August 29, 2023

1. What is the basis for compensation for report writers – is it hourly or by project? Do you have a standard rate? If so, what is it?

We will pay writers on an hourly basis. The rate is based off a writer's professional experience and expertise, which can be negotiated at the beginning of each contract.

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2. The RFQ mentions using data visualizations and infographics. Are you expecting that the writer will create these items and then explain them in the text? Or are these items being created by another member of the report production team and then being provided to the writer for explanation and incorporation into the report draft?

We are looking for writers with various skill sets. We can provide data visualizations and infographics for a report, but we welcome writers who can and are interested in issuing those skill sets. We do not expect the writers to produce a final product, as the county contracts with a designer to create the finalized visualizations and infographics.

3. Could you provide further details about the specific types of report as well as topics, projects, or programs that the Allegheny County Department of Human Services is particularly interested in or has worked on in the past?

To find examples of reports, please visit our analytics site. We are looking for writers for various writing projects that match the writer's style and interest. These include the following:

- Research reports have a defined research question, methodology, and results. Most of the reports are produced internally, but for writers interested in this type of report writing, we would provide all the pieces to the report, and then ask the writer to create a finalized report. An example of this report on the population of unsheltered individuals in Allegheny County can be found here.
- Program reports have a defined scope and typically require interviews to create the story. We would work with the writer to determine the scope, identify people to interview, and provide background information, consisting of documents and data. An example of this report on the process to change how individuals access our homeless system can be found here.
- Other writing projects, including requests for proposals or grant proposals.

4. The W-9 form requested I add a TIN or a social security number from the United Stated and I am unfortunately no located in your country. Is there any other way that I can offer my services for this RFQ?

You do not need to be located in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania or the United States to apply, however, some projects will require a physical presence in Allegheny County.

5. For individuals or single member LLC, are there any requirements for audits and insurance? Can "Schedule C Tax Form 1040 Profit or Loss from Business" be used in-lieu of audited statements? Are there any insurance or liability insurance requirements for applicants?

If you do not have audited financial information to provide, then yes, a Schedule C Tax Form 1040 Profit or Loss from Business will suffice, however, this information is not required to be submitted at the time of your Application.

All Applicants are required to abide by the contract requirements outlined in Section 7: Contract Requirements for Qualified Applicants. For insurance, if you are applying as an individual, a waiver(s) may be permissible for Worker's Compensation or Employee Dishonest/Theft Insurance, however, this will be decided during the contract and negotiation phase if you are selected for qualification.

6. Do applicants have to have a physical address in Allegheny County or the state of Pennsylvania?

No, you do not need to be located in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania or the United States to apply, however, some projects will require a physical presence in Allegheny County.

7. If the applicant works as an independent contractor (not an employee) for local based companies writing RFP/RFQ's that are submitted to DHS as a response to Allegheny County DHS's RFQ/RFI, but the applicant is not an employee of the organizations and does not perform any work funded by Allegheny County DHS, does this create a conflict of interest? Is the applicant still eligible to apply?

No, we would not consider that a conflict of interest. Yes, the Applicant would still be eligible to apply.

8. Can an applicant submit an application AND also mark oneself as "Interest in being subcontracted"?

Yes. The "Interest in being subcontracted?" feature is designed to allow potential Applicants to indicate their desire to submit a collaborative Application with other potential Applicants.

9. Is it permissible to include links within the response we provide (e.g., to websites of clients or myself, additional published work that is references in answers, or other relevant URLs)?

No, it is not permissible. Please only provide the three (3) writing samples requested.

10. What is a typical turnaround time between when a task order is issued to a Qualified Applicant and when the work for the task order needs to be completed?

This will be determined by the scope of the project. The project timeline will be determined during the project scope stage.

11. What is the typical timeline for projects? If this differs by the type of project, could you give examples for various categories (interview and reporting project, quantitative reporting, grant writing project, etc.)

Timelines will vary by project and will be determined during the project scope stage.

12. What is the range of budgets expected for the projects?

Budgets will vary by project and will be determined during the project scope stage.

13. What is the process for responding to a project request once the pool of writers has been selected?

DHS will identify the writer(s) most able to complete the project based on their experience, expertise, and capacity.

14. If a project requires a local presence, are travel costs allowed in the budget?

If a local presence is required, travel costs will be paid for by the County.

15. For the evaluation of applications, what separates a 4 (exceeds expectations) from a 5 (outstanding)?

Applications are evaluated by an evaluation team composed of content experts from within DHS, local external organizations, and community members with lived experience. The evaluation team utilizes the evaluation criteria listed in Section 3 of the RFQ to award points for each application's response and scores based on the evaluator's discretion. Please refer to Section 5 of the RFQ for more information on how applications are evaluated.