

Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program
2009-2014 Request for Proposals GC #009-007
Questions and Answers

FORMAT -

Question #1. Should an application include a Table of Contents?

Answer #1. Having a Table of Contents is advisable.

Question #2. For those institutions that have moved to online catalogs, financial notification and other items that have historically been done in hard copy, is it appropriate to make reference to those online resources in the proposal or are hard copies still required?

Answer #2. Regarding the format for submitting the institution catalog, see Answer #7, below. The financial notification and other items must be submitted in hard copy.

Question #3. Why do materials need to be submitted in two separate envelopes?

Answer #3. The competitive State contract application review process requires that budget materials be reviewed apart from the review of program narrative materials.

Question #4. What materials need to be included in each envelope?

Answer #4. One sealed envelope must include one original and three copies of the Narrative Application (Section VII. B. and C.), forms A-1, A-3, A-5, A-6, A-7, A-8, A-9 (APPENDIX A) and forms B-1 and B-2 (APPENDIX B). This envelope must be labeled “Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program Bid Proposal #GC#09-007”. Another separate sealed envelope must include one original and three copies of the Budget/Budget Narrative (forms A-1, A-2 and A-4 of APPENDIX A). This envelope must be labeled “Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program Bid proposal # GC#09-007 – DO NOT OPEN”.

Question #5. Where can we find a list of the New York State Regents' Goals?

Answer #5. The Regents Goals can be found at: <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/about/>

Question #6. Section VII. Grant Proposal Requirements, item A. 5.b. includes a link for Excel budget forms. Must these forms be used?

Answer #6. Previously funded institutions that are working in MERS may download forms from MERS or from the Excel link provided. Institutions that are not working in MERS may

download forms from the Excel link or use either the Excel link provided or may use the hard copy forms provided in the Request for Proposal.

Question #7. Is it necessary to include a copy of the university catalog in the proposal or is reference to the University web address sufficient?

Answer #7. A currently active link for the institution catalog may be provided, in lieu of a hard copy catalog.

Question #8. Are there any recommended technical suggestions for writing the proposal, such as font size, margin sizes, binding of proposals, section tabs, and length of sections (other than the abstract)?

Answer #8. Recommended font size is 12 point typeface. Left-hand margins should be at least one-inch wide if binding or hole punching is used. The use of ring binders, plastic bindings, or adhesive bindings is recommended. Please avoid report covers, prong fasteners, bookbinding, rubber bands, or staples that are not long enough to secure all pages. If a three-ring binder is used, please use the size that allows pages to turn freely but is not oversized. Please use tabs for separating each major section of your application. There is no required minimum or maximum number of pages but the application should concisely answer the items presented in the proposal format. As noted in Answer #4, above, the original and three copies of application materials must be appropriately split into two sealed envelopes.

Question #9. Is it acceptable to reference another section of the proposal instead of reiterating information provided in another section of the proposal?

Answer #9. Generally, this is not advisable because referencing another section may leave a response vague or subject to question.

Question #10. Do we need to include a program objectives chart for 09-10 only or several pages of program objective charts for all five year 09-2014?

Answer #10. The program objectives chart need be developed for only 2009-2010.

BUDGET –

Question #11. What line-item budget category is most appropriate to include Board for residential staff during summer programming?

Answer #11. If Board is not already included in the salary of student assistants (APPENDIX A. A4, Line 4), then the most appropriate entry is in benefits of student assistants (APPENDIX A. A4, Line 5).

Question #12. When forecasting the budget, where should we log student travel? This would be travel for conferences, internships, and other development activities.

Answer #12. Student travel for internships is covered under the cost of attendance and would show up as a financial aid item. Student travel for conferences and development should be placed in the Contractual Services budget category.

Question #13. Can a summer budget cover HEOP pre-freshman costs if activities did not begin as early as July 1?

Answer #13. HEOP pre-freshman costs cover the period of July 1 up to the first day of the fall term. The pre-freshman summer program does not need to begin as early as July 1.

TIMELINE/PROCEDURE –

Question #14. When is the Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire due? Another office will be completing this form. Is it due before the proposal is submitted?

Answer #14. Although not a requirement, it is recommended that the Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire (VRQ) be submitted with the proposal. The VRQ is needed in order for any grant contracts to be awarded.

Question #15. Will there **NOT** be an opportunity to receive an extension in submitting the proposal?

Answer #15. **No submission will be accepted if postmarked after July 31, 2009.**

Question #16. If a chief executive officer of an institution submits correspondence to designate an alternate signatory, must this be submitted before submitting the application, or can it be submitted with the application in the sealed envelope?

Answer #16. No signatory correspondence is required. An alternate signatory must have the approval of an institution's governing board.

Question #17. Appendix D, item 7 refers to the need to affirm "...to the State a non-collusive bidding certification on Contractor's behalf." What is this document and under what conditions is it submitted?

Answer #17. This clause appears in the contract. By signing the contract, the institution agrees to perform the requirements stated in the contract.

AWARDS/APPEALS –

Question # 18. If an institution is not selected for an award, what recourse is there for recovering summer pre-freshman program costs?

Answer #18. There is no provision to provide funds for pre-freshman program costs if an institution is not selected for an award.

INSTITUTIONAL ELIGIBILITY -

Question #19. Are awards for subsequent years in the five-year contract cycle made automatically or is a reapplication required?

Answer #19. A new budget submission is required for years two, three, four and five of the five-year contract cycle.

SCORING –

Question #20. Will the full-time equivalency (FTE) of HEOP students be used to determine the contract award?

Answer #20. The headcount of HEOP students will be used to determine the contract award amount.

Question #21. Section VIII. Proposal Rating and Method of Award, item 8 includes a table with a support services expenditure amount and a financial aid expenditure amount. Can an applicant combine these amounts and request \$4,500 per student?

Answer #21. Yes, you can, however combining these numbers may not represent your best approach. This table addresses an average amount for support services and financial aid. It may be problematic to attempt a combination of two amounts that are averages.

Question #22. Part III of the Evaluation Rubric includes three tables that will be used to determine the “best value” application score. What is the process for evaluating points on these tables?

Answer #22. For table 1, the combined HEOP Financial Assistance budget total requested for the summer and the academic year will be compared to the combined headcount requested for the summer and the academic year. For table 2, the combined HEOP Support Services budget total requested for summer and the academic year will be compared to the combined headcount requested for the summer and the academic year. For table 3, the HEOP budget total will be compared to the budget total from all sources. The best value score for each table will be combined for an overall best value determination, with 25 points being the maximum combined score.

Question #23. Are colleges/universities who receive the maximum score of 100 points going to receive 100% portion of the SED funding requested as a result of their proposal?

Answer #23. Contracts will be issued to the applicants whose aggregate review scores for Part I, Part II and Part III are the highest among all the proposals rated. Proposals will be rated numerically, with a maximum score of 100 points. If there are funds remaining that will not fully support funding the next highest ranked application, a partial award will be made. In the event of a tie score, proposals with the highest score on the Institutional Expertise review category (maximum 8 points) will be the tie breaker. Funds will be awarded on a ranking based on scores in descending order. Adjustments to the award will occur if items within the proposed budget are deemed to be non-allowable or inappropriate.

Question #24. How is the SED portion of funding to be determined for college/universities that did not score the maximum points (100), but have been approved to administer the HEOP contract?

Answer #24. Please see Answer #23, above.

Question #25. Will SUNY (EOP) and CUNY (SEEK) have to participate in a competitive bid process in order to be considered an Opportunity Program Grant and if yes, will they be adjudged by same EVALUATION RUBIC as HEOP (independent institutions)?

Answer #25. SUNY and CUNY opportunity programs are administered differently than HEOP for institutions in the independent sector. They will not be evaluated by the same rubric that is being used by the State Education Department for HEOP.

Question #26. What is the minimum passing score in order to be eligible for full funding of the HEOP Grant as requested in the individual institutions 2009-2014 Grant Proposal?

Answer #26. A minimum score of 45 is required for the combined Parts I and II in order to be considered for scoring under Part III.

Question #27. Are there individual gradations of scoring which will entitle an institution to only partial funding?

Answer #27. The request for proposal, under item 2, on page 61 states "If there are funds remaining that will not fully support funding the next highest ranked application, a partial award will be made."

Question #28. In the rubric for the proposal, in the fiscal viability, it looks like we will be penalized if we use the rate the SED gave us last year, when it is higher than the lowest rate. Why should we be penalized just because our rate is higher and that is what the state gave us? The institutions should not be having to pick up this extra burden at this time.

Answer #28. The competitive State contract process does not provide for a continuation of historical rates into a new contract cycle. The tables under Part III Fiscal Viability list approximate ranges from which institutions may select.

CLARIFICATIONS –

Question #29. In item #11, Program Evaluation, are we selecting 1 "special component" of programming to address with a structured process for assessing or the entire program to address in process of evaluation? (There is contradictory wording between the RFP and the evaluation rubric).

Answer #29. The component or components that you select for evaluation should be identified. The study approach that you will use to evaluate the identified component or components should be described. There is no requirement to evaluate the entire program.

Question #30. Can you explain and give an example of a "Budget Narrative" referred to in the language of the submission requirements for the proposal? Is this in anyway different from the budget pages we have submitted before and is the form available on MERS? (See Below); "Submit one original and three (3) copies of the Budget/Budget Narrative** in a separate sealed envelope labeled " etc.

Answer #30. For this Request for proposal, the Budget/Budget Narrative is represented by pages A-1, A-2 and A-4, which can be downloaded from MERS or from the Excel file, which is posted on the SED/HEOP website.

Question #31. In providing information and a list of remedial/developmental course titles as support in the academic year - 1. Do we need to include courses provided by institutional funds or only HEOP funded courses? 2. Do we need to include Form B-2 of Appendix B for both institutional funded and HEOP funded courses?

Answer #31. Remedial/developmental courses to be taken by HEOP students in the summer and/or academic year should be included on Form B-2 of Appendix B regardless of funding source.

Question #32. On page 10, E., is there a #3 or was this a numbering error?

Answer #32. Thank you. This is a numbering error. There is no number "4" in this sequence. Number "3" should appear where number "4" is used.

Question #33. On page 13 - B. 2. - should the composite scores to read 3100 or 310?

Answer #33. The correct composite score is 3100.

Question #34. On page 13 - 2. a. - are the numbers correct?

Answer #34. Yes.

Question #35. On page 15 - Should 5 in the household read \$31,830 or \$37,240?

Answer #35. The corrected figure for a household of 5 should be \$37,240.

Question #36. On page 62 of the guidelines it talks about the average expenditure per student - the total is \$4,500. If in the past the SED support was more than this, should our proposal reflect what they gave us this year or do you think we should be going with the \$4,500? I am concerned with the state giving us less than what we received this year/student and I am really concerned about what my administration would think of this. I realize that they say they will take the best and final offer but ?????

Answer #36. The table on page 62 shows two separate average amounts. An applicant would need to determine an appropriate level of per student expenditure for support services and for financial aid. The competitive State contract process does not provide for a continuation of historical rates into a new contract cycle.

Question #37. Please advise on which of the two formats shown below should be addressed by an applicant. The Guidelines (pp. 48-49) gives the following proposal format:

3. Campus Environment -

Provide a copy of the institution's current catalog and:

- a. Briefly describe institutional efforts to serve the needs of disadvantaged populations during the last four years.
- b. Provide a chart of the latest available ethnic breakdown of undergraduate enrollment by number and percentage.

4. Program Growth and Development -

Discuss the projected limits to program growth. Include:

- a. optimum percent of the institution's student body to be designated as HEOP
- b. reference to the institution's mission and goals.

However, the evaluation rubric (pp. 79-80) deviates somewhat from this format:

Campus Environment, Growth and Development - Applicant demonstrates that it has the campus environment and capacity to deliver an effective opportunity program that can prepare economically and educationally disadvantaged students for the academic rigor of higher education and the complexities of campus life.

- Provides evidence of serving the needs of disadvantaged students during the last 4 years.
- Provides a chart of the most recent available undergraduate enrollment by ethnicity number and percentage.
- Provides the projected limits of institutional enrollment and the corresponding percentage of HEOP enrollment through 2014.
- Provides a copy of the most recent college catalog.

Prior Experience, Program Growth and Development with HEOP - Applicant provides evidence that it has the capacity to effectively deliver HEOP, preparing economically and educationally disadvantaged students for the academic rigor of higher education and the complexities of campus life.

- Provides evidence of historical commitment or successful experience in delivering HEOP.

- Provides evidence of specific departments within the institution that provided active and viable supports in the development and implementation of HEOP services and/or provided additional funding in support of HEOP students.

Answer #37. Applicants should provide information that earns points, as presented in the Evaluation Rubric. Specifically:

Regarding Campus Environment, under the Proposal Format (Section VII. C. 3.), applicants should respond to the information being requested in Appendix C. Evaluation Rubric for Campus Environment, Growth and Development on page 79.

Regarding Program Growth and Development, under the Proposal Format (Section VII. C. 4.), applicants should respond to the information being requested in Appendix C. Evaluation Rubric for Prior Experience, Program Growth and Development with HEOP on page 80.

MISCELLANEOUS -

Question #20. Can anyone tell us WHO the readers are for this year?

Answer #20. Reviewers are all professional staff of the State Education Department.