MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES
PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE
FIA/ORA-17-509-S

REQUEST FOR GRANT PROPOSALS
SERVICES TO OLDER REFUGEES

Held at Maryland Department of Human Resources
311 W. Saratoga Street
Room 952
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

July 13, 2016
10:00 a.m.

ATTENDANCE:

AGENCY:

Kristin Leonard, Procurement Officer

Candice Edwards, Acting Program Manager, Office of Refugees and Asylees

Augustin Ntabaganyimana, Director, Office for Refugees and Asylees

Elizabeth Chernin, Contract Manager, MORA

Scott Moore, Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General
ATTENDEES:
Debbie Austin, Procurement Unit, DHR
Yana Cascioffe, Baltimore City Community College
Catherine Gichinga, International Rescue Committee
Debbie Holt, Procurement Unit, DHR
Dawn McCleary, Community Health & Nutrition Methods International
Juanita McGill, Procurement Unit, DHR
Jo Anne Schneider, Chrysalis Collaborations
Dr. Michele S. Towson, Baltimore City Community College
Doug Weimer, Baltimore City Community College
Bridget Weisenreder, Ethiopian Community Development Council, Inc.

Reported by: Carol O’Brocki, Notary Public
Hunt Reporting Company, Glen Burnie, Maryland
PROCEEDINGS
(10:10 a.m.)

MS. LEONARD: Okay, ladies and gentlemen, I think we're going to go ahead and get started. We were waiting for our representatives from another organization but it looks like they might be delayed, so to keep things moving along this morning we'll go ahead.

Good morning. My name's Kristin Leonard and I'm the Procurement Officer here at DHR for this solicitation. It's my pleasure to welcome you this morning. Just for your information, bathrooms are straight out the door down the hallway and to your left-hand side.

Today we will share information with you concerning the Request for Grant Proposals entitled Services to Older Refugees. Hunt Reporting is transcribing this conference. Thank you very much for being here today. There will be questions and responses at the end of the presentation. If you wouldn't mind holding your questions until then I would...
appreciate that.

My fellow panel members will now introduce themselves.

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: Augustin Ntabaganyimana.

I'm the Director for the Office for Refugees and Asylees here at DHR.

MS. EDWARDS: Candice Edwards, Acting Program Manager for the Office of Refugees and Asylees.

MS. CHERNIN: Elizabeth Chernin, the Contract Manager for MORA.

MS. LEONARD: Thank you. Now I'd like to go around the room and have each of you introduce yourselves and the organization that you represent today. We'll go ahead and start with you.

MS. CASCIOFFE: Yana Cascioffe, Citizenship Program at Baltimore City Community College.

MR. WEIMER: Good morning. I'm Doug Weimer. I'm the interim Director of English Language Services and Basic Skills at Baltimore City Community College.

DR. TOWSON: Good morning. I'm Dr. Michele Towson, Director of Grant Development at Baltimore City
Community College.

MS. MCGILL: I’m Juanita McGill (phonetic). I work here at DHR for the Procurement Unit.

MS. AUSTIN: Debbie Austin (phonetic), Procurement Unit, DHR Central.

MS. HOLT: Allison Holt (phonetic), DHR Procurement Unit.

MR. MOORE: Scott Moore with the Attorney General’s Office here at DHR.

MS. WEISENREDER: Bridget Weisenreder. I work for ECDC.

MS. SCHNEIDER: Jo Anne Schneider. I’m with Chrysalis Collaborations. We’re a minority-owned business certified in Maryland, also a disabled-owned which might be important for this contract. I’m looking to partner probably on the evaluation and employment pieces in outreach.

MS. LEONARD: Thank you. Once again, this Pre-Proposal Conference is addressing the RFQP for MORA Services to Older Refugees and Asylees. The agency control number is FIA/ORU-17-509-S. The published date
of the RFGP was on June 8, 2016 and the closing date of
this RFGP will be on July 28, 2016.

I’d like to have you take note of the
following. One, no proposals will be accepted beyond
the 3:00 p.m. local time submission deadline on July
28. Two, the Procurement Officer, that would be
myself, will serve as the sole point of contact until
award determinations are made. Please do not contact
any other State representatives about this
solicitation.

In other words, our fine members of MORA here
are not going to be able to respond to any of your
questions, but I am definitely the person to contact by
email or by phone. I’ll make myself available to you
guys.

Right now I’d like to start reviewing the
highlights of the RFGP sections. Does everybody have a
copy? Do they need one? Okay. So we will start with
general information regarding the RFGP and that begins
on page 6 of the document. And we’ll start at Section
1.1.1, Objective.
The objective of this RFGP is to provide comprehensive supportive services to older refugees and asylees which may include but are not limited to language training, housing, and employment assistance, naturalization and citizenship services. Services will be provided in six jurisdictions of the Baltimore Metropolitan area and in two suburban Washington, D.C. counties.

Section 1.1.2 -- this section has been amended. We provided the letter of amendment this morning on the cart necopies of the RFGP. Does everybody have that? Okay.

It is the State's intention to obtain services from an agreement or agreements between a selected applicant or applicants and the State. The anticipated duration of services to be provided under the resulting agreement or agreements is two years, not one year. The Department posted this amendment to the DHR website and as I said before a hard copy has been made available to you this morning.

Section 1.1.3 -- the Department intends to
award two grants, one for the Baltimore-Washington area region and one for the suburban Washington, D.C. region. The Department may consider awarding both grants to the same applicant if it can demonstrate both capacity and infrastructure to perform all services required under the RFGP to clients in both regions.

An applicant added directly or through subcontracting must be able to provide all the services and meet all of the requirements requested in this solicitation. The successful applicant shall remain responsible for all performance requirements regardless of whether there is a subcontractor participating in the provision of services.

Lastly, the term of each grant is two years. The agreement will begin on October 1, 2016 and end on September 30, 2018. The award amount of each grant is $48,600 per year or $97,200 for the full two-year grant period.

Section Two of the RFGP is addressing minimum qualifications required of applicants to this solicitation. I'll be directly referencing Sections
2.1.1 and 2.1.2 of the RFGP.

The applicant shall possess a minimum of five years of experience providing services direct to use through State or Federally-funded projects. Section 2.1.2, as proof of meeting this minimum requirement, the applicant shall provide with its proposal, A, three letters of reference no more than three years old that attest to the applicant’s experience and ability to provide services to refugees and, B, a list of State and Federal grants or contracts the applicant has held over the last five years.

The list shall include details for each grant or contract, such as the funding source, amount, purpose, number of renewals, and State or Federal point of contact.

Okay. We’re going to move on to Section 3 of the RFGP which is scope of work. The scope of work requirements will be presented by MORA. This section begins on page 19 of your RFGP. Augustin, will you start with highlighting the important aspects of this section?
MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: Yes, and good morning and thank you very much for coming. So just briefly, for those who are already in refugee (indiscernible), the services to all the refugees is not a new program. The Federal government has been funding this program for years as a discretionary grant. And so the State has had to apply to respond to request for proposal from the Federal government in the past.

But from last year on and going forward, the Federal government decided that they were transitioning this grant from being discretionary to being formula based. So that means we’re going to receive this funding every year and obviously the amount allocated to our State will be depending upon the number of older refugees, defined as refugees 65 -- age 65 and older who came to the State for the last two years. That’s kind of how they determine a location -- an amount allocated to each state.

Now, in terms of what we are looking for -- services, we wanted to look at, you know, what is not already being met in terms of services. You know, with
some agencies are required to perform certain activities for newly arrived refugees. And so what we’re looking for in terms of services to older refugees is essentially bridging the gap where, you know, what is being provided or what agencies are currently funded to provide and what the client’s needs are not being -- or they’re not receiving such services.

One area that has been lacking for many years from my own perspective is linking client mainstream services for older individuals in general. Refugees are eligible for general, you know, public assistance and incident to that immigration status, and so there’s no reason why we should not be reaching out to mainstream agencies to all deserving older individuals and making sure that refugees have access to existing services.

And so, outreach and capacity building to those mainstream agencies is one of the areas we’re looking to address. And what does that mean? Well, number one, as we’re serving the community we need to
know what is already out there that refugees can
access. So, number two, we need to make sure that if a
refugee goes to a mainstream provider, is the
mainstream provider prepared to provide linguistic and
(indiscernible) appropriate services. So that’s the
capacity building part.

So, then we have service enhancement. So
some of you already know this, but a refugee -- an
older refugee who’s here for seven years would lose
access to SSI if they are not -- if they don’t become
naturalized. So that’s a big problem area that we need
to figure out how to address. How can we prepare a
refugee who arrives in our community to ensure that
they obtain that citizenship within those seven years
because, you know, so they don’t lose that SSI safety
net? That is, you know, very important.

We need to help refugees establish long-term
and natural stability. Currently not many refugees are
being helped to apply for, you know, public housing or
Section 8 housing voucher. I know, you know, the wait
list is long in many places but, you know, can we --
and it takes three years, I understand, but at least we
know somewhere down the road they will have that -- so,
you know, they will have that service and that helps in
terms of financial stability for the client.

You know, is the refugee -- because we know
resources are very scarce -- financially so very
scarce. It’s of note the refugee able to manage --
they have the financial interest here to manage the
little that they have, and do they have the decision-
making rather than the family members making decisions
for them, you know, are they oriented enough that they
can take charge over their financial situation?

What I’m telling you is just examples and
what we’re looking -- the reason why we’re putting this
to bid is to receive creative solutions to all these
problem areas that I’m describing.

MS. LEONARD: Very well put. Candice, did
you want to address some of the RFGP requirements for
the technical proposal submission?

MS. EDWARDS: Sure.

MS. LEONARD: Thank you. I think a lot of
people have an interest in knowing what the submission requirements are.

MS. EDWARDS: So we can talk about the program requirements that we’re looking at. So, Augustin kind of touched on some of them. So, again, the main idea here is to look at providing services that are not currently being provided in the community and focusing on ways to enable our older refugees to be able to live as independent as possible for as long as possible.

So we’re going to be looking at ways to develop or to link our clients to naturalization services, particularly focusing on those who are closer to losing their SSI benefits because they’ve been here for almost seven years and have not yet naturalized.

So, Augustin again touched on the building capacity with mainstream service providers. We know that they’re here so I’m wanting to kind of connect with them. So we’re looking at establishing or expanding relationships with, for example, your Department of Aging and local area agencies on aging.
that already exist. We're looking to establish
relationships with them. Establishing and expanding
working relationships with other public and private
organizations that serve the older population, not
necessarily just refugee population, but the older
population in general. And then educating community
partners and their employees on -- so the community
partners can help to provide these culturally and
linguistically appropriate services.

We also -- Augustin talked about the
promoting of long-term financial stability, so we're
looking at again -- looking at connecting people with
civic and the Excel (phonetic) programs so that they
can get citizenship and maintain their SSI benefits,
possibly connecting them to employment services. Many
of our older population, not just refugees, but in
general are interested in working, and there are a lot
of older adults who go through the various programs to
help them obtain employment. So looking at ways to
connect our clients with those services.

Case management is a big one -- so
implementing case management so that the various needs
of the old refugee population can be met. Augustin
talked about subsidized housing and other housing
programs to help with independent living.

Helping them to connect with Medicaid and
Medicare, making sure that they have access to medical
treatment and medical care that they are entitled to,
and then financial literacy to help them maintain and
be able to manage the finances that they may have
coming in so that again they can be independent as long
as possible.

And then there is the physical and mental
health and other basic needs. For example,
transportation, and these are just some examples. So
providing -- connecting clients with services and
programs that would help with social integration,
connecting them with other people in the community,
establishing partnerships that would allow for reliable
transportation to various appointments such as medical
appointments, any activities that they may be involved
in.
Long-term care solutions for those who maybe
are not able to live as independently -- need some help
whether that's in the home or outside of the home,
making sure that they are connected with those options.
And then insuring that clients have access to ongoing
healthcare, including primary care.

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: I just wanted to add
that we use the term "refugee" as a general term to
include individuals as admitted to the US as refugees.
You know, under Section 207 of the Naturalization and
Nationality Act, asylees, many of whom you are already
working with, victims of trafficking, certified victims
of trafficking, Cuban and Haitian parolees, special
immigrant visa recipients, and I think that's it.

I just wanted to, you know, make sure that
you know the expanded population that we'll work with.
Those are the population that we'll work with in all
our other programs and will be eligible for this
program.

MS. LEONARD: Thank you. That's pretty much
providing the definition that's in the Definitions and
Abbreviations Section of the RFGP for what a client
would qualify as.

MS. EDWARDS: I’ll talk about the
administrative requirements. So as far as what we are
looking for from the administration side of the
program, basic things -- so we are expecting that case
files would be maintained for at least seven years and
that has a lot to do with auditing on our end. Not
only maintaining them for seven years, but they need to
be in a locked secure place. Obviously we know that
we’re dealing with sensitive information, so we need to
be confident that the information is being kept secure.

We want to see any referrals to organizations
because a big part of this is about capacity building,
so we do want to see evidence of those referrals that
are being made to help clients connect with other
services. And then as far as minimum documentation in
each case file it’s listed in the RFGP, but just to
kind of reiterate some of it -- so we’re looking for a
basic demographic information -- name, Social Security
numbers, alien numbers.
The individual service plan is something that we also want to see. This is how you all would assess the clients to determine what the needs are. So this is the plan for we know these are the needs of the clients once we make contact with them and this is how we are going to make sure that these needs are met.

And so we're really looking for strict adherence to the individual service plan to really be able to see that the program has been successful.

And then as far as reporting requirements go, so we would be looking for on a trimester basis a completed client database, and so we would actually be providing you with the fields that need to be completed. But there are certain minimum fields that we would need completed for each client who's being served, and it's again our way of tracking what's being done for each of the clients so that we can see overall not only what you all are doing, but also kind of get an idea of what the needs are of the population.

In addition, there is a trimester performance report and again template is provided and it's simply
a narrative description of what's been done during the last trimester. And then we actually take that information and report it to the Federal government to the Office of Refugee Resettlement.

So on a monthly basis invoices are submitted no later than the 25th of each month, and again, template is provided but we would request that those be submitted to us along with -- no, we don't need that, no. So we're just going to do the template. I'm sorry. And then we would process it internally and that's how the agency would be reimbursed for services provided during that month.

And then, of course, monitoring. So our office would monitor at least once during the contract year, and monitoring would involve review of files. It would involve communication with staff, communication with the director of the agency. It's a scheduled visit.

We plan it in advance and we would be looking to make sure that everything that's discussed here as been adhered to, and we would also be looking for an
opportunity to speak with staff to kind of be able to
get an overview of how they feel the program's been
going and to provide any technical assistance that we
can to help improve service provision.

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: I would say that the one
year monitoring visit is a minimum, so we might do
additional monitoring if we would have any reason to
think that it's necessary. So the one year monitoring
requirement is a minimum that we will do, but we might
do additional if necessary.

MS. LEONARD: I just wanted to welcome our
two attendees who we haven't heard from yet. Could you
two ladies introduce yourselves to the room?

MS. GICHINGA: Yeah, I apologize. My name is
Catherine and I work with International Rescue
Committee in Silver Spring.

MS. LEONARD: Welcome.

MS. MCCLEARY: I'm representing Circe
Trevant. She just went overseas. She'll be back soon.
Her company is Community Health and Nutrition Methods
(phonetic) International.
MS. LEONARD: And, I’m sorry, what was your name?

MS. MCCLEARY: My name is Dawn McCleary.

MS. LEONARD: Welcome. Thank you. Thank you, Candice and Augustin for reviewing the scope of work requirements. I’d like to now have you address your attention to Section 4, which is Proposal Format. That can be found on page 28 of the RFGP.

The proposal is a two-part submission. Applicant shall submit proposals in separate volumes. So Volume I is to include the technical proposal. Volume II is to include the financial proposal. Please when you submit your proposal, seal the two volumes, technical and financial separately from one other.

Section 4.2.1 -- It is preferred that the name, email address, and telephone number of the applicant be included on the outside of the packages for each volume. Each volume shall contain one unbound original so identified, and four bound copies. It is preferred that the two sealed volumes be submitted together in a single package with a label bearing the
following: the RFGP title and solicitation number, name and address of the applicant, closing date and time of the receipt for proposals.

And once again, I'm going to emphasize the proposals are due to my attention July 28th no later than 3:00 p.m. to the address listed in the RFGP. A key information summary sheet which is found at the beginning of the document on the page numbered iii.

Section 4.2.2. -- Only one technical proposal shall be provided regardless of the jurisdiction or jurisdictions proposed to be served. So, again, if you are going to be submitting or proposing for both jurisdictions, still only submit one technical proposal.

Section 4.3 -- The RFGP can be submitted in person or by mail. The Department recommends that if you're sending your proposal by mail, please use the United States Postal Service express, priority, or certified mails as these are the forms for which both the date and time of receipt can be verified by the Department. Any proposals received after the date and
time cannot be accepted.

Section 4.4 -- Please note. No pricing information is to be included with the technical proposal Volume I. Pricing information is only to be included with the financial proposal, Volume II.

Section 4.4.2 on page 30 describes the order in which applicants should organize the required sections of their technical proposals. Tab A, Title Page and Table of Contents; Tab A1, Claim of Confidentiality; Tab B, Transmittal Letter; Tab C, Executive Summary; Tab D, Minimum Qualifications Documentation; Tab E, Offeror Technical Response to RFGP and Proposed Work Plan.

Tab F is Offeror Qualifications and Capabilities; Tab G, Experience and Qualifications of Proposed Staff including proposed Subcontractors; Tab H, a List of Current or Prior State Grants or Contracts; Tab I, Financial Capability; Tab J, Certificate of Insurance; Tab K, Subcontractors; Tab L is the Legal Action Summary; and Tab O are Additional Required Technical Submissions. These are going to
include specifically a completed Bid or Proposal
Affidavit and that is your Attachment B to the RFGP.
The Federal Funds attachment, that is going to be
Attachment E, and Conflict of Interest Affidavit and
Disclosure and that’s going to be your Attachment F.
And those will be submitted under Tab 0.

Okay. So that’s for the technical proposal.
Let’s move on to the financial proposal. That’s
Section 4.5. As I stated previously, the financial
proposal should be in a sealed envelope separate from
the technical proposal and clearly identified in the
format that is presented in Section 4.2.

The applicant shall submit one unbound
original and four bound copies of their financial
proposal as well as an electronic version in Microsoft
Excel of the financial proposal forms. And the
financial proposal forms are your Attachments D1 and
D2. Please submit financial proposal forms for each
jurisdiction that you propose to serve if you’re going
to be proposing for both.

All pricing information shall be provided in
accordance with the instructions in Attachment D and that's labeled Financial Proposal Instructions.

We're going to move on to Section 5, which is Evaluation Criteria and Selection. That can be found on page 36. Section 5 is entitled the Evaluation Committee, the Evaluation Criteria, and the Selection Procedure. In Section 5.1, Evaluation Committee, I'll highlight some of the key points. Evaluation of proposals will be evaluated in accordance with COMAR 21.05.03 by a committee established for that purpose and based on the criteria set in RFGP Sections 5.2 and 5.3.

The committee will review proposals and may request written clarifications and also participate in oral presentations and discussions if deemed necessary and will provide input to the Procurement Officer. The Department reserves the right to utilize the services of individuals outside of the established committee for advice and assistance as deemed appropriate.

Section 5.2 is the Technical Proposal Evaluation Criteria. The criteria of the technical

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proposal will be evaluated in the following order
listed in descending order of importance. First,
applicant's technical response to the RFGP requirement
and work plan. Second, experience and qualification of
proposed staff, and third, offeror qualifications and
capabilities.

Section 5.3, Financial Proposal Evaluation
Criteria. The financial proposal will be evaluated for
compliance with the terms of the RFGP. Sealed copies
of Volume 2 will be distributed to the evaluation
committee members for all applicants deemed reasonably
susceptible of being selected for award following the
conclusion of the technical evaluation.

Any financial proposal with an excessive or
unreasonable budget, either in total or in any line
item may be deemed not reasonably susceptible for
award.

Section 5.4 details the selection procedures.

Now, although COMAR Title 21, Maryland State
Procurement Regulations is not applicable to an RFGP,
the selection procedure for award for these grants will
generally follow the evaluation and selection procedures described in COMAR 21.05.03, Procurement by Competitive Sealed Proposals.

The selection sequence process is as follows:

Technical proposals will be evaluated for technical merit and then ranked amongst all other technical proposals. Oral presentations and discussions may be held to ensure a full understanding of the RFQP requirements and the applicant’s ability to meet these requirements.

An applicant must confirm in writing any substantive change to his technical proposal that arises through the course of its oral presentations. All changes will then become a permanent part of their technical proposal and will be considered in the final review and ranking of that proposal.

Financial proposals will not be ranked. Financial proposals will be reviewed to determine that each qualified applicant has submitted an acceptable financial proposal.

Section 5.4.3 is Award Determination.
Finally, upon completion of the selection sequence process, each applicant will receive an overall ranking. The Procurement Officer will recommend award of the grants to the responsible applicants that submitted proposals determined to be the most advantageous to the State. In making that determination, technical factors will receive greater weight than financial factors.

Okay. We’re going to move on to the question and response portion of our conference. Just a couple of things before we open the floor to questions. When asking a question, please identify yourself and the organization which you represent for the record. A transcript of this conference will be posted as soon as possible to the DHR website.

Questions that are asked during this conference that are provided a response today during the conference will be posted to the DHR website. Please also note that if a definitive answer cannot be provided at the time that you ask it today by any of us, we will still take your question down and we will
work on providing a response to it and that response, along with your question, will also be posted to the DHR website.

Take note that should there be a discrepancy between responses given during the conference today and written responses provided subsequently, the written response shall prevail.

Okay. We're ready to take questions. I open up to the floor. Yes?

MS. MCLEARY: I'm here for Circe Trevant. Her company is Community Health Nutrition Methods International. My name is Donna McCleary. I'm representing her because she's not here.

What is the actual -- do you have a breakdown of the population of each 65 and over for the six jurisdictions, because I didn't see it in my -- in the proposal -- the bid proposal. I mean, do you do have it by jurisdiction, like for Baltimore City, for Harford County, how many? Because when I looked -- when I visit the statistics, the three percentages that you had, I estimated based on the way the proposal is
written it was about 3,000 for all six jurisdictions.

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: Yes. That would be

overall refugee population that we serve in our part in
the State. In terms of the actual number of individual
reasonable resources under the services for all the
refugee’s program, the number will be much smaller.
So, we can probably look at our data and provide
estimates by each of the two jurisdictions for which
we’re seeking services in.

MS. LEONARD: Thank you for your question. I
think that the program will work on getting the figures
for you. You’re asking for generally the population
that is expected to be served per jurisdiction in both
of the regions, correct?

MS. MCLEARY: Yes.

MS. LEONARD: Okay. Thank you. Any other
questions? Yes, please?

MS. CASCIOFFE: Hi. Yana Cascioffe, BCCC. I
have many questions. For the financial requirements,
do those count in the minimum for the technical
proposal to show the institution’s financial
statements? Our financial statements are long.

MS. TOWSON: Do they count toward the page limitation?

MS. CASCIOFFE: For the page limit, yeah.

MS. LEONARD: I think supportive documents such as that are not counting towards the minimum, I mean -- I'm sorry -- the maximum page limit.

MS. CASCIOFFE: For the financial proposal, in doing two financial proposals for each jurisdiction, if we run our organization out of Baltimore and we administrate in both Baltimore and in Montgomery County, do we still have to do two financial proposals if we're the main ones coordinating it?

MS. LEONARD: The RFGP reads that if you're going to propose to provide services in both jurisdictions that you provide a financial proposal for each jurisdiction. Is anybody from MORA in disagreement with --

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: No.

MS. CASCIOFFE: For personnel resumes, do we need instructor resumes or just main staff?
MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: Well, if they'll be part
of the budget. It will be different if they're paid
out of a different program, you know, but if they're
part of the budget for services for all of the refugees
we'll want to see their qualifications.

DR. TOWSON: If they're not hired do you want
job descriptions?

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: Yes.

DR. TOWSON: I notice in one -- my name is
Michele Towson. I'm with Baltimore City Community
College. I notice in one section you ask for State and
Federal listings of grants awarded, and another section
you ask for just State. Do you want both or just the
State grant -- State and local?

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: What we're really
looking for is experience managing government funded
programs, so it's both. You know, it could, you know,
State, Federal, or local grants that you managed. So -
-

DR. TOWSON: So every --

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: Yes.
DR. TOWSON: All right. Thank you.

MS. SCHNEIDER: Jo Anne Schneider. I'm with Chrysalis Collaborations for those who weren't here earlier. I am looking to partner with other organizations, probably on the evaluation and employment and outreach pieces. I had a couple general questions and a couple subcontractor questions.

General questions, I noted that it was a formula grant and now from ORR. And so I'm wondering if there is a sudden major change as in moving forward with the additional folks from Syria, Iraq, et cetera. Is there a possibility to renegotiate a budget on that?

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: No. The formula of funding are not negotiated. So, they, you know, again, we use whatever it is allocated to our State as a baseline.

MS. SCHNEIDER: Okay. So it's not likely to change in here to -- in any dramatic way?

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: Well, so again, how -- allocations are determined at different levels based on the number of refugees who arrived in the State two
years back. Okay? So, you know, and those are really of overall funding.

So, if they decided to allocate, you know, $5 million on the program nationwide, you know, then they would have to figure out what the per capita for each older refugee, you know, State is. And then, you know, give whatever the per capita times whatever number of older refugees in our states are. So, with -- the State don’t really have any control over that.

MS. SCHNEIDER: Okay. Thank you. Two more general questions and one subcontracting question. If I’m understanding you correctly, a lot of the population that would be a focus here would have been here a bit and are likely to be moving toward the end of eligibility if they don’t become citizens and so on. So I’m wondering if -- I just wanted to confirm that that will include people who have aged into the 60 plus category who came here say in their fifties and they’ve been here say five years.

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: Yeah. That’s correct.

MS. SCHNEIDER: Okay. And then the final
general question, one of the things that is happening
is as I suspect all of you know is that there's been a
rethinking and renegotiation of the single access point
contracts for the area agencies and agents and the way
that disabilities are handled on that. So for folks
who are developing proposals now, when the actors may
change, what are more general, you know, this is who's
doing it now, this is how the system works be
appropriate because who one might partner with may
change over the course of the contract or in the next
frankly year?

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: Yeah. I mean, I think
the, you know, what we are also looking in the proposal
is that they're ready to adopt changes, right? You
know, so like for instance if there's a particular
agency in your jurisdiction providing subsidy to all of
the individuals and all of a sudden a contract is given
to someone else, you know, we will look to diversity
(phonic) to build a business with whoever the new
provider is. I mean, those things happen all the time,
so, I mean, there's no expectation that you stick with
whoever you establish a relationship with, although
they are no longer providing services.

MS. SCHNEIDER: Okay. Great. Thank you.

All right. And the final question, because this is
Federal funds it would come under the Section 503 of
the Rehabilitation Act that says that seven percent of
the staff need to be people with disabilities. I
didn’t see anything in here about sort of checking on
that or minority subcontracting at all. Are there any
criteria in here or any way that you guys are looking
at that in the proposals?

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: That’s a question for
that guy behind you.

MR. MOORE: Well, that’s -- sorry. Scott
Moore with the Attorney General’s Office. That’s going
to be a discussion between MORA and the AG’s Office,
and we’ll provide a written answer to that question.

MS. SCHNEIDER: Okay. Thanks.

MS. LEONARD: Thank you for your questions.

Does anybody -- yes, please?

MR. WEIMER: Yeah. Doug Weimer from
Baltimore City Community College. I have a question in regards to the definition of "client." So on page 7, a client is defined as an individual 60 years of age or older who, one, meets the definition of refugee, like you had said -- already said, and, two, has resided in the United States with one of these statuses for 60 months or less. So, I want to confirm that anyone who has, you know, the SSI you had said cuts off after seven years, but we are only able to serve individuals under this if they've been here for five years or less; is that right?

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: That's correct.

MR. WEIMER: Okay.

MS. LEONARD: Where is that? That definition's coming from ORR?

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: Yeah.

MR. WEIMER: Okay. Thank you.

MS. LEONARD: Thank you for your question.

MS. CASCIOFFE: And can I just clarify with that one, because we know in our program sometimes since people can only apply at four years, nine months
at the very earliest --

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: For naturalization.

MS. CASCIOFFE: -- that sometimes they'll
like come to our program at that four year, nine month
or five year mark.

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: Yeah. So, I think --
well, our internal policies are you're looking at the
age limit. In terms of service time line, at the time
of enrollment. So if a client comes in and they are at
full, I don't know, point, you know, point nine years
in the U.S., if you enroll in the program before they
reach that 60 month mark, they can continue to receive
services and they can continue services until you've
gone through all of their service plan, right?

So you're really looking at -- in terms of
how long they've been in the country, you're looking at
the time of enrollment in the program. Does that make
sense? So if someone is already receiving services,
they're not going to discontinue services because all
of a sudden they hit their 60 month time frame. It can
continue services as long as those are the services
that you described in your service plan at the time of enrollment.

MS. CASCIOFFE: Okay.

MR. WEIMER: So to clarify that, if our service plan included like up to two years' worth of services if that was the plan for that client, and this is a two year grant, if a person met the eligibility requirement at the initial intake, as long they’re still on that service plan whatever the definition was then they would continue to be eligible?

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: Right, because the service plan should say that, well, we’re working on the citizenship and this is how long, you know, because there are different plans they can enroll in, and this one --

MR. WEIMER: And this one is -- they can’t interrupt their service.

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: Right.

MS. LEONARD: Thank you, Doug, for that clarification. I think Candice wanted to make a point about an exception.
MS. EDWARDS: Well, I think we might just want to confer and put it in writing, because I’m not sure that there is a limit on naturalization services. I think naturalization services there is no time limit.

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: Yeah. We’re going to look into that and provide a written response.

MR. WEIMER: That would be great. Thank you.

MS. LEONARD: Thank you. I’m sorry. You had your hand up.

MS. MCCLEYARY: Again, I’m representing Ms. Circe Trevant. Question about fluency and languages. What are some of the main languages of this refugee group, because you were just saying Syria and some of the Middle East. Do you have any from Africa? Do you have any from South America? What are some of the languages? And is there -- do you require -- because I didn’t see it in the proposal, do you require some type of language fluency?

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: What we’re looking for isn’t that the applicant has language capacity in themselves or their own. What we’re looking for is the
ability to provide cultural and linguistic services.
So that means if you are able to procure interpretation
or translation services externally and you have that,
you know, written into your proposal, that should be
fine.

You know, I can give you the top five
nationalities, but I would caution that the refugee
population changes all the time. So what I give to you
now might change next year. Currently, the largest
national, I think, is Iraqis -- people from Iraq,
followed by people from Afghanistan, and then
Congolese, probably followed by Burmese. But again,
refugee arrivals fluctuate in terms of countries of
origin.

MS. MCCLEARY: But you can provide at least
the first five and then some of the -- you know,
because that's going to be important to know what
languages you're dealing with so that you can provide
with people who can help translate for them, because of
the language issue.

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: We can provide the
listing of the top five nationalities currently in writing. But again, keep it in mind that again, those will change in the future.

MS. LEONARD: We've noted your question and the program will provide a response in more detail with the top five and then perhaps a couple of additional examples of some of the smaller segments -- some of the smaller populations that require translation services.

MS. MCCLEARY: Thank you.

MS. LEONARD: Thank you for your question.

Yes, please?

MS. GICHINGA: My name is Catherine, IRC. I think you may have already been asked this question, but I just wanted to clarify. We have two offices -- IRC has two offices, one in Baltimore, one in Silver Spring. So if we were to submit a proposal we would have to submit two or one proposal, for both offices in question? Would we have it as a shared grant?

MS. LEONARD: You're a single agency but with two satellite offices in two different jurisdictions? Are you asking if you propose for both jurisdictions do
you need to submit a proposal -- a technical proposal for both?

MS. GICHINGA: Both, yeah.

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: I think we will seek one proposal -- one technical proposal, but I think we are asking for two -- we're asking for two -- what do you call it, financial proposal?

MS. LEONARD: Correct. So my interpretation, and Scott can correct me if I'm not right, is that if you are still a single organization but you have the satellite offices, it isn't necessarily -- makes it different for the purposes of the RFGP. It's still requesting a single technical proposal whether you're proposing one jurisdiction or both of the regions. If you're going to submit for both jurisdictions, then we would ask that you provide a separate financial proposal for each of the jurisdictions.

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: But one technical proposal.

MS. LEONARD: Any other questions? Yes?

MS. CASCIOFFE: Are there any minimum numbers
of goals, outputs, numbers of clients to be served per year, or suggestions?

MR. NTABAGANYIMANA: Well, I think, again as I said, we’re going to provide the estimate for each jurisdiction, and the estimate will be simple. It will be like a raw number of potential program recipients. I look forward to you putting forward what you can produce, you know, given the funding that we tell you that is available.

Currently I’m hesitant to assign any specific outputs for any of the service areas, simply because, you know, I think not all participants will receive the same services. The services should be based on the need. So I don’t want people to be scrambling to provide, you know, BSL or, you know, whereas another group of clients need BSL. So, I think you know what I mean.

MS. LEONARD: Additional questions?

(No response.)

MS. LEONARD: Just to reiterate, if additional questions do come up, please submit them to
me in writing via my email address, which again is
available on the summary page at the beginning of the
RFGP.

I'm going to just make some closing comments
to wrap up our conference. As a reminder, please have
your proposals submitted by the due date and the time
specified in the RFGP. That would be Thursday, July
28th, no later than 3:00 p.m. Late submissions will
not be accepted. And if you have not already done so,
please complete the sign-in sheet outside on the cart
so that we may have a record of your attendance.

This now concludes the Pre-Proposal
Conference for Services to Older Refugees.

DR. TOWSON: One quick question.

MS. LEONARD: Go ahead.

DR. TOWSON: Can we do an early submission
before the 28th?

MS. LEONARD: Absolutely. Yes.

DR. TOWSON: Just ask for you downstairs?

MS. LEONARD: Absolutely. You can ask for
me. You can -- if I'm not in, a representative from
the Procurement Division will come down and receive
your proposal and provide a receipt of it.

Thank you all for attending today and enjoy
the rest of the day.

(At 11:01 a.m. the meeting concluded.)
CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY

I, CAROL O’BROCKI, the officer before whom the foregoing testimony was taken, do hereby certify that the witness whose testimony appears in the foregoing transcript was duly sworn by me; that the testimony of said witness was taken by me by stenomask means and thereafter reduced to typewriting by me or under my direction; that said testimony is a true record of the testimony given by said witness; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which this testimony is taken; and, further, that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.

This certification is expressly withdrawn and denied upon the disassembly or photocopying of the foregoing transcript of the proceedings or any part thereof, including exhibits, unless said disassembly or photocopying is done by the undersigned court reporter and/or under the auspices of Hunt Reporting Company, and the signature and original seal is attached thereto.

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