

ADDENDUM #1

March 31, 2026

New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute

Request for Applications (RFA)

Ending Epidemics Education, Training and Technical Assistance Services

This is a procurement which encompasses five (5) Components.

Component A: Regional Training Centers

Component B: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise

Component C: Distance Learning Resource Center

Component D: New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center

Component E: Training Centers for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources

The following are official modifications, which are hereby incorporated into **RFA #20760, Internal Program #25-0003/SFS #s: EEET&T-A26; EEET&T-B26; EEET&T-C26; EEET&T-D26; EEET&T-E26.**

The information contained in this Addendum prevails over the original RFA language.

Applicants should review all documents in their entirety to ensure all amended language is incorporated into their applications.

The following change is made to **Attachment 21: M/WBE Utilization Plan.**

The **Attachment 21: M/WBE Utilization Plan** document that can be found in the “**Attachments Section**” of the Statewide Financial System online Application/Bid Event is a fillable PDF and ***should not be uploaded as part of the full Application submission as it may cause an error in the upload.***

Please complete and submit the PDF document (non-fillable), Attachment 21: M/WBE Utilization Plan.REVISED included in this Addendum and include as part of your full application submission.

Attachment 21

RFA 20760

GUIDE TO NEW YORK STATE DOH M/WBE RFA REQUIRED FORMS

All DOH procurements have a section entitled “**MINORITY AND WOMEN OWNED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE REQUIREMENTS**” which sets forth the established DOH goal for that procurement and describes the forms that must be completed with their proposal or application. See below for a summary of each required form.

There are five (5) forms used by a grantee in the DOH MWBE Participation Program:

1. MWBE Utilization Plan
2. MWBE Utilization Waiver Request
3. Payments to MWBE Firms (Online Compliance System)
4. MWBE Staffing Plan
5. EEO and MWBE Policy Statement

Form #1: MWBE Utilization Plan –

This document is mandatory for all awards with MWBE Utilization Goals and must be completed by all grantees responding to RFAs with an MWBE goal greater than zero. Utilization Plans (UP) are not definitive commitments and include estimates which can be revised after a contract is executed. Therefore, the first submission of the UP may be an estimate. When requesting a waiver, the reasoning for not meeting the goal should be clear with explanatory documentation that no MWBE exists or can be used to meet the established goal.

If requesting a...	Then complete the “Description of Plan” ...
Partial Waiver	justifying the reduced goal and strategy to meet new goal
Full Waiver (onset of contract)	indicating why the established goal cannot be reached
Full Waiver (after onset of contract)	stating the original strategy to meet the goal and what changed

In completing this form, the grantee should describe:

- steps taken to establish communication with MWBE firms;
- current or future relationships with certified MWBE firms;
- the MWBE certified firms that the vendor plans/planned to engage with on the project;
- the amount that each certified firm is projected to be paid; and
- the breakdown of their eligible expense percentage.

Note: **Only New York State certified firms**, found on the NYS Directory, meet the criteria for participation. If a vendor has applied to Empire State Development (ESD) to become certified but is not found on the [NYS Directory](#), see form two (2). Certification of a firm in New York City (NYC) does not guarantee the firm is also NYS certified.

When a Utilization Plan is not submitted or is deemed deficient, the grantee may be sent a notice of deficiency.

Form #2: MWBE Utilization Waiver Request –

This document must be filled out by the grantee if the MWBE Goal is less than the stated MWBE Goal on the contract. In this instance, Form #2 must accompany Form #1 with the proposal.

In completing this form, the grantee must:

- Thoroughly document the steps that were taken to meet the goal
- Provide evidence in the form of Good-Faith Effort (GFE) attachments including but not limited to:
 - price negotiations
 - emails
 - searches within the NYS Directory

The Department of Health may not approve the waiver and the grantee may be deemed non-responsive without evidence of GFE's. If Form #2 is found by DOH to be deficient, the grantee will be sent a deficiency letter asking for a revised form to be returned within 7 business days of receipt.

Form #3: Online Compliance System - <https://ny.newnycontracts.com> Grantees will need to login and submit payments to MWBE Firms in this online system and sign form three (3) as acknowledgement of this requirement.

Form #4 – MWBE Staffing Plan - This form should be completed based on the composition of staff working on the project. Enter the numbers or counts in the corresponding boxes and add up the totals in each column. This form is for diversity research purposes only and has no bearing on MWBE goal achievement.

Form #5 – EEO and MWBE Policy Statement - This is a standard EEO policy that needs to be signed and dated and submitted.

New York State Department of Health
Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (“MWBE”)
Utilization Plan

***Required Field**

Prime Contractor Name *:	
Contract/Opportunity Name *:	
RFA/RFP or Contract Number *:	
SFS Vendor ID *:	
Contact Name and Email Address *:	
Submitted by (Signature)*:	

Narrative Description of Plan to Meet MWBE Goals *

Use pages 2-3 to provide specific certified Minority-Owned Business Enterprise (“MBE”) and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (“WBE”) subcontractor information. Add additional pages as needed. Potential MWBEs **MUST** be identified to demonstrate the intention for proposed utilization-“NA” or “TBD” is not acceptable. The utilization plan can be updated as needed if MWBEs identified change.

If submitted in addition to a waiver request, description **MUST** include justification for waiver request and address good faith efforts made to locate and contract with MWBE vendors.

Projected MWBE Utilization Summary

	%	Amount
1. Total Value of Eligible Expenses *:	100%	
2. MBE Goal Applied *:		
3. WBE Goal Applied *:		
4. MWBE Combined Goal Totals *:		

MBE Subcontractor Information

In order to achieve the MBE Goals, Prime Contractor expects to subcontract/purchase with New York State certified MINORITY-OWNED entities as follows. Potential MBEs MUST be identified to demonstrate the intention for proposed utilization-"NA" or "TBD" is not acceptable. The utilization plan can be updated as needed if MBEs identified change.

MBE Firm (Exactly as Registered)	Description of Work (Products/Services)	Projected MBE Expenditure Amount
Name Address City, State, ZIP Employer I.D. Telephone Number () -		\$ _____
Name Address City, State, ZIP Employer I.D. Telephone Number () -		\$ _____
Name Address City, State, ZIP Employer I.D. Telephone Number () -		\$ _____

WBE SUBCONTRACTOR INFORMATION

In order to achieve the MBE Goals, grantee expects to subcontract/purchase with New York State certified WOMEN-OWNED entities as follows. Potential WBEs MUST be identified to demonstrate the intention for proposed utilization-"NA" or "TBD" is not acceptable. The utilization plan can be updated as needed if WBEs identified change.

WBE Firm (Exactly as Registered)	Description of Work (Products/Services)	Projected WBE Expenditure Amount
Name Address City, State, ZIP Employer I.D. Telephone Number () -		\$ _____
Name Address City, State, ZIP Employer I.D. Telephone Number () -		\$ _____
Name Address City, State, ZIP Employer I.D. Telephone Number () -		\$ _____

New York State Department of Health MWBE Waiver Request

Applicant/Grantee: *	Federal Identification No. or SFS Vendor ID: *	
Address: *	Solicitation/Contract No.: *	
City, State, Zip Code: *	Assigned M/WBE Goals over life of Contract: MBE % WBE % * (From Lines 2&3 of Form 1)	
<p>Contractor is requesting the following waiver of the procurement goal: *(check one)</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Total MBE Waiver <input type="checkbox"/> Partial MBE Waiver <input type="checkbox"/> Total M/WBE Waiver <input type="checkbox"/> Total WBE Waiver <input type="checkbox"/> Partial WBE Waiver </p> <p>If a total or partial waiver is requested, appropriate supporting documentation as outlined in the Detailed MWBE Form Instructions MUST be submitted. Supporting documentation includes but is not limited to a narrative explanation, MWBE directory screenshots and documented efforts of outreach to MWBEs.</p> <p>Note: submission of a waiver request does not constitute approval of the request. Until notice of approval, efforts should still be made to engage with MWBEs and such efforts documented.</p> <p>By submitting this form and the required information, the officer or/contractor certifies that every Good Faith Effort has been taken to promote M/WBE participation pursuant to the M/WBE requirements set forth under the contract. When requesting a waiver, it should be clear that no MWBE exists or can be used to meet the established goal.</p> <p>Submission of this form constitutes the Offeror/Contractor's acknowledgement and agreement to comply with the M/WBE requirements set forth under NYS Executive Laws, Article 15-A and 5 NYCRR Part 143. Failure to submit complete and accurate information may result in a finding of noncompliance and/or termination of the contract.</p>		
PREPARED BY (Signature) *		Date: *
Name and Title of Preparer (Printed or Typed): *	Telephone Number: *	Email Address: *
Submit with the bid or proposal or if submitting after award submit to: mwbe@health.ny.gov		
For DOH Use Only	Approved By:	Date:
<p>Waiver Granted: <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Total MBE Waiver <input type="checkbox"/> Partial MBE Waiver <input type="checkbox"/> Total M/WBE Waiver <input type="checkbox"/> Total WBE Waiver <input type="checkbox"/> Partial WBE Waiver </p>		

New York State Department of Health
New York State Contract System Payment and Workforce
Utilization Submission Confirmation

Grantee/Contractor Name:	
Vendor ID:	Telephone No. Email:
RFA/RFP/Contract Title:	RFA/RFP Contract No.
<p>The Contractor is required to log into the New York Contract System and submit their Quarterly M/WBE Contractor Compliance payment data and/or Workforce Utilization report required as part of Executive Order 162). This must be submitted to the Department of Health, no later than the 10th day following the end of the quarter being reported.</p> <p>More information regarding Executive Order 162 can be found here: Executive Order 162</p> <p>Below is a breakdown of the reporting dates for your reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q1 – April - June is due by July 10th • Q2 – July -September is due by October 10th • Q3 – October -December is due by January 10th • Q4 – January -March is due by April 10th 	
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> Signature of Acknowledgement	<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> Date:

New York State Department of Health
MWBE STAFFING PLAN

General instructions: All Offerors/ Vendors and each subcontractor identified in the bid or proposal must complete an EEO Staffing Plan (MWBE 101) and submit it as part of the bid or proposal package. Where the work force to be utilized in the performance of the State contract can be separated out from the contractor's and/or subcontractor's total work force, the Offeror/ Vendor shall complete this form only for the anticipated work force to be utilized on the State contract. Where the work force to be utilized in the performance of the State contract cannot be separated out from the contractor's and/or subcontractor's total work force, the Offeror/ Vendor shall complete this form for the contractor's and/or subcontractor's total work force.

Instructions for completing:

1. Enter the Solicitation/ Contract number that this report applies to along with the name and address of the Offeror/Vendor.
2. Check off the appropriate box to indicate if the Offeror/Vendor completing the report is the contractor or a subcontractor.
3. Check off the appropriate box to indicate work force to be utilized on the contract or the Offeror's/ Vendor's total work force.
4. Enter the total work force by EEO job category.
5. Break down the anticipated total work force by gender and enter under applicable Job Category.
6. Break down the anticipated total work force by race/ethnic identification and enter under the heading 'Work force by Race/Ethnic Identification'. Contact the OMWBE Permissible contact(s) for the solicitation if you have any questions.
7. Enter information on disabled or veterans included in the anticipated work force under the appropriate headings.
8. Enter the name, title, phone number and email address for the person completing the form. Sign and date the form in the designated boxes.

RACE/ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION

Race/ethnic designations as used by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission do not denote scientific definitions of anthropological origins. For the purposes of this form, an employee may be included in the group to which he or she appears to belong, identifies with, or is regarded in the community as belonging. However, no person should be counted in more than one race/ethnic group. The race/ethnic categories for this survey are:

- WHITE - (Not of Hispanic origin) All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East.
- BLACK - a person, not of Hispanic origin, who has origins in any of the black racial groups of the original peoples of Africa.
- HISPANIC - a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
- ASIAN - a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent. The Asian category is further broken out into: Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, Vietnamese, Asian Indian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Hmong, Cambodian, Thai, Other Asian group.
- PACIFIC ISLANDER - a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Pacific Islands. The Pacific Islander category is further broken out into: Native Hawaiian, Guamanian and Chamorro, Samoan, Other Pacific Island group.
- NATIVE INDIAN (NATIVE AMERICAN/ ALASKAN NATIVE) - a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America, and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.
- OTHER CATEGORIES/INDIVIDUAL - any person who:
 - has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity(ies)
 - has a record of such an impairment; or
 - is regarded as having such an impairment.
- VETERAN - a person who served in the military.
- GENDER - Male, Female, or X

STAFFING PLAN

Solicitation/ Contract No.: _____

Report includes Contractor's/Subcontractor's:
 Work force to be utilized on this contract
 Total work force

Offeror/ Vendor Name: _____
 Offeror/ Vendor
 Subcontractor

Offeror/ Vendor Address: _____
Subcontractor's name _____

EEO-Job Category	Officials/ Administrators		Professionals		Technicians		Sales Workers		Office/Clerical		Craft Workers		Laborers		Service Workers		Temporary/ Apprentices		Totals	
	(M)	(F)	(M)	(F)	(M)	(F)	(M)	(F)	(M)	(F)	(M)	(F)	(M)	(F)	(M)	(F)	(M)	(F)		(X)
White																				
Black																				
Hispanic																				
Chinese																				
Japanese																				
Filipino																				
Korean																				
Vietnamese																				
Asian Indian																				
Bangladeshi																				
Pakistani																				
Hmong																				
Cambodian																				
Thai																				
Other Asian Group																				
Native Hawaiian																				
Guamanian and Chamorro																				
Samoan																				
Other Pacific Islander Group																				
Native American																				
Disabled																				
Military Service																				
Male																				
Female																				
Work force by Gender																				
X																				

PREPARED BY (Signature): _____ TELEPHONE NO.: EMAIL ADDRESS: _____ DATE: _____

NAME AND TITLE OF PREPARER (Print or Type): _____ Submit completed with bid or proposal MWBE 101 (Rev 03/11)

**MINORITY AND WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES –
EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY STATEMENT**

M/WBE AND EEO POLICY STATEMENT

I, _____, the (awardee/contractor) _____ agree to adopt the following policies with respect to the project being developed or services rendered at _____

M/WBE

This organization will and will cause its contractors and subcontractors to take good faith actions to achieve the M/WBE contract participations goals set by the State for that area in which the State-funded project is located, by taking the following steps:

Actively and affirmatively solicit bids for contracts and subcontracts from qualified State certified MBEs or WBEs, including solicitations to M/WBE contractor associations. Request a list of State-certified M/WBEs from AGENCY and solicit bids from them directly.

Ensure that plans, specifications, request for proposals and other documents used to secure bids will be made available in sufficient time for review by prospective M/WBEs.

Where feasible, divide the work into smaller portions to enhanced participations by M/WBEs and encourage the formation of joint venture and other partnerships among M/WBE contractors to enhance their participation.

Document and maintain records of bid solicitation, including those to M/WBEs and the results thereof. Contractor will also maintain records of actions that its subcontractors have taken toward meeting M/WBE contract participation goals.

Ensure that progress payments to M/WBEs are made on a timely basis so that undue financial hardship is avoided, and that bonding and other credit requirements are waived or appropriate alternatives developed to encourage M/WBE participation.

Name & Title

Signature & Date

EEO

(a) This organization will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, disability or marital status, will undertake or continue existing programs of affirmative action to ensure that minority group members are afforded equal employment opportunities without discrimination, and shall make and document its conscientious and active efforts to employ and utilize minority group members and women in its work force on state contracts.

(b) This organization shall state in all solicitation or advertisements for employees that in the performance of the State contract all qualified applicants will be afforded equal employment opportunities without discrimination because of race, creed, color, national origin, sex disability or marital status.

(c) At the request of the contracting agency, this organization shall request each employment agency, labor union, or authorized representative will not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, disability or marital status and that such union or representative will affirmatively cooperate in the implementation of this organization’s obligations herein.

(d) Contractor shall comply with the provisions of the Human Rights Law, all other State and Federal statutory and constitutional non-discrimination provisions. Contractor and subcontractors shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, creed (religion), color, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, age, disability, predisposing genetic characteristic, marital status or domestic violence victim status, and shall also follow the requirements of the Human Rights Law with regard to non-discrimination on the basis of prior criminal conviction and prior arrest.

(e) This organization will include the provisions of sections (a) through (d) of this agreement in every subcontract in such a manner that the requirements of the subdivisions will be binding upon each subcontractor as to work in connection with the State contract.

RFA #20760/Internal Program #25-0003

SFS #s: EEET&T-A26; EEET&T-B26; EEET&T-C26; EEET&T-D26; EEET&T-E26

SFS Event Names: RFA#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp A
RFA#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp B
RFA#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp C
RFA#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp D
RFA#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp E

New York State Department of Health
AIDS Institute
Office of the Medical Director and Health Research, Inc.

Request for Applications (RFA)

Ending Epidemics Education, Training and Technical Assistance Services

This is a procurement which encompasses five (5) Components.

Component A: Regional Training Centers

Component B: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise

Component C: Distance Learning Resource Center

Component D: New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center

Component E: Training Centers for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources

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.

An applicant may submit up to seven (7) applications in response to this RFA, with specific limitations as follows:

- Component A – Limit of no more than one (1) application
- Component B – Limit of no more than three (3) applications
- Component E – Limit of no more than one (1) application

Key Dates

RFA Release Date:	March 24, 2026
Questions Due:	April 7, 2026, by 4:00 PM ET
Questions, Answers and Updates Posted: (on or about)	April 22, 2026
Applications Due:	May 12, 2026, by 4:00 PM ET

DOH Contact Name & Address:

Shannon Mason
Educational Services and Materials Review
Office of the Medical Director, NYS Department of Health/AIDS Institute
Email: hivet@health.ny.gov

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.

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I. Introduction

The New York State Department of Health, (herein referred to as the Department), AIDS Institute, Office of the Medical Director and Health Research, Inc. (HRI) announce the availability of New York State and federal funds to provide an array of innovative professional training and capacity building programs as outlined below. Rooted in the Department of Health AIDS Institute's commitment to advancing health equity and racial justice, these programs aim to prepare non-physician health and human services providers who work with AIDS Institute programs and partners with the knowledge and skills to mount an effective response to end preventable epidemics, advance equity, fight stigma and promote health.

The intent of the Request for Applications (RFA) is to fund **\$3,094,000 annually** for five (5) years.

Component A: Regional Training Centers

The purpose of Component A funding is to identify a total of three (3) qualified training contractors, one (1) in each region, who will deliver educational and training services on a range of topics to address health inequities and improve health outcomes related to HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections (STI), sexual health, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/ Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual (LGBTQAI+) health and drug user health. Services are informed by the demographic, epidemiological and/or unique social determinants of health profiles of the region and tailored to meet the unique needs of the region.

Component B: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise

The purpose of Component B funding is to identify a total of seven (7) qualified training contractors, one (1) per topic area with statewide reach, to serve as Centers of Expertise who will design and deliver training, technical assistance, and capacity building activities to enhance organizational capacity to advance health equity and improve health outcomes in the following areas:

- Promoting Sexual Health;
- Promoting Health for LGBTQAI+ People;
- Promoting Health for People Who Use Drugs (PWUD);
- Improving Health Outcomes for Populations Impacted by Viral Hepatitis;
- Improving Health Outcomes of People Living with HIV Across the Lifespan;
- Legal Issues Impacting People with HIV, Sexually Transmitted Infections or Viral Hepatitis; and
- Trauma Informed Care.

Component C: Distance Learning Resource Center

The purpose of Component C funding is to identify one (1) organization who will support developing the capacity of funded training providers in the *Ending Epidemics Education, Training and Technical Assistance Services Initiative* to use an array of digital tools to optimize distance learning.

Component D: New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center

The purpose of Component D funding is to identify one (1) academic institution that will facilitate the formal certification process for the New York State Peer Worker Certification Program in HIV, hepatitis C, PrEP, harm reduction and criminal justice and contribute to the development of other career advancement programs.

Component E: Training Centers for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources

The purpose of Component E funding is to identify a total of three (3) qualified training contractors, one (1) in each region, who will provide training and mentoring to prepare peers to use their shared lived experience to enhance New York State's response to HIV,

hepatitis C, sexually transmitted infections, substance use disorder and to advance health equity.

A. Background/Intent

The intent of this Request for Applications is to support a comprehensive statewide training initiative to strengthen the capacity of local public health agencies, hospitals, community-based organizations, healthcare providers, peer workers, educators, and other partners to improve outcomes for the AIDS Institute's strategic health priorities. The goal is to reduce health inequities by implementing training and education interventions, such as in-person or virtual trainings, conferences, seminars, digital learning tools, and capacity building initiatives that will prepare providers with the knowledge and skills to mount an effective response to the syndemics of HIV, viral hepatitis, sexually transmitted infections, and substance use disorders. Building upon a foundation of health equity, other priorities for training include the health concerns of the LGBTQAI+ population, the concerns of persons living with HIV across the lifespan (noting the diversity in needs depending on age-related concerns), as well as training around legal and policy initiatives for these syndemic health issues and populations at risk.

Currently, there is evidence of syndemic public health threats in New York State - meaning, multiple diseases or health conditions affecting a certain population, where these conditions are exacerbated by social and environmental factors. For instance, though overall HIV rates have declined over recent years, Black New Yorkers remain disproportionately affected by HIV.¹ In 2024, 78% of all new HIV infections occurred in Hispanic and non-Hispanic Black New Yorkers, and rates are rising among Black women. Unfortunately, the number of prescriptions of HIV post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) have declined 26% since 2019.² While Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) usage continues to steadily increase among some New Yorkers, differences in PrEP use are also evident across sex and racial and ethnic groups. Women only made up 8% of PrEP users despite accounting for 22% of new diagnoses, and PrEP uptake varied across racial and ethnic groups when compared with the distribution of new HIV diagnoses.³ Largely, these disparities are attributable to social determinants of health and systemic inequities like racism, and a lack of access to consistent and high-quality healthcare, education, housing, employment, and other challenges that stem from both poverty and systemic oppression.

Furthermore, New York State has recently experienced HIV cluster outbreaks among persons who use drugs, many of whom also are coinfecting with hepatitis C virus. While rates of hepatitis C diagnosis have steadily declined over the past decade, a rise in cases of acute hepatitis C is observed among younger persons <40 years old, as well as women of reproductive age. The most reported risk factor remains injection and non-injection drug use.⁴ Discouragingly, of those diagnosed with hepatitis C, only about half have been treated, despite there being a widely available cure. Viral hepatitis disproportionately impacts many of the same groups that experience other health disparities, including people who inject drugs, people experiencing homelessness, and people who are involved with the criminal justice system. In the US during since 2016, there is ongoing widespread person-to-person transmission of hepatitis A, with multiple health alerts issued in New York between 2018 through 2023 related to increased diagnoses of hepatitis A among Men who have Sex with Men and among persons who use illicit drugs and are experiencing homelessness.^{5, 6, 7, 8}

¹ https://www.health.ny.gov/press/releases/2025/2025-12-01_hiv_surveillance_data.htm

² <https://etedashboardny.org/data/prevention/pep-in-nys/>

³ <https://etedashboardny.org/newly-released-2024-ete-metrics-and-hiv-surveillance-data/>

⁴ <https://hcvdashboardny.org/data/>

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis-a/outbreaks/person-to-person/index.html>

⁶ https://apps.health.ny.gov/pub/ctrl/docs/alertview/postings/Notification_24646.pdf

⁷ <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/han/alert/2021/hepatitis-a-vaccine-homeless-drug-users-incarcerated.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/han/alert/2023/han-alert-24.pdf>

Rising rates of sexually transmitted infection are observed among similar populations. The reported diagnoses of gonorrhea and chlamydia continued to increase in 2023, with the highest rates of sexually transmitted infections in New York State seen in young persons, racial/ethnic minorities, and men who have sex with men. Rates of sexually transmitted infections in Hispanic and non-Hispanic Black persons were more than two and four times higher, respectively, than non-Hispanic White persons.⁹ The co-occurrence of sexually transmitted infections with HIV, hepatitis C, substance use, creates a greater disease burden than if these conditions occur in isolation. Shared risk factors such as condomless sex, injection drug use, and social and structural determinants of health, increase vulnerability to negative health outcomes.¹⁰ A recent review of congenital syphilis cases that occurred in 2024 in counties outside of New York City detected several co-morbid conditions including, but not limited to, substance use and hepatitis C. Reports of these overlapping conditions have continued in 2025.¹¹

Finally, LGBTQAI+ individuals continue to face persistent health disparities, and syndemic health issues that are the priority of the AIDS Institute. Higher rates of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV and hepatitis C, substance use disorders, mental health conditions and suicide have been widely reported among the LGBTQAI+ population. Lack of knowledgeable providers and limited availability of and access to affirming healthcare can negatively impact the health outcomes and wellbeing of LGBTQAI+ New Yorkers.

As such, the intent of this RFA is to expand the knowledge and skillset of the non-clinician healthcare team, through a dedicated statewide educational training program to address these syndemics and the potential health inequities faced by the populations that are affected and at-risk. Programs funded through this initiative will support dissemination of accurate up-to-date information and the integration of evidence based and promising practices that align with the [New York State Clinical Guidelines Program](#), as well as legal and policy issues affecting these populations. Programs funded through this initiative will be responsible for implementing a range of innovative education, training, technical assistance and capacity building services to foster, prepare and maintain a workforce of knowledgeable, skilled health and human service providers. These include (but are not limited to):

- Health program managers and administrators;
- Social workers, care coordinators, support services providers;
- Local health department and other public health staff;
- Educators, navigators and other outreach workers; and
- Community Health Workers.

This initiative will also concentrate on developing a network of knowledgeable peers as part of the healthcare workforce to support populations that are experiencing or at-risk for these health conditions. This initiative will require the development of regional and statewide resources that will help prepare and educate people with lived experience for meaningful involvement in the design and implementation of programs to address the syndemics of HIV, sexually transmitted infections, viral hepatitis, substance use disorder, stigma and discrimination. This includes formal academic certification for the New York State Certified Peer Worker, as well as expanding access to employment opportunities for peer workers to use their shared lived experience to enhance New York State's response to these syndemics.

Ending Epidemics in New York State

In June 2014, NYS announced a three-point plan to end the AIDS epidemic in NYS.¹² 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

⁹ https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/diseases/communicable/std/docs/dish_apr25.pdf

¹⁰ https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/diseases/communicable/std/docs/syndemic_dish.pdf

¹¹ https://www.health.ny.gov/press/releases/2025/2025-08-12_testing_for_syphilis.htm

¹² https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/ending_the_epidemic/index.htm

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
- 3) Increase access to Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) for persons who are HIV negative.

New York State has been laying groundwork for ending the AIDS epidemic since the disease emerged in the early 1980s. New York State's response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic has involved the development of comprehensive service delivery systems that evolved over time in sync with the evolution of AIDS from a terminal illness to a manageable chronic disease. This strategy enabled the state to implement new technologies as they were introduced, including new treatments, new diagnostic tests and, more recently, PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis). Due to the historic and robust State response over the last 36 years, New York State has bent the curve on the HIV epidemic, reversing the decades-long increase in the number of people in New York State that are diagnosed with HIV.

New York State was on track to end the epidemic by the end of 2020, with outcomes measuring Ending the Epidemic (ETE) progress available by December 2021. However, the State and providers on the frontline have 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. Health equity, social determinants of health, and addressing racial disparities will be the center of focus as we move forward.

The request for applications specifically addresses these Ending the Epidemic Blueprint (BP) recommendations:

- BP1: Make routine HIV testing truly routine;
- BP2: Expand targeted testing;
- BP3: Address acute HIV infection;
- BP4: Improve referral and engagement;
- BP7: Use client-level data to identify and assist patients lost to care or not virally suppressed;
- BP8: Enhance and streamline services to support the non-medical needs of all persons with HIV
- BP9: Provide enhanced services for patients within correctional and other institutions and specific programming for patients returning home from corrections or other institutional settings
- BP11: Undertake a statewide education campaign on PrEP and nPEP
- BP13: Create a coordinated statewide mechanism for persons to access PrEP and nPEP and prevention focused care;
- BP15: Increase momentum in promoting the health of people who use drugs;

- BP18: Health, housing and human rights for LGBT communities;
- BP19: Institute an integrated comprehensive approach to transgender health care and human rights;
- BP 21: Establish mechanisms for an HIV peer workforce;
- BP22: Access to care for residents of rural, suburban and other areas of the state;
- BP23: Promote comprehensive sexual health education; and
- BP30: Increase access to opportunities for employment and employment/vocational services.

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

The ETE BP and the ETE Addendum report are available on the New York State Department of Health website at: www.health.ny.gov/endingtheepidemic

In November 2021, NYS released its [plan](#) to eliminate hepatitis C as a public health problem in NYS 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. NYS 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 NYS hepatitis C surveillance, set and track hepatitis C elimination targets, and make this information available to the public; and
- Addressing social determinants of health.

Other relevant resources are the [National HIV/AIDS Strategy \(NHAS\)](#) and the [New York State's Prevention Agenda 2025-2030](#). The NHAS is a four-year plan published by the White House's Office of National AIDS Policy (ONAP) in 2022 that details principles, priorities, and actions to guide our collective national response to the HIV epidemic. The Prevention Agenda is New York's State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). It is a six-year initiative aimed at improving the health status of individuals in New York and reducing health disparities through a strong emphasis on prevention. The Prevention Agenda outlines key health priorities and how these priorities will be addressed to improve the health and wellbeing of all individuals in New York.

The New York State Department of Health 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 New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute is 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.

B. Available Funding

Up to **\$3,094,000** annually in New York State and HRI funding is available to support programs funded through this RFA (total of \$15,470,000 in New York State and HRI funding for five (5) years).

Funding will be allocated as stated in the chart below. Annual awards will not exceed the annual award amounts listed in the table below for each Component.

New York State Department of Health Region OR Topic-Specific Training Center (Component B only)	Annual Award Amount	New York State Funding	HRI Funding	Number of Awards
Component A: Regional Training Centers - Total Annual Funding: \$742,407				Total: 3
Central New York, Finger Lakes, and Western New York	\$280,407	\$50,000	\$230,407	1
New York City and Long Island	\$231,000	\$50,000	\$181,000	1
New York City, Mid-Hudson, and Capital District	\$231,000	\$50,000	\$181,000	1
Component B: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise - Total Annual Funding: \$1,221,593				Total: 7
Promoting Sexual Health	\$240,000	\$170,000	\$70,000	1
Promoting Health for LGBTQAI+ People	\$220,000	\$220,000		1
Promoting Health for PWUD	\$240,000	\$170,000	\$70,000	1
Improving Health Outcomes for Populations Impacted by Viral Hepatitis	\$131,593	\$131,593		1
Improving Health Outcomes of People Living with HIV Across the Lifespan	\$130,000		\$130,000	1
Legal Issues Impacting People with HIV/STI/Viral Hepatitis	\$130,000	\$130,000		1
Trauma-Informed Care	\$130,000	\$130,000		1
Component C: Distance Learning Resource Center - Total Annual Funding: \$150,000				Total: 1
Statewide	\$150,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	1

Component D: New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center - Total Annual Funding: \$230,000				Total: 1
Statewide	\$230,000	\$130,000	\$100,000	1
Component E: Training Centers for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources - Total Annual Funding: \$750,000				Total: 3
Central New York, Finger Lakes, and Western New York	\$250,000	\$50,000	\$200,000	1
New York City and Long Island	\$250,000	\$50,000	\$200,000	1
New York City, Mid-Hudson, and Capital District	\$250,000	\$50,000	\$200,000	1

Central New York, Finger Lakes and Western New York: including counties of Schoharie, Steuben, Schuyler, Yates, Seneca, Ontario, Livingston, Monroe, Wayne, St. Lawrence, Jefferson, Lewis, Oswego, Oneida, Herkimer, Onondaga, Madison, Cayuga, Chemung, Tioga, Broome, Tompkins, Delaware, Cortland, Chenango, Otsego, Niagara, Orleans, Genesee, Erie, Wyoming, Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Allegany, Essex, Hamilton, Franklin, and Clinton

New York City (NYC) and Long Island: including the five (5) boroughs of NYC, and counties of Nassau and Suffolk

New York City (NYC), Mid-Hudson and Capital District: including the five (5) boroughs of NYC, and counties of Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, Westchester, Albany, Greene, Columbia, Rensselaer, Schenectady, Saratoga, Fulton, Montgomery, Warren, and Washington

An applicant may submit up to seven (7) applications in response to this RFA, with specific limitations as follows for Components, A, B and E. Applicants are limited to one (1) application for Component A, no more than three (3) applications for Component B and only one (1) application for Component E.

Applicants for **Component A: Regional Training Centers** must select their Primary Region of Service on the **Attachment 1: Application Cover Page**. Applicants may submit only one (1) application to serve as a Regional Training Center under Component A and the applicant must have an office located in the region in which they are submitting an application. **If an applicant submits more than one (1) application in response to Component A of this RFA, the last application received for Component A will be reviewed and considered for funding. Any additional applications received for Component A will not be evaluated and will be disqualified from further consideration.**

Applicants for **Component B: Topic-Specific Training Center of Expertise** must select their Topic-Specific Training Center on the **Attachment 1: Application Cover Page**. Applicants may submit up to three (3) applications in response to Component B: Topic-Specific Training Center of Expertise. Separate and complete applications must be submitted for each topic for which the applicant is seeking funding. **If an applicant submits more than three (3) applications in response to Component B of this RFA, the last three (3) applications received for Component B will be reviewed and considered for funding. Any additional applications received for Component B will not be evaluated and will be disqualified from further consideration.**

Training Centers for **Component B: Topic-Specific Training Center of Expertise, Component C: Distance Learning Resource Center, and Component D: New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center** are expected to provide statewide services.

Applicants for **Component C: Distance Learning Resource Center** may only submit one (1)

application under Component C. **If an applicant submits more than one (1) application in response to Component C of this RFA, the last application received for Component C will be reviewed and considered for funding. Any additional applications received for Component C will not be evaluated and will be disqualified from further consideration.**

Applicants for **Component D: Distance Learning Resource Center** may only submit one (1) application under Component D. **If an applicant submits more than one (1) application in response to Component D of this RFA, the last application received for Component D will be reviewed and considered for funding. Any additional applications received for Component D will not be evaluated and will be disqualified from further consideration.**

Applicants for **Component E: Training Centers for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources** must select their Primary Region of Service on the **Attachment 1: Application Cover Page**. Applicants may submit only one (1) application under Component E and the applicant must have an office located in the region in which they are submitting an application. **If an applicant submits more than one (1) application in response to Component E of this RFA, the last application received for Component E will be reviewed and considered for funding. Any additional applications received for Component E will not be evaluated and will be disqualified from further consideration.**

For ALL COMPONENTS of this RFA: Should an applicant submit an application in error before the deadline, please contact sfs.sm.helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov to submit a corrected application, as long as it is received prior to the deadline for when applications are due. The last application(s) received will be considered as part of the maximum number of applications allowed for the Component per the guidance stated above.

- Awards will be made to the highest scoring applicants in each region/topic-specific area, up to the number of awards indicated for that region/topic-specific area. Remaining funding will be awarded to the next highest acceptable scoring applicant(s) from any region/topic-specific area until the remaining funding is exhausted, or awards have been made to all acceptable scoring applicants.
- If there is an insufficient number of acceptable applications (scoring 70 or above) received from any region/topic-specific area, the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute/HRI reserves the right to:
 - Fund an application scoring in the range of 60-69 from a region/topic-specific area; and/or
 - Apply unawarded funding to the next highest scoring applicant(s) in other region(s)/topic-specific area until the maximum number of awards per region/topic-specific area is met.
- If there is not a fundable application in a region/topic-specific area, the maximum number of awards may not be met for that region/topic-specific area. The New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute/HRI reserves the right to re-solicit any region/topic-specific area where there is not an acceptable application.
- If funding remains available after the maximum number of acceptable scoring applications is awarded to each region/topic-specific area, the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute/HRI reserves the right to exceed the maximum number of awards.
- The New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute/HRI reserves the right to revise the award amounts as necessary due to changes in availability of funding.
- The New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute/HRI reserves the right to shift funding from one (1) Component of the RFA 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 AIDS Institute and HRI 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 and HRI reserve the right to establish additional competitive solicitations.

Current Contractors: If you choose not to apply for funding, the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute highly recommends notifying your community partners of your intent. This will ensure community members and providers are aware of the discontinuation of the program and services.

Ryan White funding is the “payer of last resort”. Please see **Attachment 2: Ryan White Guidance for Part B Direct Service Subcontractors** for funding restrictions.

Any HRI-funded contract will be held to this guidance.

Funds under this RFA are considered dollars of “last resort” and can only be used when there are no options for other reimbursement. Grant funding cannot be used to reimburse for services that are able to be billed to a third party (i.e., Medicaid, ADAP, PrEP-AP, private health insurance, Gilead patient assistance, co-pay assistance programs, etc.). A provider cannot use grant funds in lieu of billing for services to a third party.

Applicants are instructed to submit **Attachment 3: Statement of Assurances** signed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Designee to certify the organization meets all criteria listed on **Attachment 3**.

II. Who May Apply

A. Minimum Eligibility Requirements

All applicants must meet the following Minimum Eligibility Requirements:

Component A: Regional Training Centers:

- Applicant must be a not-for-profit 501(c) (3) tax exempt health and human services organization (community-based organization), hospital, health center, civic organization, academic institution, government entity or not-for-profit training organization;
- Applicant must have a history of at least three (3) years of experience providing training and professional development on a wide range of topics related to HIV, sexually transmitted infections, viral hepatitis, LGBTQAI+ and drug user health; Applicants are instructed to ensure this is documented in Section V. Completing the Application, A. Application Format and Content, Component A. 1. Program Abstract - Program Specific Question (PSQ) 1e).
- Applicant must have an office located in the region for which the application is being submitted; and
- Applicant must be prequalified in the New York Statewide Financial System (SFS), if not exempt, on the date applications are due as specified in the “Key Dates” set forth on the Cover Page of this Request for Applications.

Component B: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise:

- Applicant must be a not-for-profit 501(c) (3) tax exempt health and human services organization (community-based organization), hospital, health center, civic organization, academic institution, government entity or not-for-profit training organization;
- Applicant must have at least three (3) years of experience in the field of the designated topic area, which must include one (1) or more of the following: 1) developing and delivering training or capacity building for health and human services providers related to the topic; 2) developing and delivering direct service programs that relate to the topic; and/or 3) developing conference presentations and journal publications on the topic.
Applicants are instructed to ensure this is documented in Section V. Completing the Application, A. Application Format and Content, Component B. 1. Program Abstract - Program Specific Question (PSQ) 1e).
- Applicant must be located in, and conduct business in New York State; and
- Applicant must be prequalified in the New York Statewide Financial System (SFS), if not exempt, on the date applications are due as specified in the “Key Dates” set forth on the Cover Page of this Request for Applications.

Component C: Distance Learning Resource Center:

- Applicant must be a not-for-profit 501(c) (3) tax exempt health and human services organization (community-based organization), hospital, health center, civic organization, academic institution, government entity or not-for-profit training organization;
- Applicant must have at least three (3) years of experience developing and delivering distance learning programs on a range of topics related to HIV, sexually transmitted infections, viral hepatitis, LGBTQAI+ and drug user health with an emphasis on online learning, synchronous and asynchronous learning, and digital learning;
Applicants are instructed to ensure this is documented in Section V. Completing the Application, A. Application Format and Content, Component C. 1. Program Abstract-Program Specific Question (PSQ) 1e).
- Applicant must be located in, and conduct business in New York State; and
- Applicant must be prequalified in the New York Statewide Financial System (SFS), if not exempt, on the date applications are due as specified in the “Key Dates” set forth on the Cover Page of this Request for Applications.

Component D: New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center:

- Applicant must be a not-for-profit accredited academic institution that offers degree programs in public health or health and human services and has submitted a signed **Academic Institution of Higher Learning Attestation as Attachment 4**;
- Applicant must be located in, and conduct business in New York State; and
- Applicant must be prequalified in the New York Statewide Financial System (SFS), if not exempt, on the date applications are due as specified in the “Key Dates” set forth on the Cover Page of this Request for Applications.

Component E: Training Centers for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources

- Applicant must be a local health department, a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) community-based organization, academic institution, government entity, hospital, professional educational organization, tribal organization, or not-for-profit training organization;
- Applicant must have at least three (3) years of experience with working with peers with lived experience of HIV, hepatitis C, harm reduction, PrEP or criminal justice, which must include one (1) or more of the following: 1) developing and delivering leadership training or capacity building for people with lived experience 2) developing and delivering peer worker

employment readiness training for people with lived experience of HIV, hepatitis C, harm reduction, PrEP or criminal justice; and/or 3) developing and delivering peer service programs related to HIV, hepatitis C, harm reduction, PrEP or criminal justice; Applicants are instructed to ensure this is documented in Section V. Completing the Application, A. Application Format and Content, Component E. 1. Program Abstract - Program Specific Question (PSQ) 1e).

- Applicant must have an office located in the region for which the application is being submitted; and
- Applicant must be prequalified in the New York Statewide Financial System (SFS), if not exempt, on the date applications are due as specified in the “Key Dates” set forth on the Cover Page of this Request for Applications.

III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes

A. Program Model Description

This initiative aims to prepare and maintain a knowledgeable, skilled professional workforce to advance AIDS Institute’s strategic priorities to end preventable epidemics, advance equity, fight stigma, and promote health through an array of educational, training, technical assistance and capacity building services throughout New York State.

This is accomplished by:

- Providing up-to-date evidence-based education for non-physician health and human services providers, public health staff and peer workers on topics relating to HIV, viral hepatitis, sexually transmitted infections and substance use disorder building on foundation of health equity.
- Delivering skills building training to prepare public health professionals, including peer workers, to effectively provide services to communities disproportionately impacted by the syndemics of HIV, viral hepatitis, sexually transmitted infections, substance use disorder, and health inequities that lead to unfair, unjust and avoidable negative health outcomes.
- Offering technical assistance and capacity building activities to enhance organizational capacity of programs to implement AIDS Institute Ending Epidemics strategies to reduce or eliminate health disparities as they pertain to HIV, viral hepatitis, sexual health, and drug user health.
- Providing training and mentoring for people with shared lived experience to engage in consumer leadership opportunities to inform an effective response to the syndemics of HIV, viral hepatitis, sexually transmitted infections, substance use disorder, and health inequities that lead to unfair, unjust and avoidable negative health outcomes.

Component A: Regional Training Centers

Funding for Component A will support establishing Regional Training Centers to ensure accessible delivery of educational and training services on a range of topics to address health inequities and improve health outcomes related to HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections, sexual health, LGBTQAI+ health and drug user health. Services must be informed by the demographic, epidemiological and/or unique social determinants of health profiles of each region and tailored to meet the unique needs of the region. Approved training curricula will be made available to funded applicants. Additional training curricula are developed by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute, the Regional Training Centers, or organizations funded through Component B: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise on an as-needed basis.

The New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute anticipates contracting with three (3) organizations to serve as Regional Training Centers in the following defined regions:

- **Central New York, Finger Lakes and Western New York:** including counties of Schoharie, Steuben, Schuyler, Yates, Seneca, Ontario, Livingston, Monroe, Wayne, St.

Lawrence, Jefferson, Lewis, Oswego, Oneida, Herkimer, Onondaga, Madison, Cayuga, Chemung, Tioga, Broome, Tompkins, Delaware, Cortland, Chenango, Otsego, Niagara, Orleans, Genesee, Erie, Wyoming, Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Allegany, Essex, Hamilton, Franklin, and Clinton.

- **New York City (NYC) and Long Island:** including the five (5) boroughs of NYC, and counties of Nassau and Suffolk.
- **New York City (NYC), Mid-Hudson and Capital District:** including the five (5) boroughs of NYC, and counties of Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, Westchester, Albany, Greene, Columbia, Rensselaer, Schenectady, Saratoga, Fulton, Montgomery, Warren, and Washington.

Funded Applicants for Component A will be expected to:

- Establish a Regional Training Center comprised of qualified staff and consultants reflective of the communities served;
- Provide an accessible, stigma-free training environment conducive to adult learning;
- Establish a training plan that is informed by the demographic, epidemiological and/or unique social determinants of health profiles of the region and is tailored to meet the unique need of the region;
- Provide an array of educational, training and technical assistance services tailored to the region on topics related to HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections, sexual health, LGBTQAI+ health and drug user health;
- Design marketing and promotional strategies to effectively engage health and human services providers throughout the region in available educational, training and technical assistance services;
- Contribute to ensuring the initiative's portfolio of training curricula remains up-to-date and reflective of evidence-based practices and emerging needs; and
- Work collaboratively with the AIDS Institute and programs funded under Components B, C, D, and E to achieve the goals of the RFA.

Component B: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise

Funding for Component B will support establishing Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise responsible for designing and delivering statewide training, technical assistance and capacity building activities to enhance organizational capacity to advance health equity and improve health outcomes.

One (1) Center of Expertise will be supported for each of the following topic areas:

- **Promoting Sexual Health:** to include coverage of biomedical interventions (PrEP/Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), Doxycycline Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (DoxyPEP), Expedited Partner Treatment (EPT), etc.) for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including prevention, disease investigation and partner services, implementing sex positive health programming, Undetectable=Untransmittable (U=U), and overall sexual health.
- **Promoting Health for LGBTQAI+ People:** to cover topics related to preparing service providers to work with people of diverse sexual orientations or gender identities (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, etc.), conducting assessment of health histories, including asking questions about sexual orientation and gender identity, supporting access to gender affirming services, transgender health/navigating coverage of services, addressing stigma and impact of stigma (alcohol use disorder, substance use disorder, etc.).
- **Promoting Health for People who Use Drugs:** to cover topics related to providing stigma-free services, promoting engagement and retention in care, promoting harm reduction,

overdose prevention and safety planning, increasing access to substance use disorder treatment.

- **Improving Health Outcomes for Populations Impacted by Viral Hepatitis:** to cover topics related to improving capacity to provide screening and linkage to care for hepatitis B and C; vaccination for hepatitis A and B, and overall viral hepatitis prevention for communities most at risk: people who use drugs, people experiencing homelessness, foreign-born populations, etc.
- **Improving Health Outcomes of People Living with HIV Across the Lifespan:** to cover topics related to the unique challenges of people who are living with HIV across the lifespan – adolescents, older adults, lifetime survivors, etc. Specific focus on comorbidities related to HIV infection, psychosocial issues related to disclosure, such as anxiety, isolation, loneliness, and other disparities attributable to the social determinants of health.
- **Legal Issues Impacting People with HIV/STI/Viral Hepatitis:** to cover topics related to current and emerging state and federal regulations affecting people who are living with or affected by HIV, STIs, or viral hepatitis. This would include policies related to substance use, incarceration, confidentiality, antidiscrimination protections, access to healthcare coverage, impact of employment on benefits, adolescent consent, etc.
- **Trauma Informed Care:** to cover topics related to implementing services in a manner that is trauma-informed and trauma-sensitive.

Funded Applicants for Component B will be expected to:

- Establish a Training Center of Expertise composed of qualified staff and consultants with demonstrated experience in the specific topic area;
- Provide an accessible, stigma-free training environment conducive to adult learning;
- Collaborate with AIDS Institute Program offices to identify training needs and establish a training plan to build capacity statewide to advance health equity and improve health outcomes in the designated topics area;
- Design and deliver specialized or advanced learning content to support implementation of guidance, promote best practices for effective services delivery and enhance organizational capacity to meet emerging priorities in the designated topic areas;
- Design marketing and promotional strategies to effectively engage health and human services providers throughout the region in available training, technical assistance, and capacity building services; and
- Work collaboratively with the AIDS Institute and programs funded under Components A, C, D, and E to achieve the goals of the RFA.

Component C: Distance Learning Resource Center

Funding for Component C will support establishing a Distance Learning Resource Center responsible for expanding and supporting the capacity of the organizations funded through this Request for Applications to use an array of digital learning technologies and tools to optimize distance learning, training, technical assistance and capacity building services for health and human services providers.

The Funded Applicant for Component C will be expected to:

- Establish a Distance Learning Resource Center composed of qualified staff and consultants with demonstrated experience in the specific topic area;
- Enhance the accessibility of stigma-free distance learning trainings and digital learning resources;
- Provide technical assistance to the AIDS Institute and programs funded through the

initiative to enhance the use of an array of digital learning technologies and tools to optimize adult learning;

- Develop distance learning trainings, including asynchronous content and other digital learning resources;
- Advise the AIDS Institute about the latest developments in the use of artificial intelligence to support professional education;
- Design marketing and promotional strategies to effectively disseminate distance learning materials to new and existing health and human services providers statewide; and
- Work collaboratively with the AIDS Institute and programs funded under Component A, B, D, and E to achieve the goals of the RFA.

Component D: New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center

Funding for Component D will support an academic institution that will facilitate the formal certification process for the New York State Peer Worker Certification Program for New York State Certified Peer Workers in HIV, hepatitis C, PrEP, Harm Reduction and criminal justice. The awardee will also contribute to the development of other career advancement programs, such as continuing education credits, micro-credentialing or other academic recognitions, in support of the goals of this Request for Applications.

The Funded Applicant for Component D will be expected to:

- Oversee and facilitate the process for awarding an academic certificate and its renewal for Peer Workers in HIV, hepatitis C, PrEP, harm reduction and criminal justice;
- Partner with the AIDS Institute to ensure that the initiative's program training requirements are of sufficient rigor to warrant certification, micro-credentialing or other academic recognitions;
- Facilitate a Peer Review Board comprised of 9-15 individuals who will review all applicants for peer certification to determine if they meet the program requirements. Good-faith effort must be made to ensure the Peer Review Board reflects the populations served and has state-wide representation;
- Assist candidates for peer certification with understanding program requirements and navigating the application process;
- Receive and facilitate review by the Review Board of all alleged violations of the New York State Peer Worker Certification Program in HIV, hepatitis C or Harm Reduction Code of Ethics;
- Plan annual recognition event for newly certified NYS Certified Peer Workers; and
- Work collaboratively with the AIDS Institute and programs funded under Components A, B, C, and E to achieve the goals of the RFA.

Component E: Training Centers for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources

Funding for Component E will support establishing a Training Center for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources in each region to provide training and mentoring to prepare peers to use their shared lived experience to enhance New York State's response to HIV, hepatitis C, sexually transmitted infections and substance use disorder.

The New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute anticipates contracting with three (3) organizations to serve as Regional Training Centers in the following defined regions:

- **Central NY, Finger Lakes and Western NY:** including counties of Schoharie, Steuben, Schuyler, Yates, Seneca, Ontario, Livingston, Monroe, Wayne, St. Lawrence, Jefferson, Lewis, Oswego, Oneida, Herkimer, Onondaga, Madison, Cayuga, Chemung, Tioga, Broome, Tompkins, Delaware, Cortland, Chenango, Otsego, Niagara, Orleans, Genesee, Erie, Wyoming, Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Allegany, Essex, Hamilton, Franklin, and Clinton.

- **New York City and Long Island:** including the five (5) boroughs of NYC, and counties of Nassau and Suffolk.
- **New York City, Mid-Hudson and Capital District:** including the five (5) boroughs of NYC, and counties of Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, Westchester, Albany, Greene, Columbia, Rensselaer, Schenectady, Saratoga, Fulton, Montgomery, Warren, and Washington.

Funded Applicants for Component E will be expected to:

- Provide training for people who have shared lived experience of HIV, hepatitis C, incarceration, or experience accessing PrEP or harm reduction services to prepare them to participate in leadership opportunities and/or Peer Work;
- Facilitate peer support and networking opportunities within the region;
- Deliver skills building training and mentoring activities to prepare, place, and support retention in peer work;
- Assist candidates with completing New York State Peer Worker Certification program requirements with the New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center;
- Provide training and technical assistance to build the capacity of community-based organizations and healthcare facilities to effectively engage and retain peer workers;
- Deliver educational interventions to assist peers considering work to overcome barriers to employment and navigate the transition between public benefits and employment; and
- Work collaboratively with the AIDS Institute and programs funded under Components A, B, C, and D to achieve the goals of the RFA.

Anticipated Outcomes

The five (5) Components of this solicitation will contribute to achieving the following outcomes:

- Deliver a portfolio of training services across all regions of the state reaching at least 7,500 non-physician health and human services providers annually.
- Over the 5-year initiative, certify and maintain at least 350 peer workers certified in one (1) of the following specialized tracks or a combination of specialized tracks, including and limited to: HIV, hepatitis C, Harm Reduction, PrEP or criminal justice.
- At least 85% of peers completing certification will successfully obtain and retain employment for six (6) months.
- Barriers to higher learning will be reduced through the New York State Peer Worker Certification Program participation in the Empire State University Community Partnership program. All NYS Certified Peer Workers will be informed of the opportunity through the program and at least 10% will enroll in the program.
- At least 20% educational content developed annually will include substantial content aimed at promoting health equity and improving access to and quality of care for communities that experiencing health disparities, including Black, Hispanic, Indigenous and other communities of color; LGBTQAI+ people; and people who use drugs.
- The training programs will be delivered by trainers reflective of the communities impacted by HIV, hepatitis C/sexually transmitted infections and/or substance use disorder, with at least 20% of trainings each year having primary faculty who are Black, Hispanic, Indigenous or other people of color, or LGBTQAI+ people.
- On an annual basis and under direction from the program manager, overall initiative

activities will align and coordinate with at least two (2) specific objectives outlined in each of the following New York State strategic plans: Ending the Epidemic Blueprint and Beyond 2020; NYS Hepatitis C Elimination Plan; the NYS Prevention Agenda; plans to combat the opioid epidemic; and align with any related future public health plans, within six (6) months of release of such plans.

- Initiative program evaluation activities will include at least one (1) small scale mixed method study each year to evaluate the impact of capacity building training provided on the quality of care and specific outcomes, to be determined in conjunction with the AIDS Institute.
- All curricula will be reviewed at a minimum every three (3) years to ensure they are up-to-date, and new curricula are approved for continuing education credits as appropriate.
- On an annual basis the initiative will review its marketing strategy plan (e.g. media, publications, social media) to establish clear and concise messaging that will help improve the integration of education and research with providers who are serving communities disproportionately impacted by HIV, viral hepatitis, sexually transmitted infections, substance use disorder and health inequities.
- On an annual basis, each funded Center will employ quality improvement practices to refine program operations to maximize their capacity to meet each of the above-listed objectives.

B. Requirements for the Program

Component A: Regional Training Center

Funded Applicants for Component A: Regional Training Center will be expected to:

1. **Establish a Regional Training Center:** Funded Applicants will be expected to hire and maintain qualified staff and consultants to meet the goals of the RFA. Training staff and consultants should be reflective of the learner audience of the communities they serve. Applicants are expected to establish policies and procedures to ensure consistent, high quality training services that align with New York State clinical guidelines, policies and best practices. Training teams are expected to be well-versed in the principles of health equity, harm reduction, trauma-informed care, cultural humility, and effective communication.
2. **Provide an accessible, stigma-free training environment:** Funded Applicants are expected to create a welcoming learning environment free of judgement that promotes, acceptance, understanding and compassion. Funded Applicants are expected to secure fully equipped, accessible, in-person training space that can comfortably accommodate at least 35 adult learners with ample space for small group activities. Applicants may use their own agency space or negotiate use of on-site training space with service providers, or other partners. Funded Applicants will also procure a webinar package that can accommodate at least 250 virtual learning participants as well as software to ensure highly interactive, engaging learning opportunities conducive to adult learning.
3. **Establish a training plan to meet the unique needs of the region:** Funded Applicants are expected to develop a semi-annual calendar of training events that is informed by the demographic, epidemiological and/or unique social determinants of health profiles of the region and is designed to meet the unique needs of the region. Applicants are expected to work with New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute-funded agencies, community planning bodies and other providers within the region to assess training needs. Applicants are expected to collaborate with Component D: New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center to monitor the need for core courses for the New York State

Peer Worker Certification program and ensure availability in the region. Applicants are expected to post complete accurate information in the initiative wide online registration system in a timely manner.

4. **Provide educational, training and technical assistance services tailored to the region:** Funded Applicants are expected to deliver a mix of in-person, virtual, blended or other distances learning services (i.e.: agency specific requests, tailored trainings, etc.), as negotiated with the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to meet the needs of the region. Applicants will be provided New York State Department of Health-approved curricula to deliver on topics related to HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections, sexual health, LGBTQAI+ health and drug user health. This will include delivering courses that support the New York State Peer Worker Certification program. Funded Applicants are expected to collaborate with the Component B: Centers of Expertise to facilitate regional access to advanced learning or specialize training content. This collaboration may include hosting a Center of Expertise within the Applicant's training space, facilitating connection to regional partners, assisting with promotion and marketing within the region; and supporting technical assistance.
5. **Design marketing and promotional strategies:** Funded Applicants are expected to use innovative approaches to engage and build relationships with a wide range of health and human services providers throughout the region. Applicants are expected to design a marketing strategy that actively identifies new partners in the region who may benefit from the training and technical assistance services offered. Regional Training Centers are expected to serve as a hub for resources within the region, including facilitating opportunities for regional providers to network and share resources.
6. **Training design and review:** Funded Applicants are expected to contribute to ensuring the initiative's portfolio of training curricula remains up-to-date and reflective of evidence-based practices and emerging needs. Applicants will be expected to participate in the revisions of existing curricula or the creation of new curricula as directed by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute. Applicants will be expected to facilitate expert review of new or revised materials (such as identification of subject matter experts, coordination of pilot training, collection of feedback, etc.) Funded Applicants may be expected to attend or lead Training of Trainer sessions to disseminate new or revised curricula between initiative Training Centers.
7. **Participate in a collaborative process:** Funded Applicants are expected to collaborate with other programs funded under Components A, B, C, D, and E to achieve the goals of the RFA. Applicants are expected to follow initiative-wide best practices for training promoting training, participant registration, provision of quality training, and program evaluation as outlined in **Attachment 5: Training Center Best Practices**.
8. **Program monitoring and evaluation:** Funded Applicants are expected to participate in a collaborative process with the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to assess program outcomes and provide monthly narrative reports describing the progress of the program with respect to: 1) program implementation, 2) participant registration and attendance, 3) success in meeting the **Work Plan** Objectives and Performance Measures outlined in **Attachment 6**, 4) significant accomplishments achieved, and 5) barriers encountered and plans to address noted problems. Funded Applicants are expected to routinely review program data and conduct continuous quality improvement activities to enhance the Regional Training Center and overall initiative.
9. **Adhere to all Objectives, Tasks and Performance Measures** as listed in the **Work Plan - Component A: Attachment 6**.

10. **Adhere to Health Literacy Universal Precautions**

(<https://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/quality-patient-safety/quality-resources/tools/literacy-toolkit/index.html>).

11. **Demonstrate cultural responsiveness and linguistic competency:** Stigma, especially as it relates to HIV, viral hepatitis, sexually transmitted infections, sexual health, LGBTQAI+ health and drug user health, continues to be a significant barrier for people to access prevention and care services. Stigma can adversely impact a person's likelihood to seek health information, engage in care and overall quality of life. Training and technical assistance services should be designed with an understanding of the differences that derive from language, culture, race/ethnicity, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, age and developmental characteristics.

12. **Demonstrate a commitment to Health Equity:** Funded Applicants are expected to commit to ensuring program staff and partners are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and expertise to adequately address health equity and the social determinants of health. Please see **Attachment 7 for Health Equity Definitions and Examples** of social and structural determinants of health. Funded Applicants are expected to work closely with community partners to identify and respond to unequal distribution of social determinants of health that can lead to inequities in health and health outcomes. Applicants are expected to be attentive to the intersections of race and health equity and promote tailored approaches to address the challenges faced by Black/Brown, Indigenous, and People of Color communities. Funded Applicants are expected to deliver services in accordance with [health equity principles](#).

Funded Applicants may subcontract components of the scope of work. 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. 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.

Staffing Requirements Component A: Regional Training Centers

Funded Applicants will establish a staffing plan to meet the goals outlined in the RFA and will ensure the staffing needs of the program are met on an ongoing basis. At a minimum, this will include:

- a. **Program Manager** (at least .05 FTE) with a bachelor's degree and at least five (5) years of professional experience providing leadership in a public health program. This experience should include programmatic and fiscal oversight activities, with at least three (3) years of experience overseeing professional training programs. A master's degree may substitute for one (1) year of professional experience. The Program Manager will have experience in training, curriculum development, coordination of activities with community-based and governmental organizations, program development and implementation, and evaluation of training programs, and will have excellent interpersonal skills.
- b. **Lead Trainer/Curriculum Developer** with a bachelor's degree and at least five (5) years of experience training health professionals on topics related to HIV, STIs, viral hepatitis and substance use. A master's degree may substitute for one (1) year of professional experience. The Program Manager and Lead Trainer/Curriculum Developer may be the same person.
- c. **Trainers and/or consultants** with at least three (3) years of relevant experience in the topics they will train and demonstrated training skills. Funded training centers should have

access to a diverse panel of trainers and/or consultants who are representative of the priority audience and communities impacted by HIV, STIs, viral hepatitis, and substance use disorder. Funded Applicants are expected to include Certified Peer Workers as part of the training team for all peer-specific courses.

Resumes/CVs of staff and consultants are subject to approval by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute. All appropriate staff and consultants will attend, and successfully complete, Training of Trainer programs provided by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute or an approved contractor. Training centers will be responsible for ensuring all consultant trainers are fully prepared to deliver trainings for which they are assigned as primary or back-up trainers. Resumes of all key staff should be uploaded with **Attachment 8: Agency Capacity and Staffing Information**.

Component B: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise

Funded Applicants for Component B: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise will be expected to:

- 1. Establish a Training Center of Expertise:** Funded Applicants will be expected to hire and maintain qualified staff and consultants to meet the goals of the RFA. Training staff and consultants should be reflective of the learner audience of the communities they serve. Applicants are expected to establish policies and procedures to ensure consistent, high quality training services that align with New York State clinical guidelines, policies and best practices. Training teams are expected to be well versed in the principles of health equity, harm reduction, trauma informed care, cultural humility, and effective communication. Training teams are expected to have demonstrated experience in the field of the designated topic area through delivery of related training or direct program services.
- 2. Provide an accessible, stigma-free training environment:** Funded Applicants are expected to create a welcoming learning environment free of judgement that promotes, acceptance, understanding and compassion. Funded Applicants must be prepared to secure fully equipped, accessible, in-person training space throughout the different regions of the state. Training space must comfortably accommodate at least 35 adult learners with ample space for small group activities. Applicants may use their own agency space or negotiate use of on-site training space with service providers, or other partners. Funded Applicants will also procure a webinar package that can accommodate at least 250 virtual learning participants as well as software to ensure highly interactive, engaging learning opportunities conducive to adult learning.
- 3. Establish a training plan to build capacity statewide in the specific topic area:** Funded Applicants are expected to meet regularly with designated New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute program offices and partners to guide development of a semi-annual training plan to meet identified training needs, emerging priorities, best practices and lessons learned. Applicants are expected to participate in professional conferences, coalitions or other workgroups to remain abreast of the latest developments related to their designated topic area. Applicants are expected to work with Component D: New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center to monitor the need for specialized courses for the New York State Peer Worker Certification program and coordinate delivery accordingly. Applicants are expected to post complete accurate information in the initiative wide online registration system in a timely manner.
- 4. Deliver specialized or advanced learning content to build capacity statewide in the designated topic area:** Funded Applicants are expected to deliver a mix of specialized in-person, virtual, blended or other distances learning services (i.e., agency specific requests,

tailored trainings, etc.) in the designated topics area. Applicants are expected to offer a mix of didactic learning and skills building opportunities designed to build organizational capacity in the designated topic area. Activities such as short-term learning collaboratives, communities of practices or learning pathways may be supported, as negotiated with the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute. Funded Applicants are expected to collaborate with the Component A: Regional Training Centers to facilitate regional access to advanced learning or specialize training content. This collaboration may include delivering on-site training within the region, assisting Regional Training Centers in tailoring training to meet agency needs and providing other technical assistance.

5. **Design marketing and promotional strategies:** Funded Applicants are expected to use innovative approaches to engage and build relationships with a wide range of health and human services providers statewide. Applicants are expected to design a marketing strategy that actively identifies new partners who may benefit from the training and technical assistance services offered. Training Centers of Expertise are expected to serve as a hub of information and resources related to the designated topics area for the other Components funded through this RFA, AIDS Institute-funded programs and partners.
6. **Training design and review:** Funded Applicants will be expected to design new training curricula or capacity building activities to support implementation of latest guidance and best practices for effective service delivery related to their designated topic area. Funded Applicants will be expected to facilitate expert review of new or revised materials (such as identification of subject matter experts, coordination of pilot training, collection of feedback, etc.) Funded Applicants may be expected to lead Training of Trainer sessions to hand-off curricula to Component A Regional Training Centers as directed by the AIDS Institute. Funded Applicants are expected to contribute to ensuring the training initiative remains current in the designated topic area. This may include revision of existing curricula or presenting on key advances in the topic area to the other Components funded through this RFA as directed by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute. As subject matter experts in the designated topic area, Funded Applicants will be expected to work with the AIDS Institute and/or Component C: Distance Learning Resource Center to develop asynchronous training content and other digital education resources.
7. **Participate in a collaborative process:** Funded Applicants are expected to collaborate with other programs funded under Components A, B, C, D, and E to achieve the goals of the RFA. Applicants are expected to follow initiative-wide best practices for training, promoting training, participant registration, provision of quality training, and program evaluation as outlined in **Attachment 5: Training Center Best Practices**.
8. **Program monitoring and evaluation:** Funded Applicants are expected to participate in a collaborative process with the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to assess program outcomes and provide monthly narrative reports describing the progress of the program with respect to: 1) program implementation, 2) participant registration and attendance, 3) success in meeting the **Work Plan** Objectives and Performance Measures outlined in **Attachment 9**, 4) significant accomplishments achieved, and 5) barriers encountered and plans to address noted problems. Funded Applicants are expected to routinely review program data and conduct continuous quality improvement activities to enhance the Topic-Specific Training Center of Expertise and overall initiative.
9. **Adhere to all Objectives, Tasks and Performance Measures** as listed in the **Work Plan - Component B: Attachment 9**.
10. **Adhere to Health Literacy Universal Precautions**
<https://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/quality-patient-safety/quality-resources/tools/literacy->

toolkit/index.html.

11. **Demonstrate cultural responsiveness and linguistic competency:** Stigma, especially as it relates to HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections, sexual health, LGBTQAI+ health and drug user health, continues to be a significant barrier for people to access prevention and care services. Stigma can adversely impact a person's likelihood to seek health information, engage in care and overall quality of life. Training and technical assistance services should be designed with an understanding of the differences that derive from language, culture, race/ethnicity, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, age and developmental characteristics.
12. **Demonstrate a commitment to Health Equity:** Funded Applicants are expected to commit to ensuring program staff and partners are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and expertise to adequately address health equity and the social determinants of health. Please see **Attachment 7 for Health Equity Definitions and Examples** of social and structural determinants of health. Funded Applicants are expected to work closely with community partners to identify and respond to unequal distribution of social determinants of health that can lead to inequities in health and health outcomes. Applicants are expected to be attentive to the intersections of race and health equity and promote tailored approaches to address the challenges faced by Black/Brown, Indigenous, and People of Color communities. Funded Applicants are expected to deliver services in accordance with [health equity principles](#).

Funded Applicants may subcontract components of the scope of work. 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. 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.

Staffing Requirements Component B: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise

Funded Applicants will establish a staffing plan to meet the goals outlined in the RFA and will ensure the staffing needs of the program are met on an ongoing basis. At a minimum, this will include:

- a. **Program Manager** (at least .05 FTE) with a bachelor's degree and at least five (5) years of professional experience providing leadership in a public health program. This experience should include programmatic and fiscal oversight activities. The Program Manager is expected to have at least three (3) years of experience developing and delivering training or capacity building activities in the field of the designated topic area OR at least three (3) years of experience developing and delivering direct services programs that relate to the designated topic area. A master's degree may substitute for one (1) year of professional experience. An effective Program Manager will have experience in training, curriculum development, coordination of activities with community-based and governmental organizations, program development and implementation, and evaluation of training programs, and will have excellent interpersonal skills.
- b. **Lead Trainer/Curriculum Developer** with a bachelor's degree and at least five (5) years of experience training health professionals on topics related to HIV, STIs, viral hepatitis and substance use. A master's degree may substitute for one (1) year of experience. The Program Manager and Lead Trainer/Curriculum Developer may be the same person.
- c. **Trainers and/or consultants** with at least three (3) years of relevant experience in the topics they will train and demonstrated training skills. Funded training centers should have access to a diverse panel of trainers and/or consultants who are representative of the

priority audience and communities served. Funded Applicants are expected to include Certified Peer Workers as part of the training team for all peer-specific courses.

Resumes/CVs of staff and consultants are subject to approval by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute. All appropriate staff and consultants will attend, and successfully complete, Training of Trainer programs provided by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute or an approved contractor. Training centers will be responsible for ensuring all consultant trainers are fully prepared to deliver trainings for which they are assigned as primary or back-up trainers. Resumes of all key staff should be uploaded with **Attachment 8: Agency Capacity and Staffing Information**.

Component C: Distance Learning Resource Center

The Funded Applicant for Component C: Distance Learning Resource Center will be expected to:

1. **Establish a Distance Learning Resource Center:** The Funded Applicant will be expected to hire and maintain qualified staff and consultants to meet the goals of the RFA. The Funded Applicant is expected to establish policies and procedures to ensure consistent, high quality training services that align with New York State clinical guidelines, policies and best practices. Center staff are expected to be well versed in the principles of health equity, harm reduction, trauma informed care, cultural humility, and effective communication.
2. **Enhance accessibility of stigma-free distance learning resources:** The Funded Applicant will assist the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute in developing guidance to ensure distance learning content within the initiative is accessible and compliant with requirements of The Americans with Disabilities Act. The Funded Applicant is expected to ensure all content developed by the Distance Learning Resource Center uses person-first and other stigma-free language.
3. **Provide technical assistance to enhance the use of an array of digital learning technologies and tools to optimize adult learning:** The Funded Applicant is expected to advise the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute on the latest developments in the field of distance learning, web-based training and digital learning. The Funded Applicant will be expected to contribute to expanding and supporting the capacity of organizations funded through this RFA to use of an array of digital learning technologies and tools to optimize adult learning. This may include presenting on new digital learning technologies, tools and/or best practices during a contractor workgroup meeting or providing technical assistance to contractors to adopt new digital learning technologies and tools in a timely fashion.
4. **Develop distance learning training material, including asynchronous curricula and other digital learning resources:** The Funded Applicant will be expected to work with the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute and other organizations funded through this initiative to assess training needs, including through statewide surveys and/or review of evaluation and usage data. The Funded Applicant will be expected to recommend distance learning approaches that will best address the needs identified. The Funded Applicant will be expected to design new distance learning training materials, including asynchronous curricula and other digital learning resources. The Funded Applicant is expected to contribute to ensuring distance learning materials remain operational and up to date. The Funded Applicant may be required to Work with the AIDS Institute and/or Component B: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise to develop distance learning training materials or other digital learning resources.
5. **Design marketing and promotional strategies:** The Funded Applicant is expected to use

innovative approaches to engage and build relationships with a wide range of health and human services providers statewide. The Funded Applicant is expected to design a marketing strategy that actively identifies new partners who may benefit from the distance learning resources available. The Funded Applicant is expected to actively monitor usage of asynchronous courses and advise the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute on strategies to improve course registration, navigation and completion.

6. **Support appropriate use of artificial intelligence to support professional education:** The Funded Applicant is expected to advise the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute on emerging uses of artificial intelligence to support professional education. The Funded Applicant will support developing guidance for appropriate use of artificial intelligence within the initiative. This may include facilitating discussions of best practices during a contractor workgroup meeting or providing technical assistance to contractors to adopt policies and practices related to artificial intelligence in a timely fashion.
7. **Participate in a collaborative process:** The Funded Applicant is expected to collaborate with other programs funded under Components A, B, D, and E to achieve the goals of the RFA. The Funded Applicant is expected to follow initiative-wide best practices for training, promoting training, participant registration, provision of quality training, and program evaluation as outlined in **Attachment 5: Training Center Best Practices**.
8. **Program monitoring and evaluation:** The Funded Applicant is expected to participate in a collaborative process with the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to assess program outcomes and provide monthly narrative reports describing the progress of the program with respect to: 1) program implementation, 2) participant registration and attendance, 3) success in meeting the **Work Plan** Objectives and Performance Measures outlined in **Attachment 10**, 4) significant accomplishments achieved, and 5) barriers encountered and plans to address noted problems. The Funded Applicant is expected to routinely review program data and conduct continuous quality improvement activities to enhance the Distance Learning Resource Center and overall initiative.
9. **Adhere to all Objectives, Tasks and Performance Measures** as listed in the **Work Plan - Component C: Attachment 10**.
10. **Adhere to Health Literacy Universal Precautions**
<https://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/quality-patient-safety/quality-resources/tools/literacy-toolkit/index.html>.
11. **Demonstrate cultural responsiveness and linguistic competency:** Stigma, especially as it relates to HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections, sexual health, LGBTQAI+ health and drug user health, continues to be a significant barrier for people to access prevention and care services. Stigma can adversely impact a person's likelihood to seek health information, engage in care and overall quality of life. Training and technical assistance services should be designed with an understanding of the differences that derive from language, culture, race/ethnicity, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, age and developmental characteristics.
12. **Demonstrate a commitment to Health Equity:** Funded Applicants are expected to commit to ensuring program staff and partners are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and expertise to adequately address health equity and the social determinants of health. Please see **Attachment 7 for Health Equity Definitions and Examples** of social and structural determinants of health. Funded Applicants are expected to work closely with community partners to identify and respond to unequal distribution of social determinants of health that can lead to inequities in health and health outcomes. Applicants are expected to be

attentive to the intersections of race and health equity and promote tailored approaches to address the challenges faced by Black/Brown, Indigenous, and People of Color communities. Funded Applicants are expected to deliver services in accordance with [health equity principles](#).

The Funded Applicant may subcontract components of the scope of work. 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. 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.

Staffing Requirements for Component C: Distance Learning Resource Center

The Funded Applicant will establish a staffing plan to meet the goals outlined in the RFA and will ensure the staffing needs of the program are met on an ongoing basis. At a minimum, this will include:

- a. **Program Manager** (at least .05 FTE) with a bachelor's degree and at least five (5) years of professional experience providing leadership in a public health program. This experience must include programmatic and fiscal oversight activities. The Program Manager should have at least three (3) years of experience developing and delivering training or capacity building activities in the field of the designated topic area OR at least three (3) years of experience developing and delivering direct services programs that relate to the designated topic area. A master's degree may substitute for one (1) year of professional experience. An effective Program Manager will have experience in training, curriculum development, coordination of activities with community-based and governmental organizations, program development and implementation, and evaluation of training programs, and will have excellent interpersonal skills.
- b. **Lead Trainer/Curriculum Developer** with a bachelor's degree and at least five (5) years of experience developing curriculum and maintaining online training or distance education training, preferably in a health or public health-related field. A master's degree may substitute for one (1) year of experience. The Program Manager and Lead Trainer/Curriculum Developer may be the same person.
- c. **IT staff and/or consultants** with a bachelor's degree and demonstrated expertise developing interactive training materials and other digital learning tools, developing, delivering and evaluating virtual learning activities, web design and/or responsible integration of artificial intelligence tools.

Resumes/CVs of staff and consultants are subject to approval by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute. All appropriate staff and consultants will attend, and successfully complete, Training of Trainer programs provided by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute or an approved contractor. Training centers will be responsible for ensuring all consultant trainers are fully prepared to deliver trainings for which they are assigned as primary or back-up trainers. Resumes of all key staff should be uploaded with **Attachment 8: Agency Capacity and Staffing Information**.

Component D: New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center

The Funded Applicant for Component D: New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center will be expected to:

1. **Establish a Peer Worker Certification Academic Center:** The Funded Applicant is expected to hire and maintain qualified staff and/or consultants to meet the goals of the

RFA. The Funded Applicant is expected to establish comprehensive policies and procedures which describe the certification and renewal process, Review Board procedures, grievance policy, etc. Center staff are expected to be familiar with: relevant New York State clinical guidelines and policies and principles of health equity, harm reduction, trauma-informed care, cultural humility, and effective communication. Center staff are expected to be familiar with other relevant New York State certification programs (e.g. those overseen by the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH), The New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS)) and prepared make referrals as appropriate.

2. **Oversee the certification and renewal process:** The Funded Applicant is expected to award an academic certificate for Peer Workers in HIV, hepatitis C, PrEP, harm reduction and criminal justice. The Funded Applicant will facilitate review and approval of candidates by the Review Board in accordance with policy. The Funded Applicant is also expected to facilitate the recertification process, monitoring the status of certified peers and tracking completion of required continuing education. The Funded Applicant will be expected to work with the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute and Components A, B, C and E of this Request for Applications to ensure that training meets the established standards of rigor and excellence for the certification program. The Funded Applicant will contribute to the development of other academic recognitions that support continued career advancement (e.g. continuing education credits, micro-credentialing).
3. **Facilitate a Peer Review Board:** The Funded Applicant will oversee the recruitment and selection of nine (9) to fifteen (15) certified Peer Workers to serve on the Peer Review Board. Good-faith effort must be made to ensure state-wide representation of the Peer Review Board. The Funded Applicant will be responsible for coordinating Review Board activities including: overseeing travel and meeting space arrangements, ensuring confidentiality of review proceedings and applications, routinely reviewing Review Board Bylaws, and communicating issues or concerns regarding program with Peer Review Board between and at meetings.
4. **Assist applicants, supervisors and agencies:** The Funded Applicant is expected to assist peer candidates, peer supervisors and other agencies working to navigate the different aspects of the NYS Certified Peer Worker certification process. The Funded Applicant will collaborate with Component E: Training Centers for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources to engage potential peer candidates and offer opportunities for practicums and employment readiness resources. The Funded Applicant will ensure timely tracking, organization, and preparation of candidate materials for review by the Peer Review Board, maintaining confidentiality of all records.
5. **Receive and facilitate review of all alleged violations of the NYS Certified Peer Worker Code of Ethics:** The Funded Applicant is expected to serve as the point of contact for all complaints of violation of the NYS Certified Peer Worker Code of Ethics. The Funded Applicant will be responsible for working with the Peer Review Board and the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to review cases of complaints against a Certified Peer Worker, ensuring that established program policies regarding processing a complaint are followed.
6. **Plan annual recognition event for NYS Certified Peer Workers:** The Funded Applicant will be responsible for all administrative tasks and expenses related to the planning of an annual recognition event for newly certified NYS Certified Peer Workers. Responsibilities include: procuring event space, providing refreshments and a light meal, paying speaker fees as needed, and arranging and paying for travel and lodging for Certified Peer Workers as needed.

7. **Design marketing and promotional strategies:** The Funded Applicant is expected to use innovative approaches to conduct outreach and engage new peers statewide. The Funded Applicant is expected to conduct informational activities to promote available academic opportunities, such as the New York State Peer Worker Certification Program, Empire State University Community Partnership program, micro-credentialing, etc. Activities may include webinars, conference presentations, workshops, etc. The Funded Applicant will be responsible for monitoring trends in enrollment and recommending marketing strategies that support recruitment goals.
8. **Participate in a collaborative process:** The Funded Applicant is expected to collaborate with other programs funded under Components A, B, C and E to achieve the goals of the RFA. The Funded Applicant is expected to support initiative-wide best practices for training programs as outlined in **Attachment 5: Training Center Best Practices**.
9. **Program monitoring and evaluation:** The Funded Applicant is expected to participate in a collaborative process with the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to assess program outcomes and provide monthly narrative reports describing the progress of the program with respect to: 1) program implementation, 2) participant registration and attendance, 3) success in meeting the **Work Plan** Objectives and Performance Measures outlined in **Attachment 11**, 4) significant accomplishments achieved, and 5) barriers encountered and plans to address noted problems. The Funded Applicant is expected to routinely review program data and conduct continuous quality improvement activities to enhance the Regional Training Center and overall initiative.
10. **Adhere to all Objectives, Tasks and Performance Measures** as listed in the **Attachment 11 - Work Plan - Component D**
11. **Adhere to Health Literacy Universal Precautions**
(<https://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/quality-patient-safety/quality-resources/tools/literacy-toolkit/index.html>).
12. **Demonstrate cultural responsiveness and linguistic competency:** Stigma, especially as it relates to HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections, sexual health, LGBTQAI+ health and drug user health, continues to be a significant barrier for people to access prevention and care services. Stigma can adversely impact a person's likelihood to seek health information, engage in care and overall quality of life. Training and technical assistance services should be designed with an understanding of the differences that derive from language, culture, race/ethnicity, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, age and developmental characteristics.
13. **Demonstrate a commitment to Health Equity:** Funded Applicants are expected to commit to ensuring program staff and partners are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and expertise to adequately address health equity and the social determinants of health. Please see **Attachment 7 for Health Equity Definitions and Examples** of social and structural determinants of health. Funded Applicants are expected to work closely with community partners to identify and respond to unequal distribution of social determinants of health that can lead to inequities in health and health outcomes. Applicants are expected to be attentive to the intersections of race and health equity and promote tailored approaches to address the challenges faced by Black/Brown, Indigenous, and People of Color communities. Funded Applicants are expected to deliver services in accordance with [health equity principles](#).

The Funded Applicant may subcontract components of the scope of work. 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. 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.

Staffing Requirements for Component D New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center

The Funded Applicant will establish a staffing plan to meet the goals outlined in the RFA and will ensure the staffing needs of the program are met on an ongoing basis. At a minimum, this will include:

- a. **Program Director or other Senior Staff person** (at least .05 FTE) with a bachelor's degree and at least five (5) years of professional experience with Academic Certificate programs. This experience should include programmatic and fiscal oversight activities, with at least three (3) years of experience overseeing professional training programs for Peer Workers. Experience with Peer Workers who have shared lived experience of HIV, hepatitis C, incarceration, or experience accessing PrEP or harm reduction services is preferred. A master's degree may substitute for one (1) year of professional experience. The Program Director will provide leadership to the New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center, interface with the Academic Center and the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute, and serve as a facilitator of the Peer Certification Review Board.
- b. **Peer Certification Coordinator** (at least .50 FTE) with lived experience of HIV, hepatitis C, incarceration, or experience accessing PrEP or harm reduction services and who has completed or is in the process of completing the New York State Peer Worker Certification Program in HIV, hepatitis C, PrEP, harm reduction, or criminal justice at the time of hire. The Peer Certification Coordinator will assist peers, supervisors and agencies with navigating the certification process and application; represent the program at public meetings and events; oversee the preparation of applicant materials for the Peer Review Board; facilitate certification renewals; and conduct outreach and recruitment activities for the program.
- c. **Administrative Assistant** is needed to prepare application materials for the Peer review Board, manage all logistics associated with conducting committee meetings and annual graduation event, including travel arrangements.

Resumes/CVs of staff and/or consultants are subject to approval by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute. Resumes of all key staff should be uploaded with **Attachment 8: Agency Capacity and Staffing Information.**

Component E: Training Centers for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources

All Funded Applicants for Component E: Training Centers for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources will be expected to:

1. **Establish a Training Center for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources:** Funded Applicants will be expected to hire and maintain qualified staff and /or consultants to meet the goals of the RFA. Training staff and consultants should be reflective of the communities they serve, including people with lived experience of HIV, hepatitis C, incarceration, or experience accessing PrEP or harm reduction services. Applicants are expected to establish policies and procedures to ensure consistent, high-quality training and mentoring services that align with New York State policies and best practices. Staff are

expected to be familiar with the New York State Peer Worker Certification Program and well versed in the principles of health equity, harm reduction, trauma-informed care, cultural humility, and effective communication.

2. **Provide an accessible, stigma-free training environment:** Funded Applicants are expected to create a welcoming learning environment free of judgement that promotes, acceptance, understanding and compassion. Funded Applicants are expected to secure fully equipped, accessible, in-person training space that can comfortably accommodate up to 35 adult learners with ample space for small group activities. Funded Applicants may use their own agency space or negotiate use of on-site training space with service providers, or other partners. Funded Applicants must also procure a webinar package that can accommodate at least 250 virtual learning participants as well as software to ensure highly interactive, engaging learning opportunities conducive to adult learning.
3. **Prepare people with lived experience for community involvement opportunities and peer work:** Funded Applicants are expected to deliver leadership training that is accessible for people with lived experience of HIV, hepatitis C, incarceration, or experience accessing PrEP or harm reduction services in the region. Training will include opportunities for in-person skills building. Funded Applicants are expected to facilitate peer leadership participation in regional community involvement activities such focus groups, public awareness events, advisory boards, task forces, etc. Funded Applicants will also be expected to coordinate quarterly educational sessions within the region to assist peers considering work to overcome barriers to employment and navigate the transition between public benefits and employment.
4. **Facilitate peer support and networking opportunities:** Funded Applicants will be responsible for coordinating with other recipients of Component E funding to plan and facilitate ongoing regular peer-led education and support call for people with lived experience. Funded Applicants are expected to promote the benefits of the New York State Peer Worker Certification Program to peers and healthcare organizations within their designated region. Funded Applicants are expected to provide support to peers expressing interest in certification to help them achieve key program milestones. This may include developing a training plan, providing reminders, transportation assistance to attend required trainings, coaching to identify and prepare for practicum experience, etc. Funded Applicants will work with Component D: New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center to develop a comprehensive practicum directory.
5. **Prepare Peer Workers for job placement and support retention:** Funded Applicants will be responsible for developing a range of activities to prepare Peer Workers for job placement and support retention in health and human services positions. This includes developing and delivering training curricula designed to build soft skills, such as effective communication, teamwork, professionalism and time management. Funded Applicants may also be asked to develop and deliver curricula to build job seeking skills, such as job search strategies, interview preparation and communication of benefit of lived experience. Funded Applicants may be asked to lead or participate in a Training of Trainers to disseminate curricula developed to other regions. Funded Applicants will be expected to provide training and technical assistance to support employers in integrating and retaining Peer Workers in their agencies.
6. **Develop Outreach and marketing strategies:** Funded Applicants are expected to use innovative approaches to engage and build relationships with a wide range of health and human services providers throughout the region. Specifically, Funded Applicants must develop an outreach strategy to engage people with shared lived experience of HIV, hepatitis C, incarceration, or experience accessing PrEP or harm reduction services.

Funded Applicants are expected to design a marketing strategy that actively identifies new partners in the region who may benefit from the training and technical assistance services offered. Centers are expected to serve as a hub for Peer Worker resources within the region, including facilitating opportunities for regional providers to network and share resources.

7. **Participate in a collaborative process:** Funded Applicants are expected to collaborate with other programs funded under Components A, B, C, D, and E to achieve the goals of the RFA. Applicants are expected to follow initiative-wide best practices for training promoting training, participant registration, provision of quality training, and program evaluation as outlined in **Attachment 5: Training Center Best Practices**.
8. **Program monitoring and evaluation:** Funded Applicants are expected to participate in a collaborative process with the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to assess program outcomes and provide monthly narrative reports describing the progress of the program with respect to: 1) program implementation, 2) participant registration and attendance, 3) success in meeting the **Work Plan** Objectives and Performance Measures outlined in **Attachment 12**, 4) significant accomplishments achieved, and 5) barriers encountered and plans to address noted problems. Funded Applicants are expected to routinely review program data and conduct continuous quality improvement activities to enhance the Regional Training Center and overall initiative.
9. **Adhere to all Objectives, Tasks and Performance Measures** as listed in **Attachment 12 - Work Plan - Component E**.
10. **Adhere to Health Literacy Universal Precautions**
(<https://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/quality-patient-safety/quality-resources/tools/literacy-toolkit/index.html>).
11. **Demonstrate cultural responsiveness and linguistic competency:** Stigma, especially as it relates to HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections, sexual health, LGBTQAI+ health and drug user health, continues to be a significant barrier for people to access prevention and care services. Stigma can adversely impact a person's likelihood to seek health information, engage in care and overall quality of life. Training and technical assistance services should be designed with an understanding of the differences that derive from language, culture, race/ethnicity, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, age and developmental characteristics.
12. **Demonstrate a commitment to Health Equity:** Funded Applicants are expected to commit to ensuring program staff and partners are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and expertise to adequately address health equity and the social determinants of health. Please see **Attachment 7 for Health Equity Definitions and Examples** of social and structural determinants of health. Funded Applicants are expected to work closely with community partners to identify and respond to unequal distribution of social determinants of health that can lead to inequities in health and health outcomes. Applicants are expected to be attentive to the intersections of race and health equity and promote tailored approaches to address the challenges faced by Black/Brown, Indigenous, and People of Color communities. Funded Applicants are expected to deliver services in accordance with [health equity principles](#).

Applicants may subcontract components of the scope of work. 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. 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.

Staffing Requirements for Component E: Training Centers for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources

Funded Applicants will establish a staffing plan to meet the goals outlined in the RFA and will ensure the staffing needs of the program are met on an ongoing basis. At a minimum, this will include:

- a. **Program Manager** (at least .05 FTE) with a bachelor's degree and at least five (5) years of professional experience providing leadership in a public health program. This experience must include programmatic and fiscal oversight activities, with at least three (3) years of experience overseeing professional training or workforce development programs. A master's degree may substitute for one (1) year of professional experience. An effective Program Manager will have experience in training, curriculum development, coordination of activities with community-based and governmental organizations, program development and implementation, and evaluation of training programs, and will have excellent interpersonal skills.
- b. **Lead Trainer/Curriculum Developer** with relevant lived experience, an appropriate educational background and relevant experience training and/or mentoring Peer Workers and training on topics related to HIV, STI, viral hepatitis and substance use. The Program Manager and Lead Trainer/Curriculum Developer may be the same person.
- c. **Peer Worker Support Coordinator** with lived experience of HIV, hepatitis C, incarceration, or experience accessing PrEP or harm reduction services and who has completed or is in the process of completing the New York State Peer Worker Certification Program in HIV, hepatitis C, PrEP, harm reduction, criminal justice at the time of hire. The Peer Worker Support Coordinator will plan and lead weekly educational and support calls for people with lived experience, support peers in achieving key certification milestones, represent the program at public meetings and events, and conduct outreach and recruitment activities for the program.
- d. **Trainers and/or consultants** with an appropriate educational background, including demonstrated training skills and appropriate experience and qualifications in the topics they will train. Funded centers should have access to a diverse panel of trainers and/or consultants who are representative of the priority audience and communities served. Funded Applicants are expected to engage trainers and/or consultants with relevant lived experience of HIV, hepatitis C, incarceration, and/or experience accessing PrEP or harm reduction services.

Resumes/CVs of staff and consultants are subject to approval by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute. All appropriate staff and consultants will attend, and successfully complete, Training of Trainer programs provided by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute or an approved contractor. Training centers will be responsible for ensuring all consultant trainers are fully prepared to deliver trainings for which they are assigned as primary or back-up trainers. Resumes of all key staff should be uploaded with **Attachment 8: Agency Capacity and Staffing Information**.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

A. Issuing Agency

This RFA is issued by the Department, AIDS Institute, Office of the Medical Director and Health Research, Inc. The Department is responsible for the requirements specified herein and for the evaluation of all Applications. See, 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 Shannon Mason, Office of the Medical Director, the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute at the following email address: hivet@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

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 #20760: Ending Epidemics Education, Training and Technical Assistance Services*) 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#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp A;
RFA#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp B;
RFA#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp C;
RFA#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp D;
RFA#20760 Ending Epidemics Ed & Training Comp E.
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 "pass-worded" 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 and HRI's Reserved Rights

The Department of Health and HRI reserve 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 or HRI's sole discretion.
3. Make an award under the RFA in whole or in part.
4. Disqualify any Applicant whose conduct and/or proposal fails to conform to the requirements of the RFA.
5. Seek clarifications and revisions of applications, in the Department's or HRI'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 or HRI'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 and HRI.
13. Conduct contract negotiations with the next responsible Applicant, should the Department or HRI be unsuccessful in negotiating with the selected Applicant.
14. Utilize any and all ideas submitted with the Applications received, at the Department's or HRI'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 and HRI.

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. Any HRI contract resulting from this RFA will be effective only upon approval by HRI. **Refer to Attachment 13: General Terms and Conditions – Health Research, Incorporated Contracts.**

It is expected that State contracts resulting from this RFA will have the following time period: December 1, 2026 – November 30, 2031.

Continued funding throughout this 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 State of New York 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 14**)
- Attachment A-2: Program-specific Terms and Conditions (HIV/AIDS Clause) (**RFA Attachment 15**)
- Attachment E-1: AIDS Institute Policy on Personal Health Related Information (**RFA Attachment 16**)
- Attachment M: Participation by Minority Group Members and Women with Respect to State Contracts: requirements and Procedures (**RFA Attachment 17**)

HRI funded contracts resulting from this RFA will be for 12-month terms. The anticipated start date of HRI contracts is December 1, 2026. However, depending on the funding source, the initial contract term could be for a shorter time period. HRI awards may be renewed for up to four (4) additional annual contract periods based on satisfactory performance and availability of funds. HRI reserves the right to revise the award amount as necessary due to changes in the availability of funding.

H. Payment & Reporting Requirements of Grant Awardee(s)

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:

Office of the Medical Director
AIDS Institute
New York State Department of Health
Empire State Plaza
Corning Tower, Room 259
Albany, NY 12237
AIDS.Institute.Admin@health.ny.gov

2. 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 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: Contractor 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 of Health at the address above or, if requested by the Department, through the Statewide Financial System:

- A monthly narrative addressing program implementation, barriers and accomplishments.
- All training services must be documented in the initiatives Learning Management System – www.hivtrainingny.org.

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. For HRI Contracts, payments and reporting requirements will be detailed in Exhibit "C" of the final contract.

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 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 MWBE firms). A Grantee awarded a Grant Contract pursuant to this RFA must document good faith efforts to provide meaningful participation by MWBEs as subcontractors or suppliers in the performance of the Grant Contract and Grantee will agree under the terms of its Grant Contract that the Department may withhold payment pending receipt of the required MWBE documentation required by the Department or the OSC. For guidance on how the Department will determine "good faith efforts," refer to 5 NYCRR §142.8.

The directory of New York State Certified MWBEs 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 MWBE participation in the performance of its obligations under its Grant Contract.

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, by contacting the SFS Help Desk at 855-233-8363 or by emailing at 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.

Applicants opting to complete online should complete and upload the **Vendor Responsibility Attestation: Attachment 18** of the RFA. The Attestation is located under the SFS Attachments Section and once completed should be submitted as part of your full application submission.

Applicants opting to complete and submit a paper questionnaire can obtain the appropriate questionnaire from the VendRep website, www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep, and submit it as part of your full application submission.

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).
- If you have previously registered and do not know your Username, please email 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).
- 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. 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.

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:**

SFS Security Role Name	Description	Access Provided
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, "Grant 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.

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 19**. Applicants should review, sign, date and include as part of their full application submission the **Gender-Based Violence and the Workplace Certification as Attachment 19**.

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 Narrative. 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 20)** 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 20**.

The Application Narrative should not exceed eleven (11) double-spaced pages, using an 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 eleven (11) 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 11 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

Program Specific Questions: Component A: Regional Training Centers

Application Format

1.	Program Abstract	Not Scored	
2.	Community and Agency Description	Maximum Score:	15 points
3.	Health Equity	Maximum Score:	15 points
4.	Program Design and Implementation	Maximum Score:	50 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) Summarize the proposed program, including the geographic region selected and major activities that will be undertaken to meet the goals of this initiative.
- 1b) Briefly describe how your program will address the goals and objectives of **Component A: Regional Training Centers** within the geographic region to be served.
- 1c) Indicate how your program will work with the other funded Components to achieve the goals of this initiative.
- 1d) What types of outcomes does your organization expect to achieve? How will success be measured?
- 1e) Describe your experience providing training and professional development on topics related to HIV, sexually transmitted infections, viral hepatitis, LGBTQAI+ and drug user health. **Be sure to include the number of years of relevant experience.**
- 1f) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 1: Application Cover Page** as part of your full application submission.
- 1g) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 3: Statement of Assurances** as part of your full application submission.
- 1h) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 18: Vendor Responsibility Attestation** as part of your full application submission.
- 1i) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 19: Gender-Based Violence and the Workplace Certification** as part of your full Application submission.
- 1j) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 20: Application Checklist** as part of your full Application submission.

1k) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 21: M/WBE Utilization Plan** as part of your full application submission.

2. Community and Agency Description

**Total 15 Points
Maximum: 2 Pages**

2a) Describe why your organization is qualified to serve as the Regional Training Center for the region in which you submitted an application. Include both quantitative and qualitative evidence to address this question.

2b) Describe your understanding of the current priorities for professional training of health and human services providers within the region. How do you anticipate these needs will change throughout proposed contract?

2c) Describe any prior grants your organization has received from the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute that are relevant to this proposal and any outcomes from those grants. Include the number of individuals and/or agencies trained over the past two (2) years. OR, if your organization has not received funding from the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute, describe any similar types of programs that your organization has undertaken in the past, and any outcomes from those programs. Include the number of individuals and agencies trained over the past two (2) years.

2d) Describe how you will leverage other programs and agencies within the geographic area to maximize the impact of your proposed program without supplanting other resources.

2e) Provide your Agency Organizational Chart to show where your specific program fits within the agency and how it will support the initiative's programmatic goals. The **Agency Organizational Chart** should be uploaded as **Attachment 22** as part of your full application submission.

3. Health Equity

**Total 15 Points
Maximum: 2 Pages**

3a) Describe how you will determine the health inequities and disparities in access to prevention and care services that exist in your region.

3b) What steps will you take to ensure your training services are accessible to providers working with populations experiencing the greatest inequities, including peer workers? How will you identify and address barriers to accessing your training services?

3c) Describe steps you will take to ensure the training and technical assistance services you provide address unique social determinants of health profiles within your region? How will you determine if these steps are successful?

3d) Describe your organization's capacity to apply a health equity foundation (staff knowledge, staff training, support for collaboration and evaluation). What steps will you take to ensure your trainers and consultants are well versed in the principles of health equity and prepared to build health equity competencies for healthcare providers?

3e) Describe concrete steps your organization has taken in its operations that demonstrate its commitment to advancing health equity and racial justice.

4. Program Design and Implementation

**Total 50 Points
Maximum: 6 Pages**

- 4a) Describe your overall proposal to plan and implement a Regional Training Center as outlined in **Section III. Project Narrative / Work Plan Outcomes** of this Request for Applications.
- 4b) Describe the unique training needs of health and human services providers to be served through the Regional Training Center. How will you approach developing a training plan to meet these needs with an appropriate mix of in-person, virtual, blended or other distances learning services (i.e. agency specific requests, tailored trainings, etc.) to ensure access throughout the region?
- 4c) Describe how your organization will ensure training services are accessible, culturally and linguistically appropriate, stigma-free and conducive to adult learning consistent with the standards outlined in **Attachment 5: Training Center Best Practices**.
- 4d) Describe key community partnerships required for successful implementation of the proposed program. How will you facilitate regional networking opportunities to identify and share resources?
- 4e) Describe how you propose to market your training services for different training audiences within the region? How will you outreach to new providers or partners in your region to offer technical assistance or tailored training services?
- 4f) Describe your organization's approach to the design, review and implementation of new or revised training curriculum and materials, in a meaningful timeframe.
- 4g) What indicators will you use to measure the success of your training program? How will these be used to track and improve performance of your training program?
- 4h) Describe how your organization will collaborate with the organizations funded under Components B, C, D and E to support the goals of this Request for Applications.
- 4i) Referring to **Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program** of this RFA, describe how your organization will implement a program that meets all of the **Staffing Requirements**. Include 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. Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 8: Agency Capacity and Staffing Information** as part of your full application submission.
- 4j) Describe how you will develop and maintain an adequate pool of consultants and/or training faculty with subject matter expertise in sufficient quantity to meet all program deliverables. Include how you will recruit individuals with demonstrated expertise working with the priority populations representatives of the priority audience and communities served.
- 4k) Describe your plan for ongoing training and support of staff and consultants to ensure they are current with relevant New York State policies and practices and can effectively operate learning technology (webinar platforms, digital tools etc.)

5. Budgets and Justifications

Total 20 Points

All costs must be related to the provision of *Ending Epidemics Education, Training and Technical Assistance Services Initiative* as well as be consistent with the scope of services, reasonable and cost effective. Justification for each cost should be submitted in narrative form. For all existing staff, the Budget narrative must delineate how the percentage of time devoted to this initiative has been determined.

Responses to questions 5d and 5e are not included in the page limits for the RFA.

Funding provided under this RFA may only be used to expand existing activities or create new activities pursuant to this RFA. These funds may not be used to supplant funds for currently existing staff activities.

Applicants are instructed to:

- ***Respond to questions 5d and 5e below as part of your full application submission; and***
- ***Complete and submit a budget in SFS according to the following guidelines:***

5a) Applicants are instructed to prepare an annual budget based on the maximum award as indicated in Section I of this RFA, and for the region in which they are applying, if applicable. The Applicant is instructed to enter the budget for year one (1), 12/1/2026 – 11/30/2027, into the Statewide Financial System (SFS). Entering a budget for years two (2) – five (5) is not required. Refer to **Attachment 23: 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 Request for Application 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) Applicants are required to complete and upload **Attachment 24: Funding History for HIV/STI/Viral Hepatitis Training, Capacity Building, Technical Assistance or Client Services** as part of your full application submission.

5f) 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. HRI-awarded contracts funded by Ryan White Part B funding will be limited to a maximum of 10% total contract costs. See **Ryan White Guidance for Part B Direct Service Subcontractors: Attachment 2**.
- Agencies currently funded by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to provide program services in accordance with the requirements of this RFA must apply for continuation of funding.
- Ineligible budget items will be removed from the budget prior to contracting. Ineligible items are those items determined by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute 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.

- Faculty Subject Area Experts: Any agreement established with faculty should be made directly with faculty and not an institution. Fees should not include any administrative costs and/or institutional fringe benefit rates.

6. Work Plan

For the **SFS Work Plan Project Summary**, Applicants are instructed to insert the Project Summary as it is listed in **Attachment 6: Regional Training Centers Work Plan - Component A**. Any additional Project Summary language entered in the Project Summary area **will not** be considered or scored by reviewers of your application.

Applicants are **not** required to enter the performance measures for each work plan objective in the SFS Work Plan at the time of application. Applicants should review the performance measures as they are listed in **Attachment 6: Regional Training Centers Work Plan - Component A**.

Funded Applicants will be held to the Objectives, Tasks, and Performance Measures as listed in **Attachment 6: Regional Training Centers Work Plan - Component A** and will be required to enter the performance measures into SFS if funding is awarded.

Program Specific Questions: Component B: Topic-Specific Training Center of Expertise

Application Format

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

1.	Program Abstract	Not Scored Maximum: 1 Page
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Applicants should provide a program abstract with the following information:

- 1a) Summarize the proposed program, including the topic area selected and major activities that will be undertaken to meet the goals of this initiative.
- 1b) Briefly describe how your program will address the goals and objectives of **Component B: Topic Specific Training Center of Expertise**.
- 1c) Indicate how your program will work with the other funded Components to achieve the goals of this initiative.
- 1d) What types of outcomes does your organization expect to achieve? How will success be measured?
- 1e) Describe your experience in the field of the designated topic area, which must include one (1) or more of the following: 1) developing and delivering training or capacity building for health and human services providers related to the topic; 2) developing and delivering

direct service programs that relate to the topic; and/or 3) developing conference presentations and journal publications on the topic.

Be sure to include the number of years of relevant experience.

- 1f) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 1: Application Cover Page** as part of your full application submission.
- 1g) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 3: Statement of Assurances** as part of your full application submission.
- 1h) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 18: Vendor Responsibility Attestation** as part of your full application submission.
- 1i) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 19: Gender-Based Violence and the Workplace Certification** as part of your full Application submission.
- 1j) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 20: Application Checklist** as part of your full Application submission.
- 1k) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 21: M/WBE Utilization Plan** as part of your full application submission.

2. Community and Agency Description

**Total 15 Points
Maximum: 2 Pages**

- 2a) Describe why your organization is qualified serve as the Training Center of Expertise for the selected topic area. Include both quantitative and qualitative evidence to address this question.
- 2b) Describe your understanding of the current priorities for professional training of health and human services providers related to the topic area selected. How do you anticipate these needs will change throughout proposed contract?
- 2c) Describe any prior grants your organization has received from the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute that are relevant to this proposal and any outcomes from those grants. Include the number of individuals and/or agencies trained over the past (2) years. OR, if your organization has not received funding from the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute, describe any similar types of programs that your organization has undertaken in the past and any outcomes from those programs. Include the number of individuals and agencies trained over the past two (2) years.
- 2d) Describe how you will leverage other programs within your agency and its partners to maximize the impact of your proposed program without supplanting other resources.
- 2e) Provide your Agency Organizational Chart to show where your specific program fits within the agency and how it will support the initiative's programmatic goals. The **Agency Organizational Chart** should be uploaded as **Attachment 22** as part of your full application submission.

3. Health Equity

**Total 15 Points
Maximum: 2 Pages**

- 3a) Describe how you will ensure that training and capacity building services provided under this initiative will impact communities in New York State that are experiencing the greatest health disparities and inequities.
- 3b) Describe how you will ensure the training and technical assistance services you provide address the social determinant of health. How will you determine if these trainings/services are successful?

- 3c) What steps will you take to ensure your training services are accessible to providers working with populations experiencing the greatest inequities, including peer workers? How will you identify and address barriers to accessing your training services?
- 3d) Describe your organization's capacity to apply a health equity lens (staff knowledge, staff training, support for collaboration and evaluation). What steps will you take to ensure your trainers and consultants are well versed in the principles of health equity and prepared to build health equity competencies for healthcare providers?
- 3e) Describe the concrete steps your organization has taken in its operations that demonstrate its commitment to advancing health equity and racial justice.

4. Program Design and Implementation

**Total 50 Points
Maximum: 6 Pages**

- 4a) Describe your overall proposal to plan and implement a Training Center of Expertise in the topic area selected as outlined in Section III. Project Narrative / Work Plan Outcomes of this Request for Applications.
- 4b) Describe the unique training needs of health and human services providers to be served through the Training Center of Expertise in the selected topic area. How will you approach developing a training plan to meet the needs of diverse learning audiences statewide, including an appropriate mix of advanced learning opportunities and core concepts related to your selected topic area?
- 4c) Describe steps you will take to ensure training services are accessible, culturally and linguistically appropriate, stigma-free and conducive to adult learning consistent with the standards outlined in **Attachment 5: Training Center Best Practices**. Describe steps you will take to ensure the availability of adequate training space statewide.
- 4d) Describe key community partnerships required for successful implementation of the proposed program.
- 4e) Describe how you propose to market your training services for different training audiences statewide. How will you outreach to new providers or partners statewide to offer technical assistance or tailored training services?
- 4f) Describe your organization's approach to the design, review and implementation of new or revised training curriculum and materials in a meaningful timeframe.
- 4g) What indicators will you use to measure the success of your training program? How will these be used to track and improve performance of your training program?
- 4h) Describe how your organization will collaborate with the organizations funded under Components A, C, D and E to support the goals of this Request for Applications.
- 4i) Referring to Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program of this RFA, describe how your organization will implement a program that meets all of the **Staffing Requirements**. Include 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. Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 8: Agency Capacity and Staffing Information** as part of your full application submission.
- 4j) Describe how you will develop and maintain an adequate pool of consultants and/or training faculty with subject matter expertise in sufficient quantity to meet all program deliverables.

Include how you will recruit individuals with demonstrated expertise working with the priority populations representatives of the priority audience and communities served.

- 4k) Describe your plan for ongoing training and support of staff and consultants to ensure they are current with relevant New York State policies and practices and can effectively operate learning technology (webinar platforms, digital tools etc.)

5. Budgets and Justifications

Total 20 Points

All costs must be related to the provision of - *Ending Epidemics Education, Training and Technical Assistance Services Initiative* as well as be consistent with the scope of services, reasonable and cost effective. Justification for each cost should be submitted in narrative form. For all existing staff, the Budget narrative must delineate how the percentage of time devoted to this initiative has been determined.

Responses to questions 5d and 5e are not included in the page limits for the RFA.

Funding provided under this RFA may only be used to expand existing activities or create new activities pursuant to this RFA. These funds may not be used to supplant funds for currently existing staff activities.

Applicants are instructed to:

- ***Respond to questions 5d and 5e below as part of your full application submission; and***
- ***Complete and submit a budget in SFS according to the following guidelines:***

- 5a) Applicants are instructed to prepare an annual budget based on the maximum award as indicated in Section I of this RFA, and for the region in which they are applying, if applicable. The Applicant is instructed to enter the budget for year one (1), 12/1/2026 – 11/30/2027, into the Statewide Financial System (SFS). Entering a budget for years two (2) – five (5) is not required. Refer to **Attachment 23: 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 Request for Application 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) Applicants are required to complete and upload **Attachment 24: Funding History for HIV/STI/Viral Hepatitis Training, Capacity Building, Technical Assistance or Client Services** as part of your full application submission.
- 5f) 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. HRI-awarded contracts funded by Ryan White Part B funding will be limited to a maximum of 10% total contract costs. See **Ryan White Guidance for Part B Direct Service Subcontractors: Attachment 2**.
- Agencies currently funded by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to provide program services in accordance with the requirements of this RFA must apply for continuation of funding.
- Ineligible budget items will be removed from the budget prior to contracting. Ineligible items are those items determined by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute 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.
- Faculty Subject Area Experts: Any agreement established with faculty should be made directly with faculty and not an institution. Fees should not include any administrative costs and/or institutional fringe benefit rates.

6. Work Plan

For the **SFS Work Plan Project Summary**, Applicants are instructed to insert the Project Summary as it is listed in **Attachment 9: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise Work Plan - Component B**. Any additional Project Summary language entered in the Project Summary area **will not** be considered or scored by reviewers of your application.

Applicants are **not** required to enter the performance measures for each work plan objective in the SFS Work Plan at the time of application. Applicants should review the performance measures as they are listed in **Attachment 9: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise Work Plan - Component B**.

Funded Applicants will be held to the Objectives, Tasks, and Performance Measures as listed in **Attachment 9: Topic-Specific Training Centers of Expertise Work Plan - Component B** and will be required to enter the performance measures into SFS if funding is awarded.

Program Specific Questions: Component C: Distance Learning Resource Center

Application Format

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

1.	Program Abstract	Not Scored Maximum: 1 Page
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Applicants should provide a program abstract with the following information:

- 1a) Summarize the proposed program, including the topic area selected and major activities that will be undertaken to meet the goals of this initiative.
- 1b) Briefly describe how your program will address the goals and objectives of **Component C: Distance Learning Resource Center**.
- 1c) Indicate how your program will work with the other funded Components to achieve the goals of this initiative.
- 1d) What types of outcomes does your organization expect to achieve? How will success be measured?
- 1e) Describe your experience developing and delivering distance learning programs on topics related to HIV, sexually transmitted infections, viral hepatitis, LGBTQA+ and drug user health with an emphasis on online learning, synchronous and asynchronous learning, and digital learning.
Be sure to include the number of years of relevant experience.
- 1f) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 1: Application Cover Page** as part of your full application submission.
- 1g) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 3: Statement of Assurances** as part of your full application submission.
- 1h) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 18: Vendor Responsibility Attestation** as part of your full application submission.
- 1i) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 19: Gender-Based Violence and the Workplace Certification** as part of your full Application submission.
- 1j) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 20: Application Checklist** as part of your full Application submission.
- 1k) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 21: M/WBE Utilization Plan** as part of your full application submission.

2. Community and Agency Description

**Total 15 Points
Maximum: 2 Pages**

- 2a) Describe why your organization is qualified to serve as the Distance Learning Resource Center. Include both quantitative and qualitative evidence to address this question.
- 2b) Describe your understanding of the current priorities for professional training of health and human services providers related to distance learning. How do you anticipate these needs will change throughout the proposed contract?
- 2c) Describe any prior grants your organization has received from the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute that are relevant to this proposal and any outcomes from those grants. Include examples of distance learning projects developed over the past two (2) years. OR, if your organization has not received funding from the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute, describe any similar types of programs that your organization has undertaken in the past and any outcomes from those programs. Include examples of distance learning projects developed over the past two (2) years.
- 2d) Describe how you will leverage other programs within your agency and partner agencies to maximize the impact of your proposed program without supplanting other resources.
- 2e) Provide your Agency Organizational Chart to show where your specific program fits within

the agency and how it will support the initiative's programmatic goals. The **Agency Organizational Chart** should be uploaded as **Attachment 22** as part of your full application submission.

3. Health Equity

**Total 15 Points
Maximum: 2 Pages**

- 3a) Describe how you will ensure that distance learning trainings developed through this initiative will impact communities in New York State that are experiencing the greatest health disparities and inequities.
- 3b) Describe how you will ensure the training curricula and digital learning resources you develop address the social determinants of health. How will you determine if these methods are successful?
- 3c) What steps will you take to ensure your training services are accessible to providers working with populations experiencing the greatest inequities, including peer workers? How will you identify and address barriers to accessing your trainings?
- 3d) Describe your organization's capacity to apply a health equity lens (staff knowledge, staff training, support for collaboration and evaluation). What steps will you take to ensure your training development team and consultants are well versed in the principles of health equity and prepared to build health equity competencies for healthcare providers?
- 3e) Describe the concrete steps your organization has taken in its operations that demonstrate its commitment to advancing health equity and racial justice.

4. Program Design and Implementation

**Total 50 Points
Maximum: 6 Pages**

- 4a) Describe your overall proposal to plan and implement a Distance Learning Resource Center as outlined in Section III. Project Narrative / Work Plan Outcomes of this Request for Applications.
- 4b) Describe how you will develop a training plan to meet the needs of diverse learning audiences statewide. Describe how you will approach incorporating the cutting-edge digital learning technologies and tools to optimize adult learning within the training initiative consistent with the standards outlined in **Attachment 5: Training Center Best Practices**.
- 4c) Describe key community partners you will engage to implement the proposed program. Include how you will identify needs, coordinate resources, and ensure effective training delivery.
- 4d) Describe how you propose to market your distance learning trainings for different training audiences statewide. How will you outreach to new providers or partners statewide to make them aware of available distance learning resources?
- 4e) Describe your organization's process for designing, reviewing, and updating distance learning trainings and other resources on an ongoing basis to ensure they are evidence based, stigma-free, culturally responsive, and aligned with the evolving needs of the initiative. How will you interface with content creators to meet program deliverables?
- 4f) Describe steps you will take to enhance the accessibility of distance learning trainings and digital learning resources within the initiative.
- 4g) How will you approach supporting appropriate use of artificial intelligence-driven learning

tools within the training initiative?

- 4h) What are your program's indicators for success? How will these indicators be used to track and improve performance of your program?
- 4i) Describe how your organization will collaborate with the organizations funded under Components A, B, D and E to support the goals of this Request for Applications. How will you approach offering technical assistance to support other Components funded through this initiative?
- 4j) Referring to Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program of this RFA, describe how your organization will implement a program that meets all of the **Staffing Requirements**. Include a brief description of each position's roles and responsibilities, along with job qualifications, educational background, licensures and experience required for each position. If consultants or in-kind staff are included in the proposed program, they should be included in the staffing detail. Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 8: Agency Capacity and Staffing Information** as part of your full application submission.
- 4k) Describe your plan for ongoing training and support of staff and consultants to ensure they are current with relevant New York State policies and practices and can effectively operate learning technology (webinar platforms, digital tools etc.)

5. Budgets and Justifications

Total 20 Points

All costs must be related to the provision of - *Ending Epidemics Education, Training and Technical Assistance Services Initiative* as well as be consistent with the scope of services, reasonable and cost effective. Justification for each cost should be submitted in narrative form. For all existing staff, the Budget narrative must delineate how the percentage of time devoted to this initiative has been determined.

Responses to questions 5d and 5e are not included in the page limits for the RFA.

Funding provided under this RFA may only be used to expand existing activities or create new activities pursuant to this RFA. These funds may not be used to supplant funds for currently existing staff activities.

Applicants are instructed to:

- **Respond to questions 5d and 5e below as part of your full application submission; and**
- **Complete and submit a budget in SFS according to the following guidelines:**

5a) Applicants are instructed to prepare an annual budget based on the maximum award as indicated in Section I of this RFA, and for the region in which they are applying, if applicable. The Applicant is instructed to enter the budget for year one (1), 12/1/2026 – 11/30/2027 into the Statewide Financial System (SFS). Entering a budget for years two (2) – five (5) is not required. Refer to **Attachment 23: 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 Request for Application 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) Applicants are required to complete and upload **Attachment 24: Funding History for HIV/STI/Viral Hepatitis Training, Capacity Building, Technical Assistance or Client Services** as part of your full application submission.

5f) 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. HRI-awarded contracts funded by Ryan White Part B funding will be limited to a maximum of 10% total contract costs. See **Ryan White Guidance for Part B Direct Service Subcontractors: Attachment 2**.
- Agencies currently funded by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to provide program services in accordance with the requirements of this RFA must apply for continuation of funding.
- Ineligible budget items will be removed from the budget prior to contracting. Ineligible items are those items determined by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute 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.
- Faculty Subject Area Experts: Any agreement established with faculty should be made directly with faculty and not an institution. Fees should not include any administrative costs and/or institutional fringe benefit rates.

6. Work Plan

For the **SFS Work Plan Project Summary**, Applicants are instructed to insert the Project Summary as it is listed in **Attachment 10: Distance Learning Resource Center Work Plan - Component C**. Any additional Project Summary language entered in the Project Summary area **will not** be considered or scored by reviewers of your application.

Applicants are **not** required to enter the performance measures for each work plan objective in the SFS Work Plan at the time of application. Applicants should review the performance measures as they are listed in **Attachment 10: Distance Learning Resource Center Work Plan - Component C**.

Funded Applicants will be held to the Objectives, Tasks, and Performance Measures as listed in **Attachment 10: Distance Learning Resource Center Work Plan - Component C** and will be required to enter the performance measures into SFS if funding is awarded.

Program Specific Questions: Component D: New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center

Application Format

1.	Program Abstract	Not Scored	
2.	Community and Agency Description	Maximum Score:	15 points
3.	Health Equity	Maximum Score:	15 points
4.	Program Design and Implementation	Maximum Score:	50 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) Summarize the proposed program, including major activities that will be undertaken to meet the goals of this initiative.
- 1b) Briefly describe how your program will address the goals and objectives of **Component D: New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center**.
- 1c) Indicate how your program will work with the other funded Components to achieve the goals of this initiative.
- 1d) What types of outcomes does your organization expect to achieve? How will success be measured?
- 1e) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 1: Application Cover Page** as part of your full application submission.
- 1f) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 3: Statement of Assurances** as part of your full application submission.
- 1g) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload a signed **Attachment 4: Academic Institution of Higher Learning Attestation** as part of your full application submission.
- 1h) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 18: Vendor Responsibility Attestation** as part of your full application submission.
- 1i) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 19: Gender-Based Violence and the Workplace Certification** as part of your full Application submission.
- 1j) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 20: Application Checklist** as part of your full Application submission.
- 1k) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 21: M/WBE Utilization Plan** as part of your full application submission.

2. Community and Agency Description **Total 15 Points**
Maximum: 2 Pages

- 2a) Describe why your organization is qualified to serve as the statewide Peer Worker Certification Academic Center. Include both quantitative and qualitative evidence to address this question.

- 2b) Describe your understanding of the current priorities for training of health and human services providers in New York State, especially Peer Workers. How do you anticipate these needs will change throughout proposed contract?
- 2c) Describe any prior grants your organization has received from the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute that are relevant to this proposal and any outcomes from those grants. OR if your organization has not received funding from the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute, describe any similar types of programs that your organization has undertaken in the past and any outcomes from those programs.
- 2d) Describe how you will leverage other programs and agencies statewide to maximize the impact of your proposed program without supplanting other resources.
- 2e) Provide your Agency Organizational Chart to show where your specific program fits within the agency and how it will support the initiative's programmatic goals. The **Agency Organizational Chart** should be uploaded as **Attachment 22** as part of your full application submission.

3. Health Equity

**Total 15 Point
Maximum: 2 Pages**

- 3a) Describe how you will identify the priority populations experiencing the greatest inequities and disparities in access to prevention and care services as well as training services.
- 3b) What steps will you take to ensure your program is accessible to providers working with populations experiencing the greatest inequities, including peer workers? How will you identify and address barriers to accessing your services?
- 3c) Describe steps you will take to ensure your program contributes to addressing the social determinants of health that lead to health inequities. How will you determine if these steps are successful?
- 3d) Describe your organization's capacity to apply a health equity lens (staff knowledge, staff training, support for collaboration and evaluation). What steps will you take to ensure your staff and/or consultants are well versed in the principles of health equity and prepared to build health equity competencies for healthcare providers, including Peer Workers?
- 3e) Describe the concrete steps your organization has taken in its operations that demonstrate its commitment to advancing health equity and racial justice.

4. Program Design and Implementation

**Total 50 Points
Maximum: 6 Pages**

- 4a) Describe your overall proposal to plan and implement a Peer Worker Certification Academic Center as outlined in Section III. Project Narrative / Work Plan Outcomes of this Request for Applications.
- 4b) Describe how your organization will oversee the process for New York State Peer Worker certification in HIV, hepatitis C, PrEP, harm reduction and criminal justice and re-certification. How will you ensure established academic standards of rigor and excellence are met?
- 4c) Describe how you will approach recruiting, screening and selecting members to serve on the Peer Review Board, ensuring members are reflective of the communities served. How will you prepare new members to effectively fulfill their role on the Peer Review Board?

- 4d) Describe your understanding of the unique needs of peer certification candidates, supervisors and agencies. How will your program help each to navigate the different aspects of the New York State Peer Worker Certification process? Estimate the number of individuals your organization proposes to certify as Peer Workers in HIV, hepatitis C, PrEP, harm reduction and criminal justice during the project period. Estimate the number of individuals that will be recertified.
- 4e) Describe the steps you will take to develop other academic recognitions that support continued career advancement, such as continuing education credits, micro-credentialing or other academic recognitions. Discuss how you will establish a process and standards to support consistent implementation across all funded Components in the initiative.
- 4f) Describe key community partnerships required for successful implementation of the proposed program. How will you leverage partnerships to identify potential peer candidates, opportunities for practicums and employment readiness resources?
- 4g) Describe how you propose to promote the program, including outreach to engage peers statewide. How will you tailor promotion for different audiences to support recruitment goals?
- 4h) What are your program's indicators for success? How will these indicators be used to track and improve performance of your program?
- 4i) Describe how your organization will collaborate with the organizations funded under Components A, B, C and E to support the goals of this Request for Applications.
- 4j) Referring to Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program of this RFA, describe how your organization will implement a program that meets all of the **Staffing Requirements**. Include 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. Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 8: Agency Capacity and Staffing Information** as part of your full application submission.
- 4k) Describe your plan for ongoing training and support of staff and/or consultants to ensure they are current with relevant New York State policies and practices and are well versed in harm reduction, trauma-informed care, and effective communication. Describe how your organization will ensure services are accessible and culturally and linguistically appropriate.

5. Budgets and Justifications

Total 20 Points

All costs must be related to the provision of *Ending Epidemics Education, Training and Technical Assistance Services Initiative* as well as be consistent with the scope of services, reasonable and cost effective. Justification for each cost should be submitted in narrative form. For all existing staff, the Budget narrative must delineate how the percentage of time devoted to this initiative has been determined.

Responses to questions 5d and 5e are not included in the page limits for the RFA.

Funding provided under this RFA may only be used to expand existing activities or create new activities pursuant to this RFA. These funds may not be used to supplant funds for currently existing staff activities.

Applicants are instructed to:

- **Respond to questions 5d and 5e below as part of your full application submission; and**
- **Complete and submit a budget in SFS according to the following guidelines:**

- 5a) Applicants are instructed to prepare an annual budget based on the maximum award as indicated in Section I of this RFA, and for the region in which they are applying, if applicable. The Applicant is instructed to enter the budget for year one (1), 12/1/2026 – 11/30/2027 into the Statewide Financial System (SFS). Entering a budget for years two (2) – five (5) is not required. Refer to **Attachment 23: 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 Request for Application 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) Applicants are required to complete and upload **Attachment 24: Funding History for HIV/STI/Viral Hepatitis Training, Capacity Building, Technical Assistance or Client Services (Past Three (3) Years)** as part of your full application submission.
- 5f) 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. HRI-awarded contracts funded by Ryan White Part B funding will be limited to a maximum of 10% total contract costs. See **Attachment 2 - Attachment B-1 Ryan White Guidance for Part B Direct Service Subcontractors**
 - Agencies currently funded by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to provide program services in accordance with the requirements of this RFA must apply for continuation of funding.
 - Ineligible budget items will be removed from the budget prior to contracting. Ineligible items are those items determined by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute 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.
 - Faculty Subject Area Experts: Any agreement established with faculty should be made directly with faculty and not an institution. Fees should not include any administrative costs and/or institutional fringe benefit rates.

6. Work Plan

For the **SFS Work Plan Project Summary**, Applicants are instructed to insert the Project Summary as it is listed in **Attachment 11: New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic**

Center Work Plan - Component D. Any additional Project Summary language entered in the Project Summary area **will not** be considered or scored by reviewers of your application.

Applicants are **not** required to enter the performance measures for each work plan objective in the SFS Work Plan at the time of application. Applicants should review the performance measures as they are listed in **Attachment 11: New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center Work Plan - Component D.**

Funded Applicants will be held to the Objectives, Tasks, and Performance Measures as listed in **Attachment 11: New York State Peer Worker Certification Academic Center Work Plan - Component D** and will be required to enter the performance measures into SFS if funding is awarded.

Program Specific Questions: Component E: Training Centers for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources

Application Format

1.	Program Abstract	Not Scored	
2.	Community and Agency Description	Maximum Score:	15 points
3.	Health Equity	Maximum Score:	15 points
4.	Program Design and Implementation	Maximum Score:	50 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) Summarize the proposed program, including the topic area selected and major activities that will be undertaken to meet the goals of this initiative.
- 1b) Briefly describe how your program will address the goals and objectives of **Component E: Training Centers for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources.**
- 1c) Indicate how your program will work with the other funded Components to achieve the goals of this initiative.
- 1d) What types of outcomes does your organization expect to achieve? How will success be measured?
- 1e) Describe your experience working with peers who have lived experience of HIV, hepatitis C, harm reduction, PrEP or criminal justice, as evidenced by one (1) or more of the following:
1) developing and delivering leadership training or capacity building for people with lived experience; 2) developing and delivering peer worker employment readiness training for people with lived experience; and/or 3) developing and delivering peer service programs related to HIV, hepatitis C, harm reduction, PrEP or criminal justice.
Be sure to include the number of years of relevant experience.
- 1f) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 1: Application Cover Page** as part of your full application submission.
- 1g) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 3: Statement of Assurances** as part of your full application submission.

- 1h) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 18: Vendor Responsibility Attestation** as part of your full application submission.
- 1i) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 19: Gender-Based Violence and the Workplace Certification** as part of your full Application submission.
- 1j) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 20: Application Checklist** as part of your full Application submission.
- 1k) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 21: M/WBE Utilization Plan** as part of your full application submission.

2. Community and Agency Description

**Total 15 Points
Maximum: 2 Pages**

- 2a) Describe why your organization is qualified to serve as the Component E: Training Center for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources for the region for which you are submitting an application. Include evidence to demonstrate experience working with peers with lived experience of HIV, Hepatitis C, Harm Reduction, PrEP or Criminal Justice, which must include one or more of the following: developing and delivering leadership training or capacity building for people with live experience; developing and delivering peer worker employment readiness training, and/or developing and delivering peer service programs related to HIV, Hepatitis C, Harm Reduction, PrEP or Criminal Justice.
- 2b) Describe your understanding of the current priorities for training of health and human services providers in New York State, especially Peer Workers. How do you anticipate these needs will change throughout the proposed contract?
- 2c) Describe any prior grants your organization has received from the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute that are relevant to this proposal and any outcomes from those grants. Include the number of individuals and/or agencies trained over the past two (2) years. OR, if your organization has not received funding from the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute, describe any similar types of programs that your organization has undertaken in the past and any outcomes from those programs. Include the number of individuals and agencies trained over the past two (2) years.
- 2d) Describe how you will leverage other programs and agencies within the geographic area to maximize the impact of your proposed program without supplanting other resources.
- 2e) Provide your Agency Organizational Chart to show where your specific program fits within the agency and how it will support the initiative’s programmatic goals. The **Agency Organizational Chart** should be uploaded as **Attachment 22** as part of your full application submission.

3. Health Equity

**Total 15 Points
Maximum: 2 Pages**

- 3a) Describe how you will ensure that training and mentoring services provided under this initiative will impact communities in New York State that are experiencing the greatest health disparities and inequities.
- 3b) Describe how you will ensure the training, mentoring and support services you provide address the social determinants of health? How will you determine if these measures are successful?

- 3c) What steps will you take to ensure your services are accessible to populations experiencing the greatest inequities? How will you identify and address barriers to accessing your services?
- 3d) Describe your organization's capacity to apply a health equity lens (staff knowledge, staff training, support for collaboration and evaluation). What steps will you take to ensure your staff, trainers and consultants are well versed in the principles of health equity and prepared to build health equity competencies for healthcare providers?
- 3e) Describe the concrete steps your organization has taken in its operations that demonstrate its commitment to advancing health equity and racial justice.

4. Program Design and Implementation

**Total 50 Points
Maximum: 6 Pages**

- 4a) Describe your overall proposal to plan and implement a Training Center for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources in the region selected as outlined in Section III. Project Narrative / Work Plan Outcomes of this Request for Applications.
- 4b) Describe the unique needs for leadership skills development for people with lived experience of HIV, hepatitis C, incarceration, or experience accessing PrEP or harm reduction services in the region in which you submitted an application. How will you approach developing a training plan to meet the regional needs for peer leadership and career readiness training?
- 4c) Describe how your organization will ensure training and services are accessible, culturally and linguistically appropriate, stigma-free and conducive to adult learning consistent with the standards outlined in **Attachment 5: Training Center Best Practices**.
- 4d) How will your program support peers in achieving key milestones in the New York State Peer Worker Certification process? Describe steps you will take to support Certified Peer Workers for job placement. Estimate the number of individuals you anticipate mentoring.
- 4e) Describe key community partnerships required for successful implementation of the proposed program. How will you leverage partnerships to identify potential peer leaders, employment readiness resources, and community involvement, practicums and/or employment opportunities?
- 4f) What strategies will you use to outreach to people with lived experience in the region? How do you propose to market training and technical assistance to employers throughout the region?
- 4g) What are your program's indicators for success? How will these indicators be used to track and improve performance of your program?
- 4h) Describe how your organization will collaborate with the organizations funded under Components A, B, C, D and E to support the goals of this Request for Applications.
- 4i) Referring to section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program of this RFA, describe how your organization will implement a program that meets all of the **Staffing Requirements**. Include 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. Applicants are instructed to complete and upload **Attachment 8: Agency Capacity and Staffing Information** as part of your full application submission.

- 4j) Describe how you will develop and maintain an adequate pool of trainers and/or consultants to meet all program deliverables. Include how you will recruit individuals with demonstrated expertise working with the priority populations representatives of the priority audience and communities served.
- 4k) Describe your plan for ongoing training and support for staff and/or consultants to ensure they are current with relevant New York State policies and practices and are well versed in harm reduction, trauma-informed care, and effective communication.

5. Budgets and Justifications

Total 20 Points

All costs must be related to the provision of - *Ending Epidemics Education, Training and Technical Assistance Services Initiative* as well as be consistent with the scope of services, reasonable and cost effective. Justification for each cost should be submitted in narrative form. For all existing staff, the Budget narrative must delineate how the percentage of time devoted to this initiative has been determined.

Responses to questions 5d and 5e are not included in the page limits for the RFA.

Funding provided under this RFA may only be used to expand existing activities or create new activities pursuant to this RFA. These funds may not be used to supplant funds for currently existing staff activities.

Applicants are instructed to:

- ***Respond to questions 5d and 5e below as part of your full application submission; and***
- ***Complete and submit a budget in SFS according to the following guidelines:***

- 5a) Applicants are instructed to prepare an annual budget based on the maximum award as indicated in Section I of this RFA, and for the region in which they are applying, if applicable. The Applicant is instructed to enter the budget for year one (1), 12/1/2026 – 11/30/2027, into the Statewide Financial System (SFS). Entering a budget for years two (2) – five (5) is not required. Refer to **Attachment 23: 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 Request for Application 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) Applicants are required to complete and upload **Attachment 24: Funding History for HIV/STI/Viral Hepatitis Training, Capacity Building, Technical Assistance or Client Services (Past Three (3) Years)** as part of your full application submission.
- 5f) 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. HRI-awarded contracts funded by Ryan White Part B funding will be limited to a maximum of 10% total contract costs. See **Ryan White Guidance for Part B Direct Service Subcontractors: Attachment 2**.
- Agencies currently funded by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to provide program services in accordance with the requirements of this RFA must apply for continuation of funding.
- Ineligible budget items will be removed from the budget prior to contracting. Ineligible items are those items determined by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute 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.
- Faculty Subject Area Experts: Any agreement established with faculty should be made directly with faculty and not an institution. Fees should not include any administrative costs and/or institutional fringe benefit rates.

6. Work Plan

For the **SFS Work Plan Project Summary**, Applicants are instructed to insert the Project Summary as it is listed in **Attachment 12: Training Centers for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources Work Plan - Component E**. Any additional Project Summary language entered in the Project Summary area **will not** be considered or scored by reviewers of your application.

Applicants are **not** required to enter the performance measures for each work plan objective in the SFS Work Plan at the time of application. Applicants should review the performance measures as they are listed in **Attachment 12: Training Centers for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources Work Plan - Component E**.

Funded Applicants will be held to the Objectives, Tasks, and Performance Measures as listed in **Attachment 12: Training Centers for Peer Leadership and Access to Employment Resources Work Plan - Component E** and will be required to enter the performance measures into SFS if funding is awarded.

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.** 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 the Minimum Eligibility Requirements will be reviewed and evaluated competitively by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute. 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.

Applications will be evaluated on a 100-point scale as follows:

Program Abstract	Not Scored
Community and Agency Description	15 Points
Health Equity	15 Points
Program Design and Implementation	50 Points
Budget	20 Points
Work Plan	Not Scored
Total	100

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.

If changes in funding amounts are necessary for this initiative or if additional funding becomes available, funding will be modified and awarded in the same manner as outlined in the award process described above.

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 Department 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 Shannon Mason at hivet@health.ny.gov. In the subject line, please write: *Debriefing Request: Ending Epidemics Education, Training and Technical Assistance Services*.

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. Completing the Application, A. Application Format/Content).
- Note: Any updates to the RFA/attachments will be addressed in an Addendum to the RFA. **Addendums, as well as questions and answers, will be posted to the [SFS Public Portal Homepage](#) under the Grant Opportunity for this Bid Event, not in the application itself.** To access these documents in SFS, Applicants must go to the Grant Opportunity and select “View Grant Opportunity” **which can ONLY be viewed when logged out of the SFS Vendor Portal.** Any updated Attachments will be posted on the NYS Department of Health Funding Opportunity website: <https://www.health.ny.gov/funding/>.
- **ALL Applicants are instructed to verify each required attachment that has been uploaded to the application.** 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: Application Cover Page*

Attachment 2: Attachment B-1: Ryan White Guidance for Part B Direct Service Subcontractors**

Attachment 3: Statement of Assurances*

Attachment 4: Academic Institution of Higher Learning Attestation – Component D only*

Attachment 5: Training Center Best Practices**

Attachment 6: Work Plan - Component A**

Attachment 7: Health Equity Definitions and Examples**

Attachment 8: Agency Capacity and Staffing Information*

Attachment 9: Work Plan - Component B**

Attachment 10: Work Plan - Component C**

Attachment 11: Work Plan - Component D**

Attachment 12: Work Plan - Component E**

Attachment 13: General Terms and Conditions – Health Research, Incorporated Contracts**

Attachment 14: Attachment A-1: Agency-specific Terms and Conditions**

Attachment 15: Attachment A-2: Program-specific Terms and Conditions (HIV/AIDS Clause)**

Attachment 16: Attachment E-1: AIDS Institute Policy on Personal Health Related Information**

Attachment 17: Attachment M: Participation by Minority Group Members and Women with Respect to State Contracts: Requirements and Procedures**

Attachment 18: Vendor Responsibility Attestation*

Attachment 19: Gender-Based Violence and the Workplace Certification*

Attachment 20: Application Checklist*

Attachment 21: M/WBE Utilization Plan*

Attachment 22: Agency Organizational Chart*

Attachment 23: SFS Expenditure Budget Instructions**

Attachment 24: Funding History for HIV/STI/Viral Hepatitis Training, Capacity Building, Technical Assistance or Client Services (Past Three (3) Years)*

*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.