

**College and Career Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC) Transition
Request for Proposals (RFP) # V-11
Questions and Answers (Final - 3/4/2015)**

Q 1. How many students will be under the instruction of this RFP?

A 1. None. The intent of the RFP is to develop Curricular/Instructional Materials/Resources (hereafter curricula) that prepare students for success on measures of college readiness and attain the New York State High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma. The current timeline does not allow for students to be prepared and tested during the contract period. We are seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that the New York State Education Department (NYSED) deems acceptable.

Q 2. Where will the instruction take place for this RFP on a daily basis, specifically, what facility?

A 2. No instruction will be provided under this RFP. The current timeline does not allow for students to be prepared and tested during the contract period. We are seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that NYSED deems acceptable.

Q 3. Are applicants responsible for providing the location where the service will take place?

A 3. No direct services will be provided. The current timeline does not allow for students to be prepared and tested during the contract period. We are seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that NYSED deems acceptable.

Q 4. What are the age ranges of the students under this RFP?

A 4. The current timeline does not allow for students to be prepared and tested during the contract period. We are seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that NYSED deems acceptable. The curricula to be developed should address preparation for WIA Title II-eligible populations. Eligible participants include individuals who have attained 16 years of age and are not enrolled or not required to be enrolled in secondary school under New York State law, and who: lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills to enable them to function effectively in society; and do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or have not achieved an equivalent level of education.

Q 5. What are the spoken languages of the students under this RFP?

A 5. The current timeline does not allow for students to be prepared and tested during the contract period. We are seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that NYSED deems acceptable. The curriculum to be developed will be in English. Any translation to other languages will occur after the contract period.

Q 6. What are the hours of operation for instruction of the students under this RFP?

A 6. No instruction will be provided to students under this RFP. The current timeline does not allow for students to be prepared and tested during the contract period. We are seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that NYSED deems acceptable.

Q 7. What are the specific vocational opportunities (type of jobs) that are preferred as areas of study under this RFP?

A 7. There are no vocational opportunities that will be areas of study under this RFP. We are seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that NYSED deems acceptable. Per the RFP, it is critical that those who earn a HSE diploma be prepared to enroll in community college without requiring the extensive remediation that is known to be a significant impediment to college persistence and completion. Many

community colleges as well as adult literacy programs funded by SED offer HSE preparation programs. However these programs have been designed around the previous measure of HSE, the General Educational Development (GED[®]) exam administered from 2002-2013. Because New York State has transitioned to the TASC, a different HSE exam measuring different standards, so must the adult education providers, community colleges and other post-secondary training providers. The alignment of secondary education and post-secondary institution requirements with the Common Core State Standards provides New York State with an excellent opportunity to do just that. The TASC assesses five subject areas including Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. It also measures the Common Core State Standards for math and English language arts and other national standards for science and social studies, and provides an estimate of the degree to which examinees are ready for college and career.

Q 8. Are for-profit organizations eligible to submit on this RFP?

A 8. No. Applicants must be not-for-profit organizations or consortiums of not-for-profits.

Q 9. Are vendors responsible for supplying internships for students and if so, are their salaries part of the budget, how many will be hired and at what rate of pay?

A 9. No. There will be no internships, nor will there be any students served. The RFP is intended for curriculum development only.

Q 10. How long will the program run for? Months, years, etc?

A 10. There will be no program. There will only be the development of curriculum, which must be accomplished by June 30, 2015.

Q 11. What assessment tool will be used by the DOL & DOE to grade effectiveness of the chosen vendor?

A 11. The evaluation criteria that will be used to make awards is given in Section IV (B) of the RFP.

Q 12. How many vendors will be chosen for award of this RFP?

A 12. The RFP will make one or more awards to fund the development of up to three curricula.

Q 13. Are their vendors currently performing these services for the DOL & DOE?

A 13. No.

Q 14. What type of background academic & social information will vendors receive on each student prior to their entry into the program?

A 14. None. The current timeline does not allow for students to be prepared and tested during the contract period. We are seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that NYSED deems acceptable.

Q 15. What are the minimum and preferred/maximum qualifications of the instructors used to administer the program? Ex. Level of certification, education, teaching experience, etc.

A 15. There will be no instructors or students. The RFP is seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that NYSED deems acceptable.

Q 16. What is the protocol of reporting progress to the DOL & DOE throughout the course of the program?

A 16. There will not be a program. The current timeline does not allow for students to be prepared and tested during the contract period. We are seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that NYSED deems

acceptable. Reporting of progress on the development of curriculum during the contract period has not yet been determined.

Q 17. Will vendors be required to work in a collaborative fashion with DOL & DOE employees and if so, to what specific degree?

A 17. The level of interaction between the chosen contractor(s) and DOL/NYSED has not yet been determined.

Q 18. Will there be security requirements to ensure teacher and student safety?

A 18. None. The current timeline does not allow for students to be prepared and tested during the contract period. We are seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that NYSED deems acceptable.

Q 19. What are the insurance requirements for chosen vendors?

A 19. None. The current timeline does not allow for students to be prepared and tested during the contract period. We are seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that NYSED deems acceptable.

Q 20. What are the payment logistics to vendors?

A 20. Per Section IV (D) of the RFP, "Once a contract has been developed and formally executed, funds will be released on a cost reimbursement basis. A grantee must first pay for incurred expenses and then submit a voucher to DOL for reimbursement. Vouchers must be submitted to DOL on prescribed forms before payment is made. The contractor will be eligible for a cash advance of up to 25% upon contract execution at DOL's sole discretion and subject to the availability of funds appropriated and available pursuant to this RFP."

Q 21. Is the total budget for this RFP \$712,000.00?

A 21. No. \$718,000 is available to fund up to three curricula under this RFP.

Q 22. What are the steps to retrieve the responses to these questions?

A 22. Per Section II (A) of the RFP, "Applicants may submit questions via electronic mail (WDTD.Onestop@labor.ny.gov). Questions regarding this RFP will be accepted until 4:00 PM Eastern Time on March 3, 2015. No telephone inquiries will be accepted. All inquiries should include the following reference in the Subject line: "TASC Transition Question". Answers to all questions will be posted on DOL's web site (<http://labor.ny.gov/businessservices/funding.shtm>) on an ongoing basis, with the final posting taking place no later than March 6, 2015."

Q 23. Are we eligible to apply for this project? The Introduction (Section I.C) explicitly states that "Eligible applicants are not for profit organizations or consortia" and again "Both registration and prequalification must be completed by not-for-profit organizations before the proposal is submitted."

A 23. Your organization is only eligible if it is a not-for-profit entity.

Q 24. Does our curriculum need to be in both English and in Spanish? (Reference: <http://www.tasctest.com/the-tasc-test-advantage-for-test-takers.html>)

A 24. The curriculum to be developed will be in English. Any translation to other languages will occur after the contract period.

Q 25. Are we preparing students for the paper-based version or the online version? Both? (Reference: <http://www.tasctest.com/the-tasc-test-advantage-for-test-takers.html>)

A 25. Neither. The current timeline does not allow for students to be prepared and tested during the contract period. We are seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that NYSED deems acceptable.

Q 26. The TASC website says that students can take two free re-takes a year. Does this program make allowances for people to take the exam more than once in order to achieve a desired score?

(Reference: <http://www.tasctest.com/the-tasc-test-comparison-for-test-takers.html>)

A 26. The current timeline does not allow for students to be prepared and tested during the contract period. We are seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that NYSED deems acceptable.

Q 27. Do we need to include the price for testing? (Reference: <http://www.tasctest.com/the-tasc-test-comparison-for-test-takers.html>)

A 27. No. The current timeline does not allow for students to be prepared and tested during the contract period. We are seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that NYSED deems acceptable.

Q 28. Are our students eligible to take the TASC for free? (Reference: <https://newyork.tasctest.com/>)

A 28. No. There will be no student testing under this RFP.

Q 29. If High School Equivalency (HSE) is granted by the state and not the student's high school, is there a graduation ceremony for the students in this program? Part of the experience of moving on from secondary school to college is the high school graduation event for families. Will the DOL and DOE offer an event to mark this important achievement in the student's life?

(Reference: <http://www.tasctest.com/parents.html>)

A 29. There will not be any work with students, therefore there will be no graduation. The current timeline does not allow for students to be prepared and tested during the contract period. We are only seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that NYSED deems acceptable.

Q 30. What role will/can parents play in this process? Will they be involved at all in the program and its implementation? Parent support is often critical to success.

(Reference: <http://www.tasctest.com/parents.html>)

A 30. There will not be any program implementation during the contract period, only curriculum development. Seeking parental input on the curriculum during its development will be at the chosen contractor's discretion.

Q 31. Is it required to incorporate the recommended test preparation materials from the TASC website? (Reference: <http://www.tasctest.com/preparation-materials-for-test-takers.html>)

A 31. It is not required to incorporate the specific TASC preparation resources, but the curriculum must prepare students for success on the TASC.

Q 32. Does our curriculum need to be completely our own or are we able to incorporate other resources?

A 32. The curriculum may include resources that support effective postsecondary transition and passing the TASC test that were not created by applicant.

Q 33. The TASC test covers five subject areas: Reading, Writing, Math, Social Studies, Science. If this program is only two-months, we have a lot of material to teach and prep to do. Do we have a limit to how many hours a day we can work with students?

A 33. There will not be any work with students. The current timeline does not allow for students to be prepared and tested during the contract period. We are only seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that NYSED deems acceptable.

Q 34. Do we need to build the cost of calculators into the budget for the program?

(Reference: <http://www.tasctest.com/tasc-test-calculators-for-test-takers.html>)

A 34. No. There will be no testing of students, therefore calculators will not be needed.

Q 35. Can we create separate tracks for students with accommodations? These students will require their own separate track in order to work at their desired pace.

(Reference: <http://www.tasctest.com/special-needs-accommodations.html>)

A 35. There will not be any work with students. The current timeline does not allow for students to be prepared and tested during the contract period. We are only seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that NYSED deems acceptable.

Q 36. Is our program simply required to help students reach the required pass score of 500?

(Reference: <http://www.tasctest.com/pass-scores-for-test-takers.html>)

A 36. There will not be any program. The current timeline does not allow for students to be prepared and tested during the contract period. We are only seeking applicants to prepare curriculum that NYSED deems acceptable.

Q 37. Section IV.B.2.C states that Community Colleges add 5-10 additional points to your proposal score. Can we work with a community college in the area to add them to our membership team?

A 37. Yes, as long as the applicant/consortium applicant is eligible per the RFP. If a community college is the sole applicant, the lead applicant in a consortium, or a member of a consortium, additional points will be awarded.

Q 38. For more than 30 years, on behalf of a consortium of CUNY Community Colleges, the CUNY Office of Academic Affairs has secured a range of federal, state and local grants in adult literacy/high school equivalency/college transition direct services, and corresponding curriculum/professional development initiatives. The Office has provided central management and oversight of the education of tens of thousands of adult learners and the preparation of hundreds of their teachers. The CUNY Research Foundation is the fiscal conduit for these central grants which support adult literacy/high school equivalency/college transition programming at CUNY's community colleges. For the purposes of RFP #V-11, would the CUNY Office of Academic Affairs, which intends to submit a proposal, be designated as a "preferred applicant" and be awarded an additional ten points?

A38. Yes.

Q 39. Our organization would like to submit an RFP to publish a book under this grant opportunity. The book, in-short, includes the tools to help the reader understand their own gifts, talents, and purpose in life; how to set goals, and reach those goals; and exactly what it takes to use one's gifts and talents to be successful in life. I have found complete success with helping individuals understand their learning styles, understand themselves, and their overall success in academia and in life. Please see the attached for basic information about the book. The updated version would be geared towards those ages 16+, and will also contain a teachers' guide. Would it make sense for us to complete this grant request?

A 39. No. The intent of the RFP is to develop Curricular/Instructional Materials/Resources (hereafter curricula) that prepare students for success on measures of college readiness and attain the New York State High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma. Publishing a book does not meet this intent.

Q 40. Please provide clarification on what constitutes a consortium under the TASC grant. We are a for-profit business and will be partnering with an LLC. Do we meet the RFP definition of a consortium?

A 40. No. Applicants must be not-for-profit organizations or consortiums of not-for-profits.

Q 41. Are Community Colleges eligible to apply for the DOL TASC Transition RFP 1 02-17-2015 New York State Department of Labor College and Career Test Assessing Secondary Completion™ (TASC) Transition Curricular/Instructional Materials/Resources Request for Proposals # V-11? There are two conflicting statements in the RFP.

A 41. Yes. For eligibility purposes, community colleges are considered to be not-for-profit entities.

Q 42. Seeking Clarification: As I read this RFP, you are requesting that we write curriculum for a specific program (possibly a college transition program, possibly one that links HSE skills to specific job skills, etc.) such that the program increases the success rate of HSE students on the TASC, such that it reduces time to completion of community college degree programs, and such that it may be implemented by other HSE providers anywhere. Correct?

A 42. Correct.

Q 43. How tightly does the curriculum have to be aligned to the Common Core or TASC?

A 43. We are looking for curricula that support preparation for the common core skills tested by TASC.

Q 44. Is a no-cost time extension possible after June 30?

A 44. No. The funding for this RFP has a federal source which lapses on June 30, 2015. All funds must be expended by that date. No extensions are possible.

Q 45. Are you looking for an integrated curriculum, a technical curriculum or both?

A45. We are looking for the curriculum described in the RFP. The curriculum would help prepare for postsecondary transition and help students prepare to pass the TASC successfully.