

**New York State Department of Health
AIDS Institute
Office of the Medical Director**

Questions and Answers

**PrEP Aware Campaign Collaborative RFA
RFA #20766/Internal Program #25-0005**

SFS ID: PACC2026

SFS Event Name: RFA #20766 PrEP Aware Campaign Collaborative

Questions below were received by the deadline announced in the Request for Applications. New York State Department of Health is not responsible for any errors or misinterpretation of any questions received.

The responses to questions included herein are the official responses by the State to questions posted by potential bidders and are hereby incorporated into the **RFA #20766**. In the event of any conflict between the Request for Applications and these responses, the requirements or information contained in these responses will prevail.

Application Submission via the Statewide Financial System (SFS)

Question 1A: Where can I access the RFA?

Question 1B: Where can I find the actual RFA?

Answer 1 A-B: This opportunity has been posted on the [New York Statewide Financial System \(SFS\) website](#).

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.

Questions? Contact the SFS Technical Support Help Desk:
helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov | 1-877-737-4185 toll-free | 518-457-7737.

Question 2: How do I apply in SFS?

Answer 2: Please refer to **Section IV. Administrative Requirements, E. How to File an Application** in the Request for Applications.

Reference materials and videos are available for Applicants to funding opportunities on the New York 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 #20766 PrEP Aware Campaign Collaborative**. 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.

Additionally, you can search using the SFS ID in the Event ID field as follows: **PACC2026**

You can 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.

Applications must be submitted by completing the online questions in the Statewide Financial System (SFS) AND by submitting an application with all required information to AIGPU@health.ny.gov by the date and time as specified in the “Key Dates” set forth on the Cover page of the RFA. The submission to AIGPU@health.ny.gov must include two (2) separate PDF documents. One (1) PDF of the Budget/Cost Proposal (Attachment 15) for Year 1 and one (1) combined PDF including the Narrative/Technical Proposal and all required non-budget attachments.

The SFS submission and PDF submissions to AIGPU@health.ny.gov are required to be completed, or an application will not be reviewed. The subject line of the email should be as follows: *RFA #20766 PrEP Aware Campaign Collaborative*. Only one (1) email with the two (2) attached PDFs is allowed.

Question 3: What if I try to submit my application and it is past the due date/time of the RFA?

Answer 3: Please refer to Section IV. Administrative Requirements, E. How to File an Application in the Request for Applications.

Late applications will not be accepted.

Applications must be submitted by completing the online questions in the Statewide Financial System (SFS) AND by submitting a PDF of the proposed Budget and a PDF of the Application with all other required attachments to AIGPU@health.ny.gov by the date and time posted on the Cover Page of this RFA under “Key Dates”.

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 Request for Applications. 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.

Question 4: How do I determine if my agency is pre-qualified?

Answer 4: Please refer to Section IV. Administrative Requirements, N. Vendor Prequalification for Not-for-Profits in the Request for Applications.

An Application cannot be submitted/received from a not-for-profit Applicant that:

- (a) has not Registered in the New York State Statewide Financial System; or
- (b) has not Prequalified in the Statewide Financial System by the Application's due date specified on the Cover Page of the Request for Applications.

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.

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>.

Question 5: Can an agency apply if they are not prequalified?

Answer 5: Applicants *must* be prequalified in SFS (if not exempt) by the date and time applications are due.

Please refer to Section IV. Administrative Requirements, N. Vendor Prequalification for Not-for-Profits in the Request for Applications.

An Application cannot be submitted/received from a not-for-profit Applicant that:

- (a) has not Registered in the New York State Statewide Financial System; or
- (b) has not Prequalified in the Statewide Financial System by the Application's due date specified on the Cover Page of this Request for Applications.

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>.

Application Format

Question 6: How do I submit my application in SFS?

Answer 6: Please refer to the **Cover Page** and **Section V. Completing the Application** of the RFA for guidance.

Applicants are instructed to respond to each of the following statements and questions under "Program Specific Questions (PSQ)/Bid Factors." Your responses comprise your application.

Number/letter your narrative to correspond to each statement and question in the order presented below. When responding to the statements and questions, be mindful that Application reviewers may not be familiar with your agency and its services. Your answers should be specific,

succinct, and responsive to the statements and questions as outlined. Please be aware that the value assigned to each section described below indicates the relative weight that will be given to each section of your Application when scoring your Application.

An **Application Checklist (Attachment 12)** 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 12**.

The Narrative/Technical Proposal should not exceed ten (10) 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 ten (10) double-spaced page limitation is specific to the Application Narrative/Technical Proposal 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 ten (10) double-spaced page limitation will not be scored or considered by reviewers.

Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a deduction of up to ten (10) points.

It is each Applicant's responsibility to ensure that all materials included in its Application have been properly prepared and submitted.

IMPORTANT: Applications must be submitted by completing the online questions in the Statewide Financial System (SFS) AND by submitting an application with all required information to AIGPU@health.ny.gov by the date and time as specified in the "Key Dates" set forth on the Cover page of this RFA. The submission to AIGPU@health.ny.gov must include two (2) separate PDF documents. One (1) PDF of the Budget/Cost Proposal (Attachment 15) for Year 1 and one (1) combined PDF including the Narrative/Technical Proposal and all required non-budget attachments. The SFS submission and PDF submissions to AIGPU@health.ny.gov are required to be completed, or an application will not be reviewed. The subject line of the email should be as follows: *RFA #20766 PrEP Aware Campaign Collaborative*. **Only one (1) email with the two (2) attached PDFs is allowed.**

Applicants are instructed to respond to each of the following statements and questions under "Program Specific Questions (PSQ)/Bid Factors" and include as the Application Narrative/Technical Proposal of their PDF application, including any required, completed non-budget attachments. The SFS submission portion of the application only includes general questions with yes/no responses and entering a line bid response. The line bid response is the total grant funds being requested as the Unit Bid Price. See **Section V. Completing the Application, A. Application Format/Content, 5. Budget** for further instructions.

Please ensure that PDF files are not fillable or "secure" or "password protected" or your document will not open properly for review. Any material added to a Bid Factor "Add Comments" box in SFS will not be reviewed as part of a submitted application.

Question 7: What do I enter for the Work Plan Project Summary in SFS?

Answer 7: Please review Section V. Completing the Application, A. Application Format/Content, 6. Work Plan.

Applicants are **not** required to enter the Objectives, Tasks or Performance Measures in the SFS Work Plan at the time of application. Applicants should review the Objectives, Tasks and Performance Measures as they are listed in **Attachment 4: Work Plan**.

Funded Applicants will be held to the Objectives, Tasks, and Performance Measures as listed in **Attachment 4: Work Plan**.

Question 8A.: When will announcement of grant awardees be made?

Question 8B: The RFA states that the start of the new grant cycle will be December 1st. Will awardees be notified before December 1st? If so, when?

Answer 8 A-B: The estimated award announcement date is October 16, 2026.

Question 9: When do you anticipate that the contract will begin for the project funded under the RFA?

Answer 9: Please refer to Section IV. Administrative Requirements, G. Term of Contract in the Request for Applications.

It is anticipated that contracts will have a start date of December 1, 2026.

Question 10: In the RFA, Section "K" Page 18, Minority & Woman-Owned Business Enterprises it states, "each Not-for-Profit Applicant and potential Grantee agrees to complete an **MWBE Utilization Plan (Not-for-Profit)** as directed in **Attachment 13A** of this RFA. Each For-Profit Applicant and potential Grantee agrees to complete an **MWBE Utilization Plan (For-Profit & Government Entity)** as directed in **Attachment 13B**." Kindly clarify whether the **M/WBE Utilization Plan** is incorporated as a reference OR must be completed and submitted with the RFA application in order for the application to be considered complete.

Answer 10: The **M/WBE Utilization Plan** must be completed and submitted with the Application for the Application to be considered complete. Instructions for completing the **M/WBE Utilization Plan** can be found on the first page of the documents, either **Attachment 13A: Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Requirement Forms (Not-for-Profit)** or **Attachment 13B: Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Requirement Forms (For-Profit & Government Entity)**.

Any **Not-for-Profit Applicants** should complete **Attachment 13A** and any **For-Profit or Government Entity** applying should complete **Attachment 13B**.

Question 11: Should the M/WBE Utilization Plan be reflective of just the first-year budget or all five years? Will there be a possibility of applying for a waiver from the MBE and WBE requirements? Is this form required?

Answer 11: The **M/WBE Utilization Plan** (Form #1 of **Attachment 13A or 13B**) should be based on the life of the contract, which is five (5) years. Eligible M/WBE expenditures include any subcontracted labor or services, equipment, materials, or any combined purchase of the foregoing under a contract awarded from this solicitation.

Please refer to the instructions on **Attachment 13A or Attachment 13B**, Guide to New York State DOH M/WBE RFA NFP Required Forms, Form #2: M/WBE Utilization Waiver Request for instructions on applying for a waiver. If the M/WBE Utilization Plan is incomplete, and the applicant is selected for funding, the resulting award will be held pending completion of the required documentation. All

Applicants must complete Form # 3 (Online Compliance System Payment Submission Confirmation), Form #4 (M/WBE Staffing Plan), and Form #5 (EEO and M/WBE Policy Statement) in addition to the forms noted above.

Program

Question 12: Will you accept proposals from businesses that participate in community outreach initiatives to give out information with regards to the proposals?

Answer 12: As stated in Section II. Who May Apply, A. Minimum Eligibility Requirements of the RFA, all applicants must meet the following Minimum Eligibility Requirements:

- Applicant must be prequalified in the New York **Statewide Financial System (SFS)**, if not exempt, on the date and time Applications in response to this Request for Applications (RFA) are due as specified in the “Key Dates” set forth on the Cover Page of this Request for Applications (RFA);
- Applicant must be located in, and conduct business in New York State;
- Applicant must be a not-for-profit, for profit, government entity, or Tribal Organization.
- Applicant must have at least three (3) years of experience creating multimedia marketing public health campaigns. Within those three (3) or more years of experience, one (1) or more campaigns must have been related to HIV, PrEP or PEP. Applicant must complete and submit **Attachment 2: History of Funding for Multimedia Marketing Public Health Campaigns** demonstrating this experience and include as part of your full application submission as requested in Section V. Completing the Application, A. Application Format/Content, Program Specific Questions (PSQ)/Bid Factors, PSQ 1d.
- Applicant must have experience engaging with community-based organizations, local health departments and/or healthcare providers located in New York State for statewide campaign development. Applicants must submit at least **Two (2) Letters of Support from past or current New York State Community Collaborators as Attachment 3**, including one (1) letter from a New York City–based collaborator and one (1) letter from a collaborator based elsewhere in New York State. **Attachment 3** must be included as part of your full application submission as requested in Section V. Completing the Application, A. Application Format/Content, Program Specific Questions (PSQ)/Bid Factors, PSQ 1e.

Question 13: Does the {submitted attachment - Contractor Profile} align with the proposal’s mission?

Answer 13: The intent of RFA #20766 PrEP Aware Campaign Collaborative is to fund one (1) agency to plan and implement a community-driven public health campaign in collaboration with the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute that will lead to:

- Increased awareness of PrEP among people most at risk for acquiring HIV;
- Increased uptake of PrEP among people most at risk for acquiring HIV; and
- Reduced disparities advance equity in access to HIV biomedical prevention (i.e. PrEP).

All Applicants must meet the Minimum Eligibility Requirements outlined in Section II. Who May Apply, A. Minimum Eligibility Requirements of the RFA and in the response to Question #12 above.

Question 14: Are we also able to partner with other organizations?

Answer 14: As stated in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program, the Funded Applicant is expected to collaborate with community partners across New York State to design campaign messaging and coordinate campaign dissemination to reach communities

experiencing disparities in PrEP Access. It is expected that the Funded Applicant will actively seek to identify and engage non-traditional partners in each region to assist in reaching the intended audience as well as provide support to local regional partners to maximize the impact of the campaign.

Question 15: Can the partnership be done independently and be reported?

Answer 15: As stated in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, A. Program Model Description, Staffing Requirements, Applicants may subcontract components of the Work Plan. If known, the Applicant is expected to state in their application the specific components to be performed through subcontracts as well as the names of the subcontractors. Grantees will need to name subcontractors prior to reimbursement. All subcontractors and subcontracts will be required to be approved by the Department.

Question 16: Section III, part A, page 7, the RFA states that the applicant needs to create a social media kit with branding. Does the applicant need to get approval for its social media and anything branded from the funder prior to its use?

Answer 16: Yes. As stated in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program, the Funded Applicant will be expected to compile all campaign assets in formats ready to be used by community partners for campaign dissemination, ensuring review and approval by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute *prior* to publication.

Question 17: Section III, part A, page 7, the RFA states that staffing has to include Access to per diem staff with expertise in video recording, editing and production. Can this position be a subcontractor or consultant instead of a member of the applicant's staff?

Answer 17: Yes. As stated in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, A. Program Model Description, Staffing Requirements, Applicants may subcontract components of the Work Plan. Up to 75% is allowed for subcontracting. If known, the Applicant is expected to state in their application the specific components to be performed through subcontracts as well as the names of the subcontractors. Grantees will need to name subcontractors prior to reimbursement. All subcontractors and subcontracts will be required to be approved by the Department.

Question 18: Section III, part A, page 8, is there any geographic restriction on where the 6 spokespersons reside? Can they all be, for example, from the Hudson Valley region or all from NYC? Also, must they be a different 6 spokespersons each year?

Answer 18: Please review Addendum #1, issued on 6/23/26, which states:

The funded applicant will be expected to develop a new campaign annually, including recruitment of new spokesmodels for each year of the five (5) year contract.

While there is no geographic restriction on where the six (6) spokesmodels reside, the campaign is intended to have statewide reach. It is the intent of funding to engage communities that have been historically underserved and/or that have experienced disparities in use of PrEP services. It is expected that the selected spokesmodels are representative of the priority populations and that they can promote personalized messages of PrEP and its importance that will resonate within their community.

Question 19: Section III, part A, page 8, can the 2 local in-person events in each region be sponsored by the same collaborator or must it be two different collaborators?

Answer 19: Local in-person events may be sponsored by the same collaborator. As stated in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program, #1, applicants should propose approaches that support reaching multiple communities experiencing disparities in PrEP access. In addition, the Funded Applicant is expected to identify and engage non-traditional partners in each region to assist in reaching the intended audience and maximize the overall impact of the campaign.

Question 20: Section III, part A, page 8, can you give examples of what you mean by “local in-person events;” for example, would this include workshops? Tabling at health fairs?

Answer 20: Local in-person events may refer to a wide range of events intended to engage and raise PrEP awareness in communities that have been historically underserved and/or that have experienced disparities in use of PrEP services. As stated in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program, #1, the Funded Applicant is expected to use *creative* approaches to engage communities that have historically been underserved. This may include workshops, tabling at health fairs, testimonials, or other social events designed to increase PrEP awareness.

Question 21: Do the funders desire applicants to propose one campaign for all vulnerable populations? Or can applicants focus on one community for the PrEP campaign?

Answer 21: The Funded Applicant is expected to develop an annual campaign intended to increase PrEP awareness among populations experiencing disparities in PrEP access. The Funded Applicant is expected to work in collaboration with the AIDS Institute and key partners to determine the campaign audience and priorities based on available data about PrEP disparities in New York State.

Question 22: The RFA mentions Hepatitis C. Do the funders want applicants to develop a joint PrEP and Hep C campaign, or choose PrEP or Hep C for this application?

Answer 22: Per Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, A. Program Model Description of the RFA, the intent of RFA #20766: PrEP Aware Campaign Collaborative is to fund one (1) agency to plan and implement a community-driven public health campaign in collaboration with the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute that will lead to:

- Increased awareness of PrEP among people most at risk for acquiring HIV;
- Increased uptake of PrEP among people most at risk for acquiring HIV; and
- Reduced disparities advance equity in access to HIV biomedical prevention (i.e. PrEP).

Activities supported through the funding are expected to align with and support the overarching strategic plans for New York State outlined in the documents referenced in Section I. Introduction, A. Background/Intent, including the Ending the Epidemic Blueprint, New York State Plan to Eliminate Hepatitis C and the New York State Prevention Agenda.

Question 23: Can an applicant also write a letter of support as a potential subcontractor for another applicant, or must we choose just one avenue to approach this work?

Answer 23: Yes, it is acceptable for an applicant to also write a letter of support as a potential subcontractor for another applicant.

Question 24: Page 6 mentions, “Applicant must have at least three (3) years of experience creating multimedia marketing public health campaigns. Within those three (3) or more years of experience, one (1) or more campaigns must have been related to HIV, PrEP, or PEP.” Can you confirm that by

“experience creating multimedia marketing public health campaigns” you mean actually developing the creative collateral and messaging not simply media placements?

Answer 24: Yes, eligible Applicants must have at least three (3) years of experience creating multimedia marketing public health campaigns, which would mean developing the creative assets and messaging for public health campaigns. Media placement alone would not be considered creating a public health marketing campaign.

Question 25: Page 6 mentions “Applicants must submit at least Two (2) Letters of Support from past or current New York State Community Collaborators.” Can you confirm that by “past or current New York State Community Collaborators” you mean organizations who have collaborated in past or current New York State HIV, PrEP, or PEP multimedia marketing public health campaigns?

Answer 25: New York State Community Collaborators may include community-based organizations, local health departments and/or other healthcare providers located in New York State that have collaborated with the Applicant for the development of a statewide public health campaign. At least one (1) letter must be from a New York City–based collaborator and one (1) letter must be from a collaborator based elsewhere in New York State, outside of New York City.

Question 26: On page 7 it mentions the staffing requirements and experience related to social media campaigns; however, since the firm needs to demonstrate specific PrEP multimedia experience, should the requirement here stipulate “expertise in managing PrEP social media campaigns?” This would ensure the Organizational Requirement around PrEP expertise is also reflected in the key Staffing Requirements too.

Answer 26: The staffing requirements listed in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, A. Program Model Description, Staffing Requirements are minimum staffing requirements of the Funded Applicant. The Funded Applicant is expected to establish and maintain a staffing plan to meet the needs of the program and achieve the goals outlined in the RFA.

Question 27: On page 7 it mentions the Staffing Requirements. Can you clarify if the Program Coordinator and Technical Expert need to be employees at the prime agency bidding on this work or whether those positions are allowed to be subcontracted out? We are assuming this needs to be within the prime agency since they are central staff to this work but please confirm.

Answer 27: Applicants should propose a staffing plan that meets the minimum requirements described in the program model and which will ensure program success. As stated in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, A. Program Model Description, Staffing Requirements Applicants may subcontract components of the Work Plan. If known, the Applicant is expected to state in their application the specific components to be performed through subcontracts [up to 75% allowed for subcontracting] as well as the names of the subcontractors. The Funded Applicant will need to name subcontractors prior to reimbursement. The Funded Applicant (as Contractor) will have overall responsibility for all Contract activities, including those performed by subcontractors, and will be the primary contact for the Department. All subcontractors and subcontracts will be required to be approved by the Department.

Question 28: On page 8 under “Anticipated Outcomes,” it mentions that “Within each region (New York City, Long Island, Hudson Valley, Capital District, Central New York, Finger Lakes, and Western New York) at least three (3) partners will be identified to assist in dissemination of the campaign locally each year. Can you clarify if this is 3 partners per region (so $3 \times 7 = 21$ partners) or 3 partners total?

Answer 28: Yes, at least three (3) partners per region. As stated in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program, the Funded Applicant must actively seek to identify and engage non-traditional partners in each region to assist in reaching the intended audience. As stated in Performance Measure 4.3.1 of the Work Plan, the Funded Applicant is expected to document at least three (3) partners per region in the monthly narrative report.

Question 29: On page 8 under “Anticipated Outcomes,” it mentions “At least two (2) in-person events aimed to raise PrEP awareness will occur each year in each region: New York City, Long Island, Hudson Valley, Capital District, Central New York, Finger Lakes, and Western New York.” Can you clarify if this means 2 events per region (so $2 \times 7 = 14$ events) or 2 total events?

Answer 29: Yes, at least (2) local events per region. As stated in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program, the Funded Applicant is expected to provide support to local regional partners to maximize the impact of the campaign. As stated in Performance Measure 4.5.1 and 4.5.2 of the Work Plan, the Funded Applicant is expected to develop a statewide calendar of PrEP Aware events and activities. This will include at least (2) local events per region.

Question 30: On page 8 it mentions the PrEP utilization goals. Will NYSDOH be sharing PrEP utilization data with the selected contractor along the way to help inform the campaign?

Answer 30: As described in the Work Plan Task 1.1., the Funded Applicant is expected to Partner with AIDS Institute and key partners to review and use existing information on PrEP disparities in New York State to identify campaign audience and priorities. This would include publicly available data and other sources available to the New York State Department of Health. In addition, the Funded Applicant is expected to conduct focus groups and key informant interviews with community representatives to supplement available data and inform an original campaign concept.

Question 31: On page 9 it mentions “Design a digital social media toolkit and webpage for the campaign.” Can you confirm that the current campaign location (and which leverages the NYSDOH Microsoft Azure system) will continue to be used to house campaign multimedia and campaign assets?

Answer 31: As stated in Task 3.3. of the Work Plan the Funded Applicant is expected to design and develop an engaging interactive PrEP Aware Week Campaign webpage using the Microsoft Azure platform. It is anticipated that the Funded Applicant will continue to leverage the current New York State Department of Health Microsoft Azure platform, www.prepforsex.org, to house the campaign assets.

Question 32: On page 9 under #4 it mentions, “The funded applicant is expected to recommend strategies to reach priority populations through targeted grassroots and/or paid media strategies.” Since there is an agency that all traditional paid media from NYSDOH needs to go through, can you confirm that this truly refers to recommendations on the statewide webinar only and not actual media buying (since that wouldn’t be permitted outside of the NYSDOH media buyer of record)?

Answer 32: The Funded Applicant is not responsible for purchasing media. As stated in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program, #4, the awarded contractor will recommend strategies for stakeholders to purchase their own media and/or the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to engage their currently funded media buyer to purchase paid media. Recommendations may also be made to Collaborators. Collaborators may, at discretion of the Funded Applicant and/or the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute, allocate a portion

of funds toward their own media buy to support campaign dissemination goals. This could include, but is not limited to, a media buy about their regional event(s) and/or the campaign as a whole.

Question 33: On page 26 under 4e it asks, “How will you leverage paid and/or unpaid media?” Since there is a required media buyer for NYSDOH that all paid media goes through (and which is run out of a different contract), can you clarify that any “paid media” on this contract would be related to social media influencers, regional organization activities, and advisement on the statewide webinar about paid media but NOT traditional paid media like that executed by the existing NYSDOH media buyer?

Answer 33: The Funded Applicant, in collaboration with New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute, will develop and implement a comprehensive dissemination plan that leverages all available communication, marketing, and outreach resources. As part of this effort, the Funded Applicant will have access to reports and performance data related to media purchases and placements made on behalf of New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute.

The dissemination plan can incorporate both paid and unpaid media strategies, including organic social media content shared by spokespersons, as well as paid and organic content distributed by New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute's stakeholders. Additionally, any paid or unpaid media efforts that support and promote regional organization activities can be integrated into the overall dissemination approach. RFA #20766 does not reference social media influencers.

Question 34: Does New York State have any media contracts in effect that will get more advantageous rates or give nod to what mediums have worked for promoting prevention?

Answer 34: The New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute currently funds a designated media buyer and the Funded Applicant will have the ability to request media reports of successful prior campaigns. RFA #20766 does not include a media buy, so advantageous rates would not apply.

Question 35: Section III.B.4 and Section V.A.5: Are paid media placement and advertising buys expected to be funded from the up to \$243,000 annual award, or is media spend supported separately?

Answer 35: There is no formal media buy for this RFA. Collaborators may, at discretion of the Funded Applicant and/or New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute, allocate a portion of funds toward their own media buy to support campaign dissemination goals. This could include, but is not limited to, a media buy about their regional event(s) and/or the campaign as a whole. This would come out of the total budget of \$243,000.

Question 36: On page 26 under 4h is the staffing plan. Are additional points or consideration given to this subsection if proposed staff have existing PrEP multimedia campaign/social media campaign experience and/or NYSDOH AIDS Institute experience?

Answer 36: The staffing requirements listed in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, A. Program Model Description, Staffing Requirements are minimum requirements of the Funded Applicant. The Funded Applicant is expected to establish and maintain a staffing plan to meet the needs of the program and achieve the goals outlined in the RFA. Scoring is based on how well the Applicant responds to the questions in keeping with the goals and intent of the RFA and Work Plan.

Question 37: On page 27 on the second to last bullet it mentions that “Contracts established resulting from the RFA will be cost reimbursable.” Please confirm this means that the selected agency will pay expenses up front and then upon proof of payment, be reimbursed.

Answer 37: Yes, this is correct. Please review Section IV. Administrative Requirements, H. Payment & Reporting Requirements of Grant Awardees for more detail.

Question 38: On page 30 under “Cost Evaluation,” it mentions 20% (or 20 points) for the Cost Proposal. Given that NYSDOH has already stipulated a budget for this work, the listed budget is aligned with other years of the PrEP Aware Week campaign, and there are significantly more regional partners included in this SOW than any other years of the PrEP Aware Week campaign, would NYSDOH be willing to reduce the total points earmarked for the budget?

Answer 38: No, the points assigned to the budget section equate to 20% for the Cost proposal. There will be no change to points assigned to this section.

Question 39: Page 24 under 2e mentions Attachment 3, however, there is no Attachment 3 listed in the SFS system. There are attachments 1-2, 4-12, 13A, 13B, 14-15. Can you please provide Attachment 3?

Answer 39: Attachment 3 is comprised of at least two (2) Letters of Support from past or current New York State Community Collaborators including one (1) letter from a New York City–based collaborator and one (1) letter from a collaborator based elsewhere in New York State. Applicants are instructed to include the letters as part of their full application submission labeled as Attachment 3. The full listing of Attachments can be found in Section VI. Attachments of the RFA.

Question 40: Attachment 4: This is the Work Plan. Numerous sections of the proposal mention aligning the technical proposal response to the Work Plan and that the Work Plan is not graded; however, it is listed in the application format. On Attachment 4 itself, it says, “Applicants are not required to enter any Objectives, Tasks, or Performance Measures into the SFS Work Plan.” Can you therefore clarify what you would like organizations to do with the Work Plan and how you’d like/expect Work Plan information to be submitted to NYSDOH since it’s listed as part of the formal application format list (found on page 24)

Answer 40: Applicants should review the Work Plan and ensure that strategies for addressing all Objectives, Tasks and Performance Measures are integrated throughout their proposal. The Work Plan is not a scored section of the RFA, however Funded Applicants will be held to the Objectives, Tasks, and Performance Measures as listed in **Attachment 4: PrEP Aware Collaborative Work Plan**.

Question 41: TERMS OF RFA #20766, FIRST PAGE: Do subcontractors also need to be prequalified in the Statewide Financial System as well as the prime contractor?

Answer 41: Applicants are required to be prequalified in the Statewide Financial System. Applicants should note that the lead organization (that is, the successful Applicant, as Contractor) will have overall responsibility for all Contract activities, including those performed by subcontractors, and will be the primary contact for the Department. All subcontractors and subcontracts will be required to be approved by the Department. A subcontractor does not need to be prequalified in the Statewide Financial System.

Question 42: II. WHO MAY APPLY A. MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS. If a subcontractor is located outside of New York State (but the primary contractor is NY-based), do they receive fewer points for the overall proposal or are otherwise penalized?

Answer 42: Applicants must meet all criteria listed in Section II. Who May Apply, A. Minimum Eligibility Requirements to be considered for funding. The use of subcontractors located outside of New York State is not prohibited per the RFA. Applicants are expected to justify their proposed staffing approach and demonstrate how subcontractors will bring the knowledge, experience, and strategies necessary to understand and effectively engage historically underserved New York State populations.

Question 43: III. PROJECT NARRATIVE/WORK PLAN OUTCOMES. A. PROJECT MODEL DESCRIPTION #2. Do you hope for the agency to create a cohort of representative spokesmodels to be their own identities or just representatives of the underserved target audiences?

Answer 43: As stated in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, A. Program Model Description, #2, the spokesmodels should represent the priority population and promote their own personalized (unique) message of PrEP and its importance in their community.

Question 44: Does the State of New York have a call-to-action they wish to include in the campaign that connects individuals with free, anonymous testing or clinics in their area?

Answer 44: The call to action is stated in Section I. Introduction, A. Background/Intent of the RFA. 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. Applicants may also include in their proposal any creative approaches to engage communities that have historically been underserved, such as connecting individuals with free, anonymous testing or clinics in their area.

Question 45: Are social media posts to be under the state's accounts or those affiliated with the campaign that is developed?

Answer 45: As stated in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, A. Program Model Description, #3, the social media toolkit should include branding, still ads, videos, and posts that resonate with the priority populations. The posts created by the Funded Applicant should be able to be used on the New York State Department of Health's social media accounts, and social media accounts of Stakeholders affiliated with the campaign that is developed.

Question 46: III. PROJECT NARRATIVE/WORK PLAN OUTCOMES. A. PROJECT MODEL DESCRIPTION #3. Is a large portion of the budget and focus to be dedicated to the mid-October date, will efforts across the state? Has the prevention cause also had a presence to Pride events throughout the state?

Answer 46: Budget allocation is at the discretion of the applicant. Applicants should propose an approach that supports a successful, statewide, mid-October campaign and ensures completion of all deliverables outlined in the Work Plan. Currently, PrEP Aware Week does not have any specific ties to Pride events, but New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute's Stakeholders may feature PrEP Aware Week at their regional Pride events.

Question 47A: Section II.A and PSQ 1d: The minimum eligibility requires three or more years of experience creating multimedia marketing public health campaigns, including at least one HIV, PrEP, or PEP campaign. May an applicant satisfy this requirement through the documented experience of its principals and key staff gained at prior organizations, or must the three years be held by the applicant entity itself?

Question 47B: Section III.A and Section II.A: Up to 75% of the Work Plan may be subcontracted. May an applicant rely on a named subcontractor's HIV, PrEP, or PEP campaign experience to meet the minimum experience requirement in Section II.A and PSQ 1d? If so, must the subcontractor be named at the time of application?

Answer 47 A-B: The Applicant itself must have at least three (3) years of experience creating multimedia marketing public health campaigns, including at least one (1) HIV, PrEP, or PEP campaign to be eligible to apply, please refer to Section II. Who May Apply, A. Minimum Eligibility Requirements of the RFA.

The applicant may not rely on a named subcontractor's HIV, PrEP, and PEP Campaign experience to meet the Minimum Eligibility Requirement. Grantees will need to name subcontractors prior to reimbursement. All subcontractors and subcontracts will be required to be approved by the Department.

Question 48: Attachment 2 and PSQ 1d: Does "History of Funding for Multimedia Marketing Public Health Campaigns" include privately funded or client-funded commercial campaigns, or must the listed campaigns have been supported by government or grant funding?

Answer 48: The three (3) years of experience creating multimedia marketing public health campaigns can include grant funded or privately funded commercial campaigns and does not need to have been supported by governmental or grant funding.

Question 49: Section II.A and PSQ 1e: For the two required Letters of Support from New York State Community Collaborators, may a letter reference work the applicant's principals performed at a prior organization?

Answer 49: As stated in Section II. Who May Apply, A. Minimum Eligibility Requirements of the RFA, two (2) Letters of Support from past or current New York State Community Collaborators must be included from agencies that your current organization has collaborated with.

Question 50: Cover Page, Section IV.M, and Section IV.N: Please confirm that for-profit applicants are exempt from the not-for-profit prequalification requirement and need only a New York State Vendor ID and the SFS bid response roles to be eligible to submit by July 14.

Answer 50: While for-profits do not need to prequalify, applicants must navigate specific requirements and processes to compete for NYS grants: including SFS Vendor Registration. Applicants must register your business in the [New York State Statewide Financial System \(SFS\)](#) and receive an official NYS Vendor ID to apply for and receive State funds. Refer to Section IV. Administrative Requirements, N. Vendor Prequalification for Not-for-Profits, Steps 1 and 3.

Question 51: Section II.A: The applicant must be located in and conduct business in New York State. Does maintaining a primary business office in New York City satisfy this requirement for a statewide contract?

Answer 51: Yes.

Question 52: Section IV.K: The goal is 30%, split 15% MBE and 15% WBE. For a for-profit applicant that is itself a New York State certified WBE, may the applicant's own certified participation count toward the 15% WBE goal, or must MWBE participation be met entirely through subcontractors and suppliers?

Answer 52: Yes, as per the instructions on M/WBE Form #4, M/WBE Staffing Plan, 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. 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. It is up to the applicant to complete the forms with information related to participation as it relates to costs on their contract.

Question 53: Section III.A Anticipated Outcomes and Section III.B.4: The outcomes call for at least two in-person events in each of seven regions each year. Are event costs expected within the annual budget? Is the funded applicant expected to produce these events directly, or to support local partners who host them?

Answer 53: All costs must be included in the proposed budget whether they are a cost of the Funded Applicant or part of a subcontractor budget. As stated in Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, B. Requirements for the Program of the RFA, the Funded Applicant is expected to provide support to local regional partners to maximize the impact of the campaign. As reflected in the tasks associated with Objective 4 of the Work Plan (Attachment 4), this may include coordinating the creation and distribution of branded giveaways with regional partners, or other supports to regional community liaisons and partners to plan and implement local events.

Question 54: Section III.A Anticipated Outcomes: Are spokesmodels compensated from the grant budget? If so, are there expected rates or usage and talent release requirements the applicant should plan for?

Answer 54: Yes, spokesmodels are compensated from the budget. There are no established rates. Applicants should use their best judgment and submit compensation that aligns with New York State market rates and standard industry practices for spokesperson agreements. The New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute will provide talent release forms to the Funded Applicant.

Question 55: Section V.A.5: Will the annual award remain at up to \$243,000 for each of the five years, or is escalation permitted across the multi-year term?

Answer 55: As stated in Section I. Introduction, B. Available Funding of the RFA, the award is up to \$243,000 annually in New York State funding for five (5) years to support one (1) statewide program.

Question 56: Section V.A: The Narrative/Technical Proposal is limited to ten double-spaced pages. Does the one-page Program Abstract count toward the ten-page limit, or is it counted separately?

Answer 56: The Program Abstract should not exceed one (1) page and is included in the ten (10) double-spaced page limitation for the Application Narrative/Technical Proposal.

Question 57: Section III and PSQ 4h: The Department reserves the right to review project staff resumes. Are staff resumes required at submission or only upon request? If required, do they count toward the ten-page limit?

Answer 57: The ten (10) double-spaced page limitation is specific to the Application Narrative/Technical Proposal and does not include all required Attachments. Staff or subcontract staff

resumes are not required to be submitted with the application. The Department reserves the right to review project staff resumes for the Funded Applicant.