point Arial font with one-inch margins on all sides. Pages should be numbered consecutively. All Attachments should be labeled with the Attachment name and corresponding attachment number. The ten (10) double-spaced page limitation is specific to the Application Narrative and does **not** include all required Attachments. Please submit only the requested information in the attachments and **do not add attachments or information that are not requested**. Any additional attachments or narrative exceeding the 10 double-spaced page limitation will not be scored or considered by reviewers. **Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a deduction of up to ten (10) points.**

It is each Applicant's responsibility to ensure that all materials included in its Application have been properly prepared and submitted. Applications must be submitted via the Statewide Financial System by the Application deadline date and time specified on the Cover Page of this RFA.

**IMPORTANT:** Please upload the full Application and all required Attachments as one (1) complete PDF document no larger than 20MB in response to Bid Factor Question 01. **Please ensure that uploaded files are not fillable PDFs or "secure" or "password protected" or your document will not upload properly.** Any material added to a Bid Factor "Add Comments" box in SFS will not be reviewed as part of a submitted application.

**See the Event Comments and Attachments link at the bottom of the Bid Event page in SFS for required Attachments to be completed and uploaded with the full Application pdf.**

## **Program Specific Questions (PSQ)/Bid Factors**

### **Component A**

#### **Application Format**

|                                      |                |                  |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| 1. Program Abstract                  | Not Scored     |                  |
| 2. Community and Agency Description  | Maximum Score: | 50 points        |
| 3. Health Equity                     | Maximum Score: | 15 points        |
| 4. Program Design and Implementation | Maximum Score: | 15 points        |
| 5. Budget and Justification          | Maximum Score: | <u>20 points</u> |
|                                      |                | 100 points       |

#### **1. Program Abstract**

**Maximum: 1 page**

Q01) Applicants are instructed to upload the full Application and **all** required Attachments as one (1) complete PDF document no larger than 20MB in response to this Bid Factor Question. **Please review the full instructions in Section V. Completing the Application, A. Application Format/Content to ensure your Application is submitted successfully.**

- 1a) Summarize your proposed program including all major activities your institution will undertake to meet the stated goals of this initiative.
- 1b) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 1 – Statement of Assurances** as part of your full application submission.
- 1c) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 10 – Minority & Women-Owned Business Enterprise Forms** as part of your full application submission.
- 1d) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 11 – Vendor Responsibility Attestation** as part of your full application submission.
- 1e) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Application Cover Page - Attachment 12** as part of your full application submission.

## **2. Community and Agency Description**

**Total 50 Points**  
**Maximum 5 pages**

- 2a) Describe why the applicant is qualified to conduct qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods research and evaluation projects in the areas of HIV, sexually transmitted infections, hepatitis C, drug user health, or lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender health in New York State and with communities of color. Include educational experience and key research/evaluation accomplishments and dates.
- 2b) Describe the project team's experience in working with relevant stakeholders to inform or conduct research/evaluation. Provide a brief example that demonstrates the applicant's process for identifying and engaging with appropriate stakeholders such as community organizations and/or members of a priority population.
- 2c) Describe the organization's capacity to acquire Institutional Review Board approval, where necessary, to conduct research/evaluation and anticipated timeline from protocol submission to approval.
- 2d) Describe the organization's capacity to support research data collection including data collection platforms for survey or other participant/client-level data, analytic software, and data security procedures in compliance with relevant state and federal laws.
- 2e) Describe the applicant's experience conducting public health research. Include evidence/information to support the applicant's experience with at least two (2) of the following methodological approaches: developing and fielding surveys, recruiting participants from a selected priority population, leveraging secondary data, conducting and analyzing qualitative focus groups or interviews, and utilizing other methodological approaches to answer research/evaluation questions.
- 2f) Describe the applicant's experience conducting short-term research/evaluation projects. Provide a brief example that demonstrates the applicant's experience designing a study,

acquiring appropriate Institutional Review Board approval (as relevant), conducting research, and summarizing findings in no more than two (2) years.

2g) Describe the applicant's experience disseminating research/evaluation findings in peer-reviewed journals.

2h) Describe the applicant's experience disseminating research/evaluation findings at conference presentations.

2i) Describe the applicant's experience disseminating research/evaluation findings to relevant stakeholders. Provide a brief example that demonstrates the applicant's experience communicating research/evaluation findings to various stakeholder groups and how the applicant incorporated contextual factors (e.g., culture, language, health literacy levels) in the dissemination approach(es).

2j) Please describe any prior grants your organization has received from the AIDS Institute that are relevant to this proposal. Include the results of the program and successes of those grants. Or, if your organization has not received funding from the AIDS Institute, describe any similar types of programs that your organization has undertaken in the past, including the identified results of the program and the successes in achieving those results.

2k) Applicants are instructed to upload a copy of the **Curriculum Vitae for the Principal Investigator as Attachment 13** as part of your full application submission.

2l) Applicants are instructed to indicate how many years of experience the Principal Investigator has conducting public health research and/or evaluation, including conceptualization, methodology, analysis, interpretation of results, and writing.

### 3. Health Equity

**Total 15 Points  
Maximum 2 pages**

3a) Describe a research or evaluation project where you had to identify barriers to SDOH, identify gaps in addressing them, and/or identify geographic areas with high SDOH needs. Which SDOH barriers were addressed in this project? Describe the process and data sources used to identify the SDOH and/or geographic areas prioritized in this project.

3b) Describe the data sources or other resources you plan to use to identify social determinant of health barriers affecting a priority population identified by the AIDS Institute for research/evaluation.

3c) Describe how you will ensure health equity is included in your evaluation plan/research design.

3d) What is your organization's policy around addressing SDOH? What is the agency's capacity (staff knowledge, staff training, support for collaboration and evaluation) at addressing health equity through the context of social determinants of health?

3e) How does the organization's leadership reflect the population served?

#### 4. Program Design and Implementation

**Total 15 Points**  
**Maximum 2 pages**

- 4a) How does your proposed staffing plan meet the minimum requirement described in the program model and what modifications have you made that will enhance the research/evaluation? Provide a brief description of each position's roles and responsibilities, along with job qualifications, educational background, licensures and experience required for each position. If in-kind staff are included in the proposed program, they should be included in the staffing detail. Indicate whether each position is to be hired or existing staff.
- 4b) Describe the plan for initial and ongoing staff training and support.

#### 5. Budgets and Justifications

**Total 20 Points**  
**Not included in page limit**

*Complete and submit a budget following these instructions:*

- 5a) Applicants are instructed to prepare an annual budget based on the maximum award as listed for the region in which they are applying. The budget for year one **November 1, 2026 – October 31, 2027**, must be entered into the Statewide Financial System (SFS). Entering a budget for years two (2) – three (3) is not required. Refer to **Attachment 14: SFS Expenditure Budget Instructions**. All budget lines should be calculated as whole dollar amounts. All costs should be related to the proposed activities, as described in the application narrative and work plan, and should be justified in detail. All costs should be reasonable and cost-effective. Contracts established resulting from the RFA will be cost reimbursable. Once the budget in SFS is completed, Applicants are required to also enter the total grant funds being requested in the Unit Bid Price field at the bottom of the page. The total grant funds and Unit Bid Price must match in order for the application to submit successfully.
- 5b) For staff listed in the Personal services (Salary and Fringe) section of the budget, include a breakdown of the total salary needs for staff. Indicate how the positions relate to program implementation. Applicants are instructed to include a justification for each of the requested FTE's and for the fringe benefits requested.
- 5c) For each item listed under Non-Personal services, describe how it is necessary for program implementation. Non-Personal services include: Contractual, Travel, Equipment, Space/Property & Utilities, Operating Expenses and Other costs.
- 5d) Describe the specific internal controls your agency uses to comply with the Federal Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200).
- 5e) Funding requests must adhere to the following guidelines:
- An indirect cost rate of up to 15% of modified total direct costs can be requested. If your organization has a federally approved rate, contractors may request up to 20% of the federally approved rate. If your agency has a federally approved rate of less than 20%, the maximum indirect rate that can be requested is the federally approved rate.
  - Funding may only be used to expand existing activities and create new activities pursuant to this RFA. Funds may **not** be used to supplant funds for currently existing staff and activities.

- Ineligible budget items will be removed from the budget prior to contracting. Ineligible items are those items determined by NYSDOH to be inadequately justified in relation to the proposed Work Plan or not fundable under existing federal guidance (Uniform Guidance). The budget amount requested will be reduced to reflect the removal of the ineligible items.

## 6. Work Plan

For the **SFS Work Plan Project Summary**, applicants are instructed to insert the Project Summary as it is listed in **Component A Work Plan, Attachment 3**. Any additional Project Summary entered in the Project Summary area **will not** be considered or scored by reviewers of your application.

Funded applicants will be held to the Objective, Tasks, and Performance Measures listed in **Attachment 3: Component A Work Plan**. Applicants are not required to enter any Objectives, Tasks, or Performance Measures into the SFS Work Plan.

## Component B

### Application Format

|                                      |                |                  |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| 1. Program Abstract                  | Not Scored     |                  |
| 2. Community and Agency Description  | Maximum Score: | 20 points        |
| 3. Health Equity                     | Maximum Score: | 15 points        |
| 4. Program Design and Implementation | Maximum Score: | 45 points        |
| 5. Budget and Justification          | Maximum Score: | <u>20 points</u> |
|                                      |                | 100 points       |

### 1. Program Abstract

**Not Scored**  
**Maximum 1 page**

Applicants should provide a program abstract with the following information:

- 1a) Describe the proposed project. Briefly describe the selected intervention and plans to inform and scale-up the intervention to increase HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis uptake among Black and Brown communities in New York State.
- 1b) What are the Project goals and objectives?
- 1c) In what geographic regions will Phase 1 (informing scale-up) and Phase 2 (scaling up, evaluating, and disseminating) of the research and evaluation be conducted?
- 1d) Describe the priority population. Indicate the anticipated sample size in Phase 2, scaling up of the intervention.
- 1e) What types of outcomes does your organization expect to achieve? How will success be measured?
- 1f) What is the anticipated project timeline, including Institutional Review Board Approval, planning, Phases 1 and 2, and dissemination?

- 1g) Applicants are instructed to provide a copy of the curriculum vitae of the Principal Investigator as **Attachment 13** as part of your full application submission.
- 1h) Indicate the number years of experience the Principal Investigator has conducting public health research and/or evaluation, including conceptualization, methodology, analysis, interpretation of results, and writing.
- 1i) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 1 – Statement of Assurances** as part of your full application submission.
- 1j) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 10 – Minority & Women-Owned Business Enterprise Forms** as part of your full application submission.
- 1k) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 11 – Vendor Responsibility Attestation** as part of your full application submission.
- 1l) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Application Cover Page - Attachment 12** as part of your full application submission.

**2. Community and Agency Description**

**Total 20 Points  
Maximum 2 pages**

- 2a) Describe why the applicant is qualified to implement the proposed intervention. Include both quantitative and qualitative experience related to intervention scale-up, and the applicant’s ability to reach the priority population.
- 2b) Describe the organization’s capacity to acquire Institutional Review Board approval, where necessary, to conduct research/evaluation and anticipated timeline from protocol submission to approval.
- 2c) Describe the applicant’s experience disseminating research/evaluation findings in peer-reviewed journals and/or conference presentations.
- 2d) Describe the applicant’s experience disseminating research/evaluation findings to relevant stakeholders. Provide a brief example that demonstrates the applicant’s experience communicating research/evaluation findings to various stakeholder groups and how the applicant incorporated contextual factors (e.g., culture, language, health literacy levels) in the dissemination approach(es).
- 2e) Please describe any prior grants your organization has received from the AIDS Institute that are relevant to this proposal. Include the results of the program and successes of those grants. Or, if your organization has not received funding from the AIDS Institute, describe any similar types of programs that your organization has undertaken in the past, including the identified results of the program and the successes in achieving those results.

**3. Health Equity**

**Total 15 Points  
Maximum 2 pages**

- 3a) Which SDOH that negatively influences PrEP uptake among Black and Brown individuals will be addressed with this funding?
- 3b) Please provide the most current data that you have used to identify the SDOH barriers affecting the population served by the funding.
- 3c) Describe how will you monitor and evaluate the immediate impact of your efforts to address the SDOH. (i.e., if your intervention addresses transportation access, how will you assess the extent to which providing access increases pre-exposure prophylaxis uptake among your target population?)
- 3d) What is your organization's policy around addressing SDOH? What is the agency's capacity (staff knowledge, staff training, support for collaboration and evaluation) at addressing this?
- 3e) How does the organization's leadership reflect the population served?

#### 4. Program Design and Implementation

**Total 45 Points**  
**Maximum 5 pages**

- 4a) Describe your selected evidence-based intervention, including whether this is a designated evidence-based intervention described in **Attachment 2 - Intervention Eligibility Criteria - Component B** or an alternative intervention meeting the specified criteria. Specify the intended target population and whether this population represents a change from the population targeted to establish the intervention's evidence base.
- 4b) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 2 - Intervention Eligibility Criteria Component B** as part of your full application submission.
- 4c) Describe your overall program design for the scale-up of the intervention. Describe the setting in which the scale-up will occur (i.e. hospital, community-based, internet-based, etc.) and the approximate number of Black and Brown New Yorkers frequenting the setting in a one-year period. Include a description of how the intervention will reach the targeted communities of color, the expected number of persons to be reached, and the specific strategies selected to implement the intervention.
- 4d) Describe all significant deviations from the original design and implementation of the intervention. If your project changes the target population, include a rationale for how the intervention is, or will be made, appropriate for the new population. Describe the intervention's key characteristics and note whether or not the key characteristics represent modifications to the original intervention's key characteristics.
- 4e) Describe key community partnerships required for successful implementation of the proposed program. If utilizing subcontractors, describe how subcontractors will engage with members of the priority population.
- 4f) Describe your process and your timeline for informing the scale-up of the intervention (Phase 1). Include a description of how you will ensure that the standards identified in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes for Component B are in place prior to implementing the intervention.

- 4g) Describe your process and your timeline for scaling up and disseminating the intervention (Phase 2) across the three-year study period.
- 4h) Describe your program's indicators for success. Describe how you will track and measure the program indicators in real-time and how you will implement corrective action for indicators falling below prescribed targets. Program indicators should measure one (1) or more of the following outcomes, with HIV Pre-exposure prophylaxis initiation/uptake being a required indicator:
- Pre-exposure prophylaxis initiation/uptake **[Required]**;
  - Screening for pre-exposure prophylaxis eligibility and referring to pre-exposure prophylaxis services;
  - Linkage to pre-exposure prophylaxis care;
  - Pre-exposure prophylaxis prescribing behavior; and
  - Pre-exposure prophylaxis utilization among healthcare systems and communities.
- 4i) Describe your process for creating the necessary documentation of the scale-up for the AIDS Institute and others to use for future replication of project upon its completion.
- 4j) Describe your proposed staffing plan for this project. Provide a brief description of each position's roles and responsibilities, along with job qualifications, educational background, licensures and experience required for each position. If in-kind staff are included in the proposed program, they should be included in the staffing detail. Indicate whether each position is to be hired or existing staff.

## 5. Budgets and Justifications

**Total 20 Points  
Not included in page limit**

*Complete and submit a budget following these instructions:*

- 5a) Applicants are instructed to prepare an annual budget based on the maximum award as listed for the region in which they are applying. The budget for year one **November 1, 2026 – October 31, 2027**, must be entered into the Statewide Financial System (SFS). Entering a budget for years two (2) – three (3) is not required. Refer to **Attachment 14: SFS Expenditure Budget Instructions**. All budget lines should be calculated as whole dollar amounts. All costs should be related to the proposed activities, as described in the application narrative and work plan, and should be justified in detail. All costs should be reasonable and cost-effective. Contracts established resulting from the RFA will be cost reimbursable. Once the budget in SFS is completed, Applicants are required to also enter the total grant funds being requested in the Unit Bid Price field at the bottom of the page. The total grant funds and Unit Bid Price must match in order for the application to submit successfully.
- 5b) For staff listed in the Personal services (Salary and Fringe) section of the budget, include a breakdown of the total salary needs for staff. Indicate how the positions relate to program implementation. Applicants are instructed to include a justification for each of the requested FTE's and for the fringe benefits requested.

5c) For each item listed under Non-Personal services, describe how it is necessary for program implementation. Non-Personal services include: Contractual, Travel, Equipment, Space/Property & Utilities, Operating Expenses and Other costs.

5d) Describe the specific internal controls your agency uses to comply with the Federal Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200).

5e) Funding requests must adhere to the following guidelines:

- An indirect cost rate of up to 15% of modified total direct costs can be requested. If your organization has a federally approved rate, contractors may request up to 20% of the federally approved rate. If your agency has a federally approved rate of less than 20%, the maximum indirect rate that can be requested is the federally approved rate.
- Funding may only be used to expand existing activities and create new activities pursuant to this RFA. Funds may **not** be used to supplant funds for currently existing staff and activities.
- Ineligible budget items will be removed from the budget prior to contracting. Ineligible items are those items determined by NYSDOH to be inadequately justified in relation to the proposed Work Plan or not fundable under existing federal guidance (Uniform Guidance). The budget amount requested will be reduced to reflect the removal of the ineligible items.

## 6. Work Plan

6a) Applicants are instructed to complete and include **Attachment 4: Component B Work Plan** found in the “Attachments Section” of the Statewide Financial System (SFS) online Application/Bid Event. **Attachment 4** should be completed according to the instructions below and included as part of your full Application submission. Tasks and Performance Measures proposed by the Applicant in the Work Plan should align with the proposed Program Model, program activities, and the program objectives outlined in the Request for Applications.

**Instructions:** For the **SFS Work Plan Project Summary**, applicants are instructed to insert the Project Summary as it is listed in **Component B Work Plan, Attachment 4**. Any additional Project Summary entered in the Project Summary area **will not** be considered or scored by reviewers of your application.

Funded applicants will be held to the Objectives as listed in Attachment 4: Component B Work Plan.

- For Objectives 1, 2, and 3, applicants are instructed to enter Tasks and corresponding Performance Measures into **Attachment 4 – Component B Work Plan**. For Objectives 1, 2, and 3, Tasks are limited to three (3) tasks per Objective and Performance Measures are limited to three (3) performance measures per corresponding Task.
- For Objective 4, all Objectives, Tasks and Performance measures have been established. **Applicants may not enter additional Tasks or Performance Measures for Objective 4 in the Work Plan.**

Applicants will **not** enter any Tasks or Performance Measures into the **SFS Work Plan Section** at the time of application but will complete and submit **Attachment 4 – Component B Work Plan**, found in the “**Attachments Section**” of the Statewide Financial System online Application/Bid Event as part of your full Application submission.

If awarded a contract, Grantees will be instructed to insert Tasks and corresponding Performance Measures in the Statewide Financial System (SFS) Work Plan for Objectives 1, 2, and 3.

**When entering tasks into the Work Plan, each Task must have a Task description of no more than 2,000 characters. In addition, each Task must have a corresponding Performance Measure narrative of no more than 2,000 characters.**

## **B. Freedom of Information Law**

All Applications may be disclosed or used by the Department to the extent permitted by law. The Department may disclose an Application to any person for the purpose of assisting in evaluating the Application or for any other lawful purpose. All Applications will become State agency records, and will be available to the public in accordance with the New York State Freedom of Information Law (FOIL). **Any portion of an Application that an Applicant believes constitutes proprietary information entitled to confidential handling, as an exception to the general rule regarding the availability to the public of State agency records under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Law, must be clearly and specifically designated in the Application.** Applicants are instructed to clearly and specifically identify all proprietary/confidential information from the application on a separate MS Word document and upload the document to the full PDF of the Application. Label the attachment as “Proprietary/Confidential Information” and include the following sentence in the document, “Subject to Public Officers Law the following materials are considered trade secrets, proprietary, and/or confidential commercial information.” If the Department agrees with the Applicant’s claim regarding the proprietary nature of any portion of an Application, the designated portion of the Application will be withheld from public disclosure. Blanket assertions of proprietary material will not be accepted, and failure to specifically designate proprietary material may be deemed a waiver of any right to confidential handling of such material.

## **C. Review & Award Process**

An Application which meets ALL of the guidelines set forth above will be reviewed and evaluated competitively by the NYSDOH AI. An Application that does not meet the minimum criteria (PASS/FAIL) will not be evaluated. An Application that does not provide all required information will be omitted from consideration.

In the event of a tie score, the applicant with the highest score for Section 3 – Health Equity – will receive the award. Should there still be a tie score, the applicant with the highest score in Section 4. Program Design and Implementation will receive the award.

Applications with minor issues (for example, an Application missing information that is not essential to timely review and would not impact review scores) **may** be processed and evaluated, at the discretion of the State, but any issues with an Application which are identified by the Department **must** be resolved prior to time of award. An Application with unresolved issues at the time award recommendations are made will be determined to be non-responsive and will be disqualified.

NYSDOH AI reserves the right to revise the award amounts as necessary due to changes in the availability of funding. If changes in funding amounts are necessary for this initiative, funding will be modified and awarded in the same manner as outlined in the award process described above. NYSDOH AI reserves the right to review and rescind all subcontracts.

Applicants will be deemed to fall into one of three categories: 1) not approved, 2) not funded due to limited resources, and 3) approved and funded. Not funded applications may be awarded should additional funds become available.

Once awards have been made pursuant to the terms of this RFA, an Applicant may request a debriefing of their own Application (whether their application was funded or not funded). The debriefing will be limited only to the strengths and weaknesses of the Application submitted by the Applicant requesting a debriefing and will not include any discussion of ANY OTHER Applications. Requests for a debriefing must be received by the AIDS Institute no later than fifteen (15) Calendar days from date of the award or non-award announcement to the Applicant requesting a debriefing.

To request a debriefing, please send an email to Shu-Yin John Leung at [researchrfa@health.ny.gov](mailto:researchrfa@health.ny.gov). In the subject line, please write: *Debriefing Request Research and Evaluation Grants RFA*.

Unsuccessful Applicants who wish to protest the award(s) resulting from this RFA on legal and/or factual grounds, should follow the protest procedures established by the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC). These procedures can be found on the OSC website at <https://www.osc.state.ny.us/state-agencies/gfo/chapter-xi/xi17-protest-procedures> (Section XI. 17.)

## VI. Attachments

Please note that ALL Attachments to this RFA are accessed under the **“Attachments Section”** of the Statewide Financial System online Application/Bid Event and are not included in the RFA document. In order to access the online Application/Bid Event and other required documents such as the Attachments, a prospective Applicant must be registered and logged into the NYS Statewide Financial System. Attachments that are requested to be uploaded as part of an Application/Bid Event response should be included as part of your full Application submission (See Section V.A., “Application Format/Content”).

**ALL applicants are instructed to verify each required attachment has been included with the full Application submission.** To check attachments, Applicants are instructed to click "View" in the SFS application for each uploaded attachment to ensure that the attachment and all of its applicable information/data is viewable in its final format.

**PDF Attachments – due to system constraints, PDF attachments cannot be uploaded with annotations, editable fields, or JAVA/active controls. Please submit PDFs that are read- only.**

Attachment 1: Statement of Assurances\*

Attachment 2: Intervention Eligibility Criteria - Component B only\*

Attachment 3: Component A Work Plan\*\*

Attachment 4: Component B Work Plan\*  
Attachment 5: Health Equity Definitions and Examples\*\*  
Attachment 6: Agency-specific Terms and Conditions (Attachment A-1)\*\*  
Attachment 7: Program-specific Terms and Conditions (HIV/AIDS Clause) (Attachment A-2)\*\*  
Attachment 8: AIDS Institute Policy on Personal Health Related Information (Attachment E-1)\*\*  
Attachment 9: Participation by Minority Group Members and Women with Respect to State  
Contracts: Requirements and Procedures (Attachment M)\*\*  
Attachment 10: M/WBE Utilization Plan\*  
Attachment 11: Vendor Responsibility Attestation\*  
Attachment 12: Application Cover Page\*  
Attachment 13: Curriculum Vitae for the Principal Investigator\*  
Attachment 14: SFS Expenditure Budget Instructions\*\*  
Attachment 15: Application Checklist\*  
Attachment 16: Gender-Based Violence and the Workplace Certification\*

\*These attachments **must** be uploaded as part of your agency's Statewide Financial System (SFS) full online Application submission. Attachments to be downloaded and completed are located in the "**Attachments Section**" of the Statewide Financial System online Application/Bid Event.

\*\*These attachments do not need to be completed and are for Applicant information only. These Attachments may be accessed in the "**Attachments Section**" of the Statewide Financial System online Application/Bid Event.