

Q1	<b>This program seems similar to the Say Yes program at the Post-Secondary University in SUNY. I read a minimum requirement in Scope of Work that needs to be clarified in regard to 5 years of experience. Any information to begin the process would be beneficial for the target population and myself. I have experience with technology programs - IS model and the Technology Assistance Model (TAM) success model and Mobile Data Services for Post Foster Care. Can you please clarify the requirements of the 5 years' experience?</b>
A1	<b>Section 3.1 Minimum Qualifications</b> requires that the applicant have five (5) years of experience providing or have demonstrated the capacity to provide the services listed in section 4.0 Scope of Work. Please also see the answer to question 2.
Q2	<b>The bid specifications, as they are written, limit eligibility to a limited number of contractors. We believe that our ability to administer such a program is scalable and could be scaled for this purpose. With an adjustment of the language, our organization, as well as other similarly situated bidders, would be a qualified bidder for this funding opportunity. Will the RFP be amended?</b>
A2	An amended RFP has been released that modifies Section 3.1 Minimum Qualifications (page 11) and Section 5.4.2 Part II – Proposal Content (page 24). The amended RFP is available for download at the following website: <a href="https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/bcm/rfp.asp">https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/bcm/rfp.asp</a>
Q3	<b>We wish to raise that the RFP contains in-text links that are inactive. We request modification of the RFP document to activate all inactive links.</b>
A3	The NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) has checked every link in the posted RFP document and are unable to replicate the issues you are experiencing. It is possible you are experiencing Information Technology (IT) related issues with the electronic device, software, or network connection you are using to open and/or view the links included in the posted RFP document. Please consult with your organization's IT staff to troubleshoot this issue. One possible remedy is copying and pasting the links out of the posted RFP document into an internet browser. It might also be beneficial to try different internet browsers.
Q4	<b>1.0 General Information/Calendar of Events: Is it correct that all liability is assigned to the offerer if there is a failure prior to the award to raise a point which later leads to liability issues?</b>
A4	As indicated in section 1.0 of the RFP, if an offerer fails to notify OCFS of a known error in or omission from the RFP, or of any error or omission or prejudice in bid specification or documents with the RFP that the offerer knew or should have known, the offerer agrees that it will assume such risk if awarded funds, and the offerer agrees that it is precluded from seeking further administrative relief or additional compensation under the contract by reason of such error, omission, or prejudice in bid specification or documents.
Q5	<b>2.2 Background: Understanding that the amount can change on a yearly basis, is there any minimum for the operational costs on a yearly basis so that we can effectively plan for the administration of the program?</b>
A5	The operational cost to administer the ETV program cannot exceed 9% of the federal award received by OCFS. The award amount varies year to year. Please see <b>Section 5.5 Part III – Cost Proposal</b> of the amended RFP. The amended RFP is available at the following website: <a href="https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/bcm/rfp.asp">https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/bcm/rfp.asp</a>
Q6	<b>2.3 Term of Contract: Is the funding pro-rated for the time period when it is less than one year?</b>
A6	Yes. However, the Attachment A – Cost Proposal – Non-Grant Budget Template should include costs associated with a 12-month budget.
Q7	<b>This question is seeking clarification of the system requirements and specifications outlined in sections 3.1 Minimum Qualifications and 5.4.2 Section 3- Detailed Requirements, section D System Specifications.</b>

	<p><b>Please clarify if the offerer must already have the information technology system and portal in place upon bidding or if the expectation is that the offer demonstrates the capacity and detailed vision to create the information technology system and portal, during the transition period from 10/31/2018 to 2/1/2019 in collaboration with the system and data from the predecessor, upon award.</b></p> <p><b>If it is determined that the bidder does not have to currently have the system in place, but has to specify the details of how this system will be created, what would the technical requirements and specifications be for the proposal?</b></p>
A7	<p>To meet the requirements of Section 3.1 Minimum Qualifications, the Offeror must already have the information technology system and portal in place upon bidding <u>or</u> demonstrate the capacity to provide on a similar scale the requirements listed in Section 4.0 Scope of Work. If the information technology system and portal is not operational upon bid submission, the offerer must develop the system and portal which must meet all Section 4.0 Scope of work requirements, contain all required program data <u>and be fully operational by 2/1/2019</u>. The other minimum qualification requirement in Section 3.1 must also be met. <b>Section 5.4.2 Proposal Content</b> has been amended in addition to <b>5.4.2, Proposal Section 3- Detailed Requirements, Section D System Specifications</b>. The amended RFP is available at the following website: <a href="https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/bcm/rfp.asp">https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/bcm/rfp.asp</a></p>
Q8	<p><b>4.3 Application Process and Timeline:</b> <b>Is there a rolling application from July 1 through the next year or is the application for funding limited to specific windows?</b></p>
A8	<p>Yes, it is a rolling application for youth to apply for an ETV benefit year-round.</p>
Q9	<p><b>Given that applications have to be processed and a monetary determination have to be made within 10 days of receiving the application, how is the Priority Order of Selection (Section 4.3.1) employed?</b></p>
A9	<p>As indicated in <b>Section 4.3.1, Priority Order of Selection for Eligible ETV Participants in 2018-19</b>, the priority is given to youth that have received an ETV benefit in the past. Further prioritization will be given to new applicants based on age. The contractor is responsible for ensuring that the Priority Order of Selection is followed in their determination process.</p>
Q10	<p><b>4.3.2 Allocation of ETV funds:</b> <b>How are living expenses, transportation expenses, books and school supplies calculated for award? How would a student who has sources of financial support such that there is no balance for tuition, fees, room and board, go about determining a number and applying for ETV funding to cover these other costs?</b></p>
A10	<p>To calculate living expenses, transportation expenses, books and school supplies, the student may submit a budget to the vendor calculating those costs. If a student has a zero balance for tuition and room and board they can still receive funding for transportation expenses, books, and school supplies.</p>
Q11	<p><b>5.3.1 General Proposal Appearance (also 5.4.1): Under Binding of Proposal for each of the 3 sections of the proposal, it states, “Each offerer will submit its proposal so that update pages can be easily incorporated into the original proposal”. Is there a specific preferred format for binding the proposal?</b></p>
A11	<p>A three-ring binder would satisfy this requirement. The method used must allow for pages to be easily added or removed. For example, a spiral wire binding or staples would not satisfy this requirement, as updated pages cannot be easily incorporated into the proposal.</p>
Q12	<p><b>Section 4.1 (Page 13) of the RFP cites that the vendor is responsible for the determination of eligibility:</b> <b>Determining if a youth is eligible for funding by:</b> <b>o reviewing applications to determine if they are complete;</b></p>

	<p>o confirming applicants were identified by OCFS as a youth who may be eligible; etc...</p> <p><b>Question: Is the vendor to expect that the validation of an OCFS eligible youth will be provided by OCFS electronically (OCFS eligibility, age, etc)? If it is an electronic validation, is it real time or batch?</b></p>
A12	<p>The validation of an application will take place in real-time electronically. The portal created by the vendor must have a checkbox or mechanism that allows the OCFS program coordinator to indicate a youth is eligible.</p>
Q13	<p><b>Section 4.1 (Page 14) of the RFP cites that the vendor is responsible for working with the predecessor ETV contractor to transfer data to the new system.</b></p> <p><b>Working with the predecessor ETV contractor during the transition period to obtain all OCFS data from the existing system in a format that allows for the transfer of data to the new contractor's system as well as obtaining any other necessary program data, information and documents from the predecessor contractor to continue ETV program operations;</b></p> <p><b>Question: Can OCFS elaborate on how much data is required (size, number of years of data, etc.), the format that the data is currently in, and the use of the data? Is there any direct accessibility to the data that is required by OCFS?</b></p>
A13	<p>While working with the predecessor ETV contractor during the transition period, it will be determined by OCFS in consultation with the new offerer the data format and content required to effectively administer the program. The State requires the current contractor to have a minimum of six year's data available, so the selected offerer should expect at least that amount of data to be provided. The data will be used to administer the program and for reporting purposes as required by State and federal laws, rules and regulations. As specified in <b>Section 4.0, Scope of Work</b>, OCFS must have direct accessibility to all OCFS client data in the selected offerer's system at all times.</p>
Q14	<p><b>Section 4.1 (Page 14) of the RFP cites that the vendor is responsible for notification of funding deficiencies to the OCFS Program Coordinator:</b></p> <p><b>Notifying the OCFS ETV Program Coordinator immediately, in writing, of funding deficiencies or other discrepancies involved with administering the ETV program;</b></p> <p><b>Question: At what award / spending threshold should the vendor notify the OCFS?</b></p>
A14	<p>As soon as any funding deficiency or discrepancy has been identified that will impact the funding of the ETV program for the remainder of the contract year, the OCFS Program Coordinator must be notified.</p>
Q15	<p><b>Section 4.2 (Page 15) of the RFP cites that the vendor is responsible for the collection of student data via online form:</b></p> <p><b>The response must show how the online application in the system will collect the information below:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student's full name, any previous names, date of birth, gender, ethnic background, Native American tribe and language</li> <li>• Student's contact information (email, phone, mailing address) ... etc</li> </ul> <p><b>Question: Is the vendor required to validate the data that is collected through the online form (at the time of application) with school record data, census data, foster care data, or any other validation source?</b></p>
A15	<p>No. OCFS will cross-reference the information provided by the student when making the youth eligible for the program.</p>
Q16	<p><b>Section 4.1 and 4.3.2 details the responsibilities of the vendor in allocating funds to eligible youth.</b></p> <p><b>Awarding funds to eligible youth and informing youth of such award;</b></p>

	<b>Question: Could OCFS provide a current and/or desired workflow for the process of billing and claiming funds? Will the responsible vendor have access to state budget systems to distribute program voucher payments?</b>
A16	No, the vendor will not have access to State budget systems. The vendor is responsible for developing the workflow and distributing program voucher payments to the educational institutions and students as required by any State or federal laws, rules and regulations.
<b>Q17</b>	<b>How does OCFS expect the vendor to handle system edits (e.g. the applicant submits information with mistakes and needs to correct them)?</b>
A17	The offerer must develop a system that allows for system edits.
<b>Q18</b>	<b>Section 4.2.3 cites that the “ETV funds cannot supplant existing funds designated for the same general purpose”</b>  <b>Question: Does this include other private and/or government-funded scholarships? Could OCFS provide additional detail to determine whether scholarships might be used for the same purpose?</b>
A18	If a scholarship(s) of private or other government funds is/are awarded to an ETV recipient, the scholarship(s) must be used before ETV funds may be accessed for eligible expenses as set forth in the RFP. Therefore, the total amount of the scholarship(s) awarded must be accounted for when determining the total amount of the ETV award.
<b>Q19</b>	<b>Can OCFS describe their objectives in releasing this program administration of this program via RFP? Could you describe specific program objectives which the selected vendor will be held? Did the previous vendor not meet these?</b>
A19	Please refer to RFP <b>Section 2.1 Purpose and Procurement Objective</b> and <b>Section 4.0 Scope of Work.</b>