RFA # 15-18

Title: Support Services Navigation & Housing Assistance for Individuals with OUD

Q&A

	RFA Section	Question	Answer
1		Is there an advance registration for the pre-application conference?	No.
	RFA Section	**Question**	**Answer**
2		Please clarify what is to be included on a flash drive CD-ROM, specifically addressing the following: Applicants are to submit two complete and exact copies of the entire application on a CD-ROM or flash drive. Are both copies to be on one CD-ROM or flash drive? Please clarify what is being sought when we are instructed to include separate folders that contain a complete and exact copy of the entire Technical Submittal in a searchable PDF. That is, please clarify both what is expected in folders and what is meant by "searchable PDF."	There should be one complete and exact copy on each of two (2) flash drives or CD-ROMs. The separate folders are for each of the elements contained in Part II, Section II-2 (Applicant Checklist). A **searchable PDF file** is a **PDF file** that includes text that can be searched upon using the standard Adobe Reader "search" functionality.
	RFA Section	**Question**	**Answer**
3	Section II-2	On page 11 of the RFA-, it states that pages are to be numbered. Is this requirement for the Work Statement or the complete package? Our concern is that these are separate documents (e.g., Application Cover Page, grant Agreement Signature Page) and it will be difficult to number all pages sequentially using Microsoft Word.	The requirement is for the Work Statement.
	RFA Section	**Question**	**Answer**
4	Section 11.9	On page 12 of the RFA, it states that applicants will be required to provide a list of agencies where program participants will be referred. Is this a separate attachment or is it to be part of the "Proposed Implementation Approach?"	Applicants may submit the list of their "Proposed Implementation Approach," in response to Section IV-4(2)(c)(iii) either as an attachment to its response or within the response itself.
	RFA Section	**Question**	**Answer**
5		On page 25 of the RFA, paragraph 2e references, "Section 11-2.A.d" and paragraph 4 references "Section 11-2.A.c." However, there is not a corresponding section (with subsection "A") in the RFA. Please clarify.	Sections IV-4(2)(e) and (4) on page 25 refer to Sections II-2(d) and II-2(c), respectively.
	RFA Section	**Question**	**Answer**
6		Under "Proposed Implementation Approach" on page 24 of the RFA, it states that the section has a maximum of 5 pages. However, at the end of this section on page 25 it states that the chart does not count	The "Proposed Implementation Approach" on page 24 of the RFA has a maximum of 5 pages. The chart does not count as part of that 5-page limit.

	RFA Section	Question	Answer
		as par of the four-page maximum. Please clarify whether this section has a limit of 4 or 5 pages.	
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
7		On pages 25 of the RFA, under "Key Personnel and Staff Qualification" applicants are to list the experience and qualifications of the staff. How should this be addressed for positions that may be filled after a grant is awarded?	If the positions are not yet filled, Applicants should provide the qualifications they will require of applicants in their job descriptions when hiring.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
8		What is it meant by "evidence of eligibility requirements" referenced in paragraph 34 on page 25? Specifically, what documentation or descriptions are being sought?	Applicants should submit documents that demonstrate the entity qualifies as an agency identified in Section II-1. It is up to the Applicant to determine how to demonstrate the requisite qualifications.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
9		Is there a particular format required for the letters of recommendation?	No, but Applicants should seek letters of recommendation that demonstrate the requirements of Section II-1, Applicant and Subcontractor Qualifications, Paragraphs A and B.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
10		Where in the application packet do the letters of recommendation get attached? They are not listed in the application checklist on pg. 11 (Part II-2).	The letters of recommendation may be attached as a separate attachment.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
11		What does the Commonwealth expect when it says, "verification of eligibility requirements" on pg. 11 (Part II-2d) and "submit evidence of eligibility requirements" on page 25 (Part IV-4, 4d)? what are we expected to submit as evidence? Or does the Staff and Organizational Experience narrative satisfy this requirement?	Please see the answer to Question 8.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
12		Is the Implementation Plan and Timeline mentioned on pg. 11 (Part II-2d) and on pg. 12 (Part II-6) the same as chart/graph mentioned on pg 25 (Part IV-4, 2e)?	Yes.

	RFA Section	Question	Answer
13		Proposed implementation plan approach is listed as 5 pgs on pg 24 (Part IV-4,2) and is listed as 4 pgs on pg 5 (Part IV-4, 2e). Is the page limit 5 pgs or 4 pgs?	Please see the answer to Question 6.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
14		Will the pre-application conference be available via webinar services? Or do you have to attend in person?	Applicants are encouraged to attend in person, but DHS will also conduct a webinar for those unable to attend in person.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
15		The City of Philadelphia Office of Homeless Services would like to apply but the RFA only indicates only one application per county will be accepted. How are you determining the one applicant for Philadelphia?	There is no limit on the number of Applicants that can submit Applications for a county or group of counties. Applicants may submit multiple applications but may only submit one application per county or group of counties. DHS will award Applicants based on their Application scores in accordance with Part III of the RFA.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
16		The pre-applicant conference is scheduled for October 30 in Harrisburg. Should I attend in person or will your office provide Skyping for interested applicants?	Please see the answer to Question 14.
	RFA Section	Question	
17		In regards to page 22-23 of the RFA: Can the PA SOR funds be used to fund the housing placements? Or is the housing being provided through HUD vouchers (or the other non-SOR funding streams listed on pages 22-23), meaning that the PA SOR funds will only be used to provide wraparound services?	Applicants may use a portion of the SOR funding for rental assistance. As stated on Page 22 of the RFA, however, applicants must explore all other financial assistance available for each participant. SOR funding may only be used after other permissible housing resources have been exhausted or are unavailable for the participant's specific housing goal. Applicants should present innovative models for meeting housing services gaps in their counties.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer

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18		This question relates to the "Occupancy" line item on the budget form. Typically, this cost category refers to occupancy costs for project operations, such as space, utilities and related cost for project staff. Should rental assistance, utilities and costs for clients be included in this line, or should these costs be placed under "Other?"	Costs for rental assistance, utilities, and costs for clients should be included under "Other," itemizing the costs as instructed in the budget submittal.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
19		If questions are submitted after 10/29/10 I understand that there is no guarantee to receive an answer prior to the applications due date; however, is there any penalty to an organization for submitting a question after the due date?	The deadline to submit questions is October 30. In accordance with Part I, Section I-9, the Department is not required to provide responses to questions received after that date; however, there is no other "penalty" for submitting questions after the deadline.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
20		I-13 (p.6) states that organizations should submit 1 original Technical Submittal and 5 paper copies. Can you clarify what differentiates the "original" for a "copy"? (since they will both be typed/printed).	There should be no difference between the original technical submittal and the copies, with the exception of the original being marked "original."
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
21		II-2 (p.11) Under Application Checklist, letter c., it requests, "verification of eligibility requirements" but does not specify where those requirements are listed in the RFA. Can you clarify what is being requested here? Is this referencing requested attachments? Should it be an attached narrative explaining eligibility? And/or is it simply referencing the requirement that our application is submitted timely and properly signed?	Please see the answer to Question 8.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
22		Should the budget narrative be a separate attachment with the cost-submittal OR should the narrative notes for each budget line item be narrated in the column to the right of the line items on the cost submittal spreadsheet? It if should be a separate attachment, what is the page maximum?	The budget narrative should be a separate attachment from the cost submittal. It should be no more than 3 pages in length.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer

	RFA Section	Question	Answer
23		Section IV-4.2.c iii (p.24) asks that we provide a list of agencies to which program participants will be referred. Does this list need to fit within the 5 page maximum for "Proposed Implementation Approach"? OR can is be referenced in the narrative and then attached as a separate document in addition to the 5 pages?	Please see response to Question 4. If an Applicant includes this information as an attachment, it does not count towards the 5 page limit.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
24		II-10 (p.12) Under Financial Information it requests the past 3 years of financial statements but also says, "Describe your financial stability and economic capability to perform the grant requirements." Should this description be narrated and attached as a separate document OR is the submission of the past 3 years of audited financial statements an efficient response to this?	The 3 years of audited financial statements will satisfy the requirement.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
25		IV-3 C. (p.22) says applicants "may provide rental assistance to participants." Is letter "C" Rental Assistance optional? Is it OK if our housing focus is just on the requirements outlined in IV-3 B. (p.21-22) OR does our program also need to include rental assistance?	While rental assistance is not mandatory, an Applicant should indicate how rental assistance needs among individuals with OUD are or will be met in the county or counties. Applicants must explain how program participants will achieve housing stability if the applicant is not directly providing rental assistance or housing subsidies. The Applicant may partner with an organization that has the capacity to provide these services, if rental assistance has been identified as a need.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
26		IV.4 2 e (p.25) says, "The chart (timeline) does not count towards the four-page maximum." However, IV.4 2 (p.25) says the Proposed Implementation Approach can be a maximum of 5 pages. Is it at maximum of 4 or 5?	Please see the answer to Question 6.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
27		Are the "Technical Submittal" submission requirements only referencing copies of the IV-4 Works Statement Narrative? Or does it include other attachments/information? If so, what?	The "Technical Submittal" submission requirements encompass all items identified in Section II-2, Application Checklist.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer

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	RFA Section	Question	Answer
28		If an organization is working with partnering organizations for select program requirements (ie. recovery housing, outpatient treatment or rental assistance initiatives), are there any budget requirements for how funds are divided among these organizations? Specifically, with operating and/or administrative costs. For example, if a program costs more than 1.7 million to operate and the full 1.7 million could be needed solely for the OUD treatment components of the program with just one of the partnering organizations, does it need to be divided in a certain way between all partnering organizations? OR is it OK that all of the funds go to the applicant organization and the program services provided by their partners are fully funded by other newly identified or existing funding sources?	Applicants should identify and partner with organizations who already provide the services. SOR funds are intended to fill gaps in services for individuals with OUD, and must supplement and not supplant existing funding. There are no requirements on how the primary Applicant allocates funding to partners. If organizations are already providing these services, SOR funding may cover only the additional costs related to this initiative.
	RFA Section	**Question**	**Answer**
29		If a program will cost more than $1.7 million, should the additional revenue/expenses be included in the cost-submittal budget OR only the revenue/expenses specifically being requested in this grant (up to $1.7 million)?	Only the revenue/expenses being requested in this grant should be included in the budget submittal.
	RFA Section	**Question**	**Answer**
30		Is it OK to staple sections of the application for submission? And/or can sections be divided into folders and/or joined with paperclips?	Sections may be divided into folders or joined with paperclips. Do not staple any sections of the application.
	RFA Section	**Question**	**Answer**
31		Why only urban or rural groups of counties in terms of applications? Our organization currently provides housing services in both urban and rural counties and they are not substantially different.	DHS considers it important for counties to be evaluated within their categories by evaluators who understand the unique challenges that smaller, rural communities and groups face when responding to the needs of individuals with OUD, as opposed to the challenges of larger, urban communities. By evaluating rural and urban counties separately, evaluators are able to assess applications in light of the unique challenges faced by each type

	RFA Section	Question	Answer
			of county. In accordance with Section I-13 of the RFA, applicants are able to submit one application for services in rural county(ies) and one application for urban county(ies).
32	RFA Section	Question	Answer
		Can we submit more than 3 letters of recommendation per application?	Letters of recommendation are limited to 3 per applicant. Other relevant information regarding the Applicant's qualifications may be included within Section II-1, under "Applicant and Subcontractor Qualifications."
33	RFA Section	Question	Answer
		Are there any income eligibility requirements?	There are no income eligibility requirements.
34	RFA Section	Question	Answer
		What does "Begin implementing services by January 1? Begin to set up network of providers, or actually house and treat people with OUD by that date?	The requirement that Applicants be able to implement services for program participants by January 1, 2019 is a SAMHSA requirement for service grants. The Selected Applicants must have a network of providers and program partners in place by January 1, 2019 able to provide program services to individuals.
35	RFA Section	Question	Answer
		How are applications going to be evaluated if, for instance, one applicant proposes to serve 4 rural counties and another proposes to serve 3 rural counties and if there is some county overlap? (But only some of the proposed counties are the same, not all of them.)	DHS cannot answer questions regarding evaluation criteria. DHS will award agreements to those applicants with the highest scores for each county type pursuant to Section III-6.
36	RFA Section	Question	Answer
		Bridge housing is challenging, since most jurisdictions have Section 8 lists which are closed and public housing waiting lists are long. What if the program ends and there is nothing at the other end of the bridge?	As indicated in Part IV-3.B, Housing Supports (p.22), and Part IV-4.2.d, the applicant must include a narrative that explains how the issue of transition will be addressed. Recognizing that there are typically issues with regard to bridge housing, rapid rehousing, or transitional housing in general, applicants must identify a strategy for assisting participants in achieving and sustaining housing stability once DHS funding is no longer available.

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	RFA Section	Question	Answer
37		Long term master leases have been suggested, but engaging in long-term leases in a one-year program is not feasible. Please comment.	The evidence-based housing models identified in Part IV-3.C are examples and may not work for every project. Applicants may review the SAMHSA website for additional evidence-based models. See answer to Question #36.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
38		With regards to submitting the RFA, should the applicant send materials by mail only, or is it acceptable to bring application materials in person to DHS.	Yes, you can submit the RFA both by mail and in person. The applicant can bring materials to 625 Forster Street, Harrisburg, PA, Health and Welfare Building, Room 402.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
39		Can funds from this initiative be used for opiate dependent persons reentering from jails or prisons? In particular, for those who met OUD criteria prior to incarceration as part of a reentry initiative.	Yes.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
40		Can start up agencies apply for funds if the management team is known to the community and has extensive experience? This is more intended to mean a new enterprise or facility related to an older organization period.	Yes. Please refer to Section IV-4.4 of the RFA.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
41		I can't download the appendix because emarketplace won't let it.	The RFA Project Officer will follow up individually.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
42		Are capital requests allowed?	No.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer

Q&A

	RFA Section	Question	Answer
43		Can a portion of RFA funds be used for training of service providers? For example, training how to appropriately supervise and support peer specialists and/or training in MAT.	Yes; however, as part of additional statewide SOR initiatives, training opportunities might become available for service providers. Therefore, successful Applicants should take advantage of those opportunities as they are offered.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
44		Will recovery houses established/funded through the RFA be required to follow mandates of current recovery housing legislation?	The recovery house should be established to meet the requirements outlined in Act 59 until the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs has promulgated regulations. The link to Act 59 is below. https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/li/uconsCheck.cfm?yr=2017&sessInd=0&act=59. The regulations will not be in place during the first year of this grant, but should be in place if a second year is awarded to the Commonwealth. The certification will be required for recovery homes that receive any state or federal funding or receive referrals from federal or state funded programs.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
45		Transportation funding is permitted, but would the purchase of a vehicle be permissible?	No, the purchase of a vehicle would not be permissible.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
46		Is there a standard for how an exit strategy once this funding ends is conceived & described?	DHS is encouraging applicants to develop their own evidence-based solutions. Housing providers must work with the intensive case management services providers to assist individuals achieve and maintain housing stability to prevent relapse. See answer to Question 36. The Department may make technical assistance available to selected applicants.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
47		Can these funds be used to purchase fixed assets?	No.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer

	RFA Section	Question	Answer
48		Can you fund a recovery house model? Would the recovery house need to meet or be working towards meeting recovery house regulations/certification?	Yes, funding may be used for a recovery house model. See answer to Question #44. The recovery house must also accept people on Medication Assisted Treatment.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
49		Admin limit is 10%. Does DHS accept an indirect cost rate?	Yes.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
50		How does DHS define partners? Sub recipients or contracted services?	If the primary applicant is not providing all service components, the applicant must describe the nature of the partnerships with other service providers within the collaboration. For example, if the primary applicant only provides intensive case management services, the applicant must describe the agencies that will be providing the remaining required services. Both sub-recipients and contracted service providers would qualify as partners if they provide other required services in collaboration with the primary Applicant. Applicants must describe the partnerships that are in place to provide participants with all the required services and supports. Please refer to Part IV-4.2 for a description of the application requirements regarding collaborations.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
51	II	Are multi-county collaboratives encouraged?	Multi-county collaborations are allowed. Please refer to Part II, Section II-1 of the RFA, "Applicant and Subcontractor Qualifications." Applicants must propose the approach that best meets the needs of their county, whether that is a single-county pilot or a multi-county collaborative initiative.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
52		How many participants should be targeted since it is a pilot program?	The Department does not require a minimum number of participants to be served.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer

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53		The instructions say to number all pages; however, it appears that some of the items on checklist one to be provided separately. Please clarify • Grant signatures p8 (3 originals vs. 1 original and 5copies) • Budget submitted and narrative (2 copies vs. 1 original and 5 copies • Financial information	The page numbering only applies to the work statement.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
54		How many copies of Financial Information requested in II.10?	.Two copies.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
55		Section IV-4.2.6 – since this is a 1-year request, what is meant by "both annually and over the entire project period?	This language is in case grants are extended due to the availability of funding for a subsequent year.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
56		What is the length of time a participant should receive financial housing support under the program?	DHS has not established limits on the length of time for financial support for housing. Applicants, however, must address their approach as outlined on Part IV-4.2.v of the RFA.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
57		Must all the housing services be provided within the county; can we partner with surrounding counties who have more availability?	Applicants may submit multi-county applications. Please refer to Part IV-3.B for requirements related to housing and housing services. As established in the RFA, applicants must substantiate the need and propose innovative solutions to address housing needs in the service area.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
58		Can this be used for people who are housing insecure (not technically homeless), such as facing eviction, lost income, or leaving residential OUD treatment?	Yes; however, please review Part IV-3 of the RFA: "Selected Applicants may use funding to assist with housing costs to provide stability, support treatment goals, and prevent relapse. In order to receive financial support for housing, selected Applicants must explore all other financial assistance available for

			each participant. DHS funding may only be used after other permissible housing resources have been exhausted or are unavailable for the participant's specific housing goal. Applicants should present innovative models for meeting housing services gaps in their counties."
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
59		Is there legal support, or can grant dollars be used to fund legal support for a participant, if a participant is placed in housing and something goes wrong resulting in a lawsuit against either the participant of the grantee?	No, funding may not be used for legal support or representation.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
60		Can these funds be used to extend services within our current capacity as an opioid treatment program, or does this require an expansion of our capacity?	The applicant should determine the resources required to address the need in its county(ies).
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
61		Are there any restrictions on spending awarded funds on acquiring and using a community care coordination system to support the performance of the work to be done over the one-year award period?	Yes. Grantees may not use funds for infrastructure costs, which include acquisition and utilization of a community care coordination system.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
62		The RFA states that up to 2% of grant funds can be used to collect and report date, but wanted to make sure there were no such limitations on spending funds to support the use of a community care coordination system.	Selected Applicants will receive additional information regarding data collection and reporting requirements upon award. See answer to Question #61.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
63		We are an urban county selection. Some of our clients and/or opioid users are clustered outside of city limits. Could you grant money to be used to expense a satellite office outside of the city where clients would receive case management, recovery and access treatment? If so, would this cost be entered as "other" on the budget worksheet?	Yes, if it is within the same county or counties of the same category (urban/rural). If the satellite office will serve a county of a different category, the applicant must submit a separate application to support the satellite office. SOR funding could be utilized to cover the portion of the services that are allowed under the RFA. The Applicant must identify in the budget which satellite clinic services will be supported through the SOR grant,

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			and, if applicable, document the need to establish a new satellite clinic and service gaps in the area. This should be itemized under "other" on the budget worksheet.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
64		Section IV-4- 2.c(v) RFA states: "If providing rental assistance, please submit information regarding payment amounts and calculations, guidelines, and eligibility criteria you will utilize. Applicants should be consistent with existing rental assistance guidelines utilized by other programs available in the county." Since this is requesting a lot of information, does it have to fit within the allowable 5 pages or can it be an appendix or addendum to that application response.	It may be included as an appendix.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
65		Can funds be used for: Rep payee services SOAR/expedited SSI services Purchase of Narcan and drug test kits Innovations that we hope to demonstrate as improving sobriety (arts, for instance)	Rep payee services: There are specific federal requirements for collecting fees for providing this service. The link below provides information related to the responsibilities of being a representative payee and the requirements for collecting any fee for this service, which must be approved in writing by the Social Security Administration: https://www.ssa.gov/payee/faqrep.htm Social Security Disability (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR)/expedited SSI services: Applicants may use funds for a specific case manager to do SOAR. There is no funding associated with SOAR. It is a method or process to expedite SSI applications. Purchase of Naloxone (brand name Narcan) and drug test kits: There have been numerous grants to support the purchase of Narcan through other funding opportunities. SOR funds may not be used to purchase Narcan. Applicants must work with the Centralized Coordinating Entity (CCE) in their county to get Naloxone free of charge from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

			SOR grant funding may be used to purchase drug test kits if there are no other existing resources available to participants; however, test results should not be used to threaten an individual's housing stability or deny access to services. Please refer to the RFA, Part IV-3.A ("Recovery Services"). Innovations that we hope to demonstrate as improving sobriety (arts, for instance): The application must provide the rationale and research supporting the use of this specific approach.
	RFA Section	**Question**	**Answer**
66		What funding streams are likely to be coordinated with this initiative?	All applicants should coordinate with the Single County Authority (SCA) in their service area, and the Centers of Excellence in their county, if applicable. The SCA has funding to provide treatment and recovery supports to individuals who are uninsured and underinsured. The housing funds should not be utilized for treatment needs. Applicants should also assist participants in connecting with resources like Medicaid, local transportation supports, SNAP, etc. In addition, participants must be linked to any housing choice voucher available, potentially reinvestment at the county level, and other types of county funding. Please review Section IV-3 of the RFA for a list of possible funding streams that could be leveraged, including housing choice vouchers, mainstream/non-elderly disabled vouchers, homeless supportive housing program resources, public housing, United States Department of Agriculture rural development, HOME Investment Partnerships Program, Low Income Housing Tax Credits, or HUD Multifamily properties. Applicants are encouraged to identify new funding streams. This may include, for example, local affordable housing trust funds or PA Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement (PHARE) funds administered by the PA Housing Finance Agency.
	RFA Section	**Question**	**Answer**

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67		Will you please confirm companies may submit up to 2 proposals – one for rural and one for urban?	Yes. Please refer to Part I, Section I-13 of the RFA.
68		We currently have a project moving forward with recovery houses. Can true recovery houses be incorporated into this RFA instead of subsidized housing? And, if so, would the recovery houses need to be certified?	See answers to questions #44 and #48 above.
69		Are the funds associated with this RFA separate from the Support Act passed on 10/29?	Yes.
70		Will you please confirm companies may submit up to 2 proposals- one for rural and one for urban?	Yes, please refer to Part I, Section I-13 of the RFA.