Questions and Answers

NCS Notice of Funding Availability
RFP Specification No. **NC24-0136F**
Pre-Proposal Meeting June 5, 2024

All interested parties had the opportunity to submit questions during the Pre-Proposal meeting on June 5, 2024. The answers to the questions received are provided below and posted to the City's website at *www.TacomaPurchasing.org:* Navigate to *Current Contracting Opportunities* / *Services Solicitations*, and then click *Questions and Answers* for this Specification. This information IS NOT considered an addendum. Respondents should consider this information when submitting their proposals.

1. **Question: Just to confirm, the Smartsheet application does not allow us to save progress, is that correct?**
   Answer: That is correct, you are not able to save or pause a draft for this Smartsheet form. For this reason, we recommend drafting your questions in a separate place until you are ready to submit. You can also check for grammar and spelling and then you can copy and paste that information into the Smartsheet application.

2. **Question: Can we also copy and paste into this form?**
   Answer: Yes, we recommend writing in a separate document to draft your questions, and to check for grammar and spelling, and then you can copy and paste that information into Smartsheet.

3. **Question: Does each budget priority have a budget? This may help inform our budget proposal.**
   Answer: We have not identified specific budgets for different focus areas or "buckets." The total funding available is approximately $8 Million. Please submit an application that is appropriate for your program needs.

4. **Question: If we have multiple programs applying for funds, do you want a full separate application for each?**
   Answer: Yes, if you have more than one program, please submit an application for each program.

5. **Question: Are you aware that nonprofit organizations cannot be certified in those categories at the state level? (*Equity in Contracting* question)**
   Answer: Yes, we are aware of the limitation. This is a standard City question for Equity in Contracting (EIC), and we are continuing to work with our EIC team to figure out different options for our nonprofit applicants in the future.

6. **Question: In an effort to create equity among organizations, maybe nonprofits could be granted the 5 points since we can't earn them due to rules beyond our control? (*Equity in Contracting* question)**
   Answer: Thank you for the suggestion. This is something that has been discussed, and we are continuing to work with our EIC team to figure out different options for our nonprofit applicants in the future.

7. **Question: What are the character limits on Smartsheet and in the Word application (Appendix B)?**
   Answer: Narrative sections have a 4000-character limit. Other text boxes (name of agency, name of program, budget questions, etc.) have 150-character limits.

8. **Question: Does the Word document limit the responses to 4000 characters per question as well?**
   Answer: Both Smartsheet and the Word document have the same character limits listed in question 6.

9. **Question: Does this funding allow billing for salaries? In the past we have had to do two separate applications, one for rental assistance/move in costs and one for admin/salaries.**
   Answer: Yes, you can fill out the application to include personnel and non-personnel costs for your program in the budget section of the application.

10. **Question: Can you repeat what the average/maximum award amount is per recommended organization?**
    Answer: We do not have an average, recommended, or maximum award amount. We have a minimum award amount of $30,000 for the biennium, which would result in $15,000 per year. In this Request for Proposals (RFP), we did not set a maximum/average because we want to know what an appropriate funding amount is for your program and how much you need to operate your program.

11. **Question: I'm having trouble finding the Word document. Where is it located?**
    Answer: The Word document is included as an attachment in the specification PDF. To locate the attachment, please open the PDF in Adobe rather than in a browser window. Once open in Adobe, click on the paperclip on the left side of the screen, and the attachment for the Word document should show up. You can then double click to open it. The Word document is also included as an attachment under the *Title and Solicitation Documents* for Specification Number NC24-0136F on the Services Solicitations webpage.

12. **Question: Is there some downside to using the Word document? It sounds like the better option to me.**
    Answer: Our goal in creating the Smartsheet option was to find an option that might be easier for applicants, especially if applicants do not have access to Word or may have issues with Word. We wanted to create an option to simply click on a link and then submit all answers in one location rather than downloading, scanning, etc. The Smartsheet option also has an automated DocuSign workflow to facilitate the required Signature Page and a built-in option for attaching letters of recommendation so that applicants do not have to deal with separate attachments and documents. There are also a few benefits on the back end of Smartsheet that help City staff with compiling all application paperwork. However, there is no downside to using Word, and applicants are free to submit using any of the methods outlined in the RFP.

13. **Question: Does the Smartsheet form allow us to attach any appendix type documents (ex: budget documents) prior to submitting?**
Answer: The only required attachments are the Signature Page and the letters of recommendation (if you were not funded by NCS in 2023-2024). The Signature Page will be sent (via DocuSign) to the inbox of the email address that you entered at the bottom of the Smartsheet application. Please double check the email address inputted to make sure it is correct. If you do not see the DocuSign in your inbox, please check your spam/junk folder. We do not have an option for uploading a more detailed budget as we are trying to ensure that everyone has the ability to submit similar information. There should be enough space in the application to answer the budget questions.

14. **Question: Is there a list of former grantees who received funding for the Building Resilience Against Violence and Exploitation (BRAVE) priority? We would likely apply in this category and I'm curious about what other programs have been successfully funded.**
Answer: BRAVE is a new initiative this biennium, although you may have known it previously as Youth and Young Adult Violence Reduction (YYAVR) or Youth Development. If you previously applied under YYAVR or Youth Development, you would apply under BRAVE. Those two initiatives have been combined into one, now known as BRAVE. To learn more about BRAVE, and to see if your program aligns with this initiative, please reference the Systems and Strategy Issue Statement (Appendix D) or Section 3 of the specification PDF.

15. **Question: Will the slide deck be available to download?**
Answer: Yes, the slide deck will be added to the *Title and Solicitation Documents* under Specification Number NC24-0136F on the Services Solicitations webpage.

16. **Question: Are organizations that operate under a nonprofit fiscal sponsorship eligible to apply?**
Answer: Yes, organizations operating under a fiscal sponsorship are eligible to apply. Please refer to sections 2 and 17 and Appendix A of the specification PDF.

17. **Question: Is this funding just for nonprofits?**
Answer: No, this funding is not limited to nonprofits; for-profit organizations are eligible to apply.

18. **Question: I attended the meeting on June 5th to learn about the funding notice. Do you also anticipate a funding opportunity going out for the Mental Health & Substance Use Disorder (MHSUD) tax?**
Answer: This RFP includes funding from the Mental Health & Substance Use Disorder (MHSUD) fund. We do not anticipate doing a separate RFP for additional MHSUD funds for 2025-26.

19. **Question: Our shelter program was identified as not needing to compete for funding in this RFP. Can the organizations that we have an MOU with apply for funds to support our shelter?**
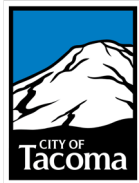
Answer: Programs that have been identified as not needing to compete for funding are not eligible to compete for more funding. If your program was not identified as not being required to compete, you are eligible to apply for funding. If your organization has other programs that were not identified as being ineligible to compete for funding, you may apply for funding for those programs. (Ex: Your organization operates Program A, Program B, and Program C. Program A was identified as not being required to compete for funding, so you may not apply for funding for Program A. However, you may still apply for funding for Programs B and C.)