COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

Questions & Answers

to

RFP No. 901885

### for

Refugee Social Integration Services Program

**Networking/Bidders Conference Held on June 30, 2020**

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| **This County of Alameda, General Services Agency (GSA), RFP Questions & Answers (Q&A) has been electronically issued to potential bidders via e-mail. E-mail addresses used are those in the County’s Small Local Emerging Business (SLEB) Vendor Database or from other sources. If you have registered or are certified as a SLEB, please ensure that the complete and accurate e-mail address is noted and kept updated in the SLEB Vendor Database. This RFP Q&A will also be posted on the GSA Contracting Opportunities website located at** [**http://acgov.org/gsa\_app/gsa/purchasing/bid\_content/contractopportunities.jsp**](http://acgov.org/gsa_app/gsa/purchasing/bid_content/contractopportunities.jsp) |

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1. What is the possible range of the award amount?
   1. **This information is not available. Please provide your best estimate for this contract. All contracts are contingent to availability of funding.** **The actual funding allocation may change, and the Contractor(s) selected through this RFP may be required to increase or reduce planned program expenditures accordingly.**
2. Is the County giving out more than 1 contract for SI? If so, what is the total amount intended for Social Integration?
   1. **No.**
3. Page 5 of the RFP, Section B. (SCOPE) states:

*Refugees, Asylees and Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) 18 to 59 years of age not enrolled in other Refugee Social Services (RSS) programs;*

What are the other RSS programs? and who would NOT qualify for SI?

* 1. **The target population is refugees not already receiving social integration or adjustment services through a different program. However, a client may choose to change social adjustment/integration providers at any time.**

1. If an asylee is receiving CalWORKs, are they ineligible for Social Integration (SI) services until they are no longer receiving cash aid? Or will the LEP Employment Services RFP include Social Integration specifically for CalWORKs and RCA participants?
   1. **Yes, they could be receiving CalWORKs and receive Social Integration services. See response A3.**
2. How will the contractor know if clients are enrolled in other RSS programs or when they time out of other RSS programs?
   1. **Coordination of services will be part of the Service Provider Procedures and will be discussed when the RFP process is completed.**
3. Are there any eligibility parameters regarding **how long the client** has been in the U.S. (i.e. “only serving clients within 60 months of their date of arrival/date of asylum granted”)? *We serve a lot of clients (esp. refugee seniors) who have been in the U.S. for longer than 5 years, and are high-need?*
   1. **Refugees, Asylees and Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) 18 years of age and above are eligible to receive Social Integration services under this RFP. There is no 60 months from their date of arrival/asylum granted eligibility restriction.**
4. Can **older refugees (60+)** be counted if they have been in the U.S. longer than 5 years? *Their needs will always continue to increase as they age.*
   1. **Yes, there is no 60-month eligibility restriction.**
5. Are clients with **pending asylum** eligible or only clients who already received their asylum?
   1. **The target populations for this RFP are adult clients who meet any one of the following USCIS classifications: Refugees, Asylees (status granted), Cuban and Haitian Entrants, Amerasians from Vietnam, Certified Human Trafficking Victims, Victims of Human Trafficking, Domestic Violence, and Other Serious Crimes, Afghan and Iraqi Special Immigrant Visa holders.**
6. Are any other immigrants eligible for services under this contract? For example, are clients who were sponsored, came through the Diversity Visa lottery, or petitioned by family members eligible?
   1. **The target populations for this RFP are adult clients who meet any one of the following USCIS classifications: Refugees, Asylees (status granted), Cuban and Haitian Entrants, Amerasians from Vietnam, Certified Human Trafficking Victims, Victims of Human Trafficking, Domestic Violence, and Other Serious Crimes, Afghan and Iraqi Special Immigrant Visa holders.**
7. Do “older refugees sixty (60) years of age or older” include individuals who came as asylees, SIVs or with some other immigration status or does it only include seniors who came as refugees?
   1. **Yes, the target population includes older refugees who came as asylees and SIVs.**
8. If a husband and wife seek SI services for different needs (for example, one needs support with SSI and the other needs support for medical needs), would they each be counted as separate clients? Or would we only report the head of the household, even if we’re working with both individuals?
   1. **Yes, in this scenario, they would be counted as two separate clients that are part of the same household for purposes of reporting. The County will provide reporting guidelines in the Service Provider Procedures when the RFP process is completed.**
9. Could vulnerable legal immigrants (NOT refugee/asylee/SIV), such as legal immigrants from Yemen, count under this grant? *For those immigrants, it would count for public charge determination if they apply for public benefits.*
   1. **All refugees enrolled in or served by this project shall be residents of Alameda County. The target populations for this RFP are adult clients who meet any one of the following USCIS classifications: Refugees, Asylees (status granted), Cuban and Haitian Entrants, Amerasians from Vietnam, Certified Human Trafficking Victims, Victims of Human Trafficking, Domestic Violence, and Other Serious Crimes, Afghan and Iraqi Special Immigrant Visa holders.**
10. If clients are served through this contract, would their participation be considered in a public charge determination?
    1. **The Social Services Agency encourages individuals and families to seek advice from reputable non-profit immigration service providers regarding what is considered a public charge.**
11. Page 5 of the RFP, Section B. (SCOPE) states:

*All service sites must be physically located within Alameda County. Bidders must be an Ethnic Community-Based Organization (ECBO), with a minimum of three (3) years of experience with an active Board membership consisting of 51% or more of actively participating refugees or former refugees, or a non-ECBO fiscal sponsor applying as the prime bidder with an ECBO(s) as their subcontractor(s). This funding is not intended to support the infrastructure development and start-up of new organizations.*

Can the lead agency be a non-ECBO as long as they subcontract with an ECBO? How much of the contract should go to the ECBO?

* 1. **A non-ECBO can be the lead agency that subcontracts with ECBO(s). The County will review the budgets submitted by bidders to determine the bidder's effort to meet requirements and objectives of the RFP.**

1. Is the Bidder required to be a SLEB or subcontract with a SLEB for at least 20% of the total bid amount in order to be considered for the award or are non-profit community-based organizations exempt from this requirement? *This seems challenging if the contractor/subcontractor must demonstrate at least 3 years of expertise and yet a SLEB must not have existed as a business for more than 5 years.*
   1. **Non-profit Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are exempt from the Small and Emerging Local Business (SLEB) requirements. Please see pages 5, 6, 21 of the RFP and pages 3 and 18 of the Bid Response Packet.**
2. Are ongoing classes (i.e., citizenship classes) allowable activities under this contract?
   1. **Yes, Contractor(s) can refer or provide citizenship classes as part of Social Integration services.**
3. How many unduplicated clients does the contract expect the program to serve per year?
   1. **Approximately 450 unduplicated individual adult clients.**
4. What is needed for a client to be officially “enrolled” in the program?
   1. **This will be covered in the Service Provider Procedures and will be discussed when the RFP process is completed. These procedures will detail eligibility criteria and the process for determining eligibility and the enrollment process.**
5. When this contract was first developed 5 years ago, refugee arrivals were still high. Now that new arrivals have decreased and a proposed asylum rule could drastically reduce the number of approved asylum applications, how will the expected number of clients to be served reflect the changing demographics year to year?
   1. **Alameda County submits an updated annual plan to the state, which is based on working with the stakeholder communities to collects data that includes information regarding demographic changes within the refuge/asylee populations that is used to determine the number of clients to be served annually.**
6. Would clients who are served in the first fiscal year be considered “new” again if they need ongoing support during the second fiscal year? (This is especially pertinent for senior or other high-need clients, many of whom will be coming back for ongoing support.)
   1. **They will be considered re-entry cases and will have new enrollment dates.**
7. How will the deliverables measure how much time is spent with one client helping to resolve their issue? *A simple request could take 10-20 min. A more complex need could require HOURS of work (such as applying for SSI). The current measures don’t seem to take into account the amount of time needed for different issues.*
   1. **ACSSA recognizes that clients have varying levels of needs and services should be individualized based on the issue being resolved and takes this into consideration when reviewing both narrative and outcome reports. The current measures include the number of refugee clients who are referred/requested services as well as the number of refugee clients who received services that successfully helped them find a solution to their problem or issue. Narrative reports cover the range of services provided. The Service Provider Procedures will provide additional guidance on how to determine how different types of services will be reported.**

1. Will carry-over clients need to complete a new intake each FY?
   1. **No, they will not need to complete a new intake each new contract year.**
2. What % of total clients served must be older refugees (60+) versus other eligible adults ages 18-59?
   1. **There is no pre-determined percentage breakdown that must be served between the two age categories. However, services for both populations need to be provided and proposals should address service delivery for both populations.**
3. Page 11 of the RFP, Section F. (DELIVERABLES/REPORTS) item Service Delivery Sites states:

*In order to make services broadly available to participants, the service sites that the Contractor(s) will provide must be open from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. In addition, the Centers must ensure that arrangements are made to keep the service sites open and providing services throughout the holiday seasons with limited closings for major holidays. All services sites must be readily accessible to public transportation.*

If service delivery sites are not open until 9am (versus the required time of 8am - p.11), will sites need to expand their hours or can this be changed from 9am-5pm?

* 1. **It is the expectation by the County that the selected Contractors will be able to meet all the terms and conditions as specified in the RFP.**

1. What information will the intake assessment need to include?
   1. **The intake assessment will include, but not be limited to, background information about the client’s educational, family and work history as well as their needs for services.**
2. (Page 10 of the Bid Response Packet)What is meant by “% of refugee participants who follow through with receiving services”? If a person is referred by another agency, would they be considered as “following through with receiving services” if they meet with a staff person by phone or in person for a one-time need?
   1. **This will be covered in the Service Provider Procedures and will be discussed when the RFP process is completed.**
3. Are refugees considered as “referred” if they hear about the services via word of mouth and simply walk into the office?
   1. **Clients can be referred by other agencies or request the services directly.**
4. Page 11 of the Bid Response Packet states “% of RCA clients” four times in the deliverables. Is this supposed to say “% of refugee clients”?
   1. **The following USCIS classifications are considered Refugees for the purpose of RCA and the target population for this RFP: Refugees, Asylees, Cuban and Haitian Entrants, Amerasians from Vietnam, Certified Human Trafficking Victims, Victims of Human Trafficking, Domestic Violence, and Other Serious Crimes, Afghan and Iraqi Special Immigrant Visa holders.**
5. How often must the satisfaction survey be given to participants (every time they receive services, monthly, annually)?
   1. **This will be covered in the Service Provider Procedures and will be discussed when the RFP process is completed with the Service Provider to determine an optimal time period to conduct a survey.**
6. Clients often return for different needs once they’ve established trust with staff, especially if they have limited English skills. All of these needs might not be indicated in the initial intake. Can the contractor keep cases “open” or will we need to officially close clients every time one issue is resolved and re-enroll them when they return?
   1. **This will be covered in the Service Providers Procedures and will be discussed when the RFP process is completed with the Service Provider.**
7. Page 5 of the RFP, Section B. (SCOPE) states:

*Social integration is the process during which newcomers or minorities are incorporated into the social structure of the host society. Social Integration (SI) services are defined as services designed for adults experiencing adjustment difficulties of a psychological, intellectual, social or physical nature. Activities are directed at assisting refugees to understand how to utilize and develop daily living and problem-solving skills. SI services may be provided on an individual basis or through workshops*.

Individuals often attend informational workshops in order to learn and not necessarily because they identify a problem or issue.

Page 10 of the Bid Response Packet asks the contractor to report the # of refugee clients who got help for their identified problem or issue. How would we report clients who attend information workshops and do not identify as having a specific problem or issue?

* 1. **This will be covered in the Service Provider Procedures and will be discussed when the RFP process is completed with the Service Provider.**

1. Page 5 of the RFP, Section B. (SCOPE) states:

*Social integration is the process during which newcomers or minorities are incorporated into the social structure of the host society. Social Integration (SI) services are defined as services designed for adults experiencing adjustment difficulties of a psychological, intellectual, social or physical nature. Activities are directed at assisting refugees to understand how to utilize and develop daily living and problem-solving skills. SI services may be provided on an individual basis or through workshops*.

Individuals often attend informational workshops in order to learn and not necessarily because they identify a problem or issue.

If individuals only attend one workshop, will they need to complete an intake assessment prior to the workshop? What information would be required for this intake? *Some clients are very mistrustful and do not want to give some of their personal information (such as date of entry or A#) simply to attend one workshop. If clients do not want to provide the information, they are currently not counted even though they were provided with services.*

* 1. **Informational workshops that meet one of the objectives for SI services outlined in the RFP are allowable services. The Service Provider Procedures will provide guidance that will help the Service Provider with determining how to report outcomes related to workshop attendance.**

1. Similarly, how would the contractor evaluate whether or not a workshop participant “received services that successfully helped them find a solution to their problem or issue” if the workshop was informational?
   1. **This is part of the Service Provider Procedures and will be discussed when the RFP process is completed.**
2. Can the County talk about the number of clients that need to be served and if the same clients can be served from year to year?
   1. **Approximately 450 clients is the target number to be served in the first contract year period. This includes first time clients and returning/re-entry clients who have new issues and need different services to help them resolve their new issue.**
3. Does there need to be a minimum number of clients served per year? and does this minimum number of clients need to be all new clients each year?
   1. **There is no minimum number of clients to be served per year. The target goal is approximately 450 clients to be served in the contract year period, which includes first time clients as well as returning/re-entry clients who have new issues and need different services to help them resolve their new issue.**
4. Does the nonprofit taking the lead have to be the fiscal agent or can we subcontract to 1 or more ECBOs?
   1. **Yes, the prime contractor has to be the fiscal agent.**
5. Can seniors who came as refugees and have been in the U.S. longer than 5 years be served?
   1. **Yes, they can be served.**
6. Can a Bidder submit its own minimum yearly number of clients in the proposal?
   1. **No.**
7. When do the contract negotiations take place?
   1. **Contract negotiations take place when the award/non-award letters are issued.**
8. Are Immigrants part of this RFP?
   1. **The target populations for this RFP are adult clients who meet any one of the following USCIS classifications: Refugees, Asylees (status granted), Cuban and Haitian Entrants, Amerasians from Vietnam, Certified Human Trafficking Victims, Victims of Human Trafficking, Domestic Violence, and Other Serious Crimes, Afghan and Iraqi Special Immigrant Visa holders.**
9. Are undocumented immigrants part of this RFP?
   1. **The target populations for this RFP are clients who meet any one of the following USCIS classifications: Refugees, Asylees (status granted), Cuban and Haitian Entrants, Amerasians from Vietnam, Certified Human Trafficking Victims, Victims of Human Trafficking, Domestic Violence, and Other Serious Crimes, Afghan and Iraqi Special Immigrant Visa holders.**

The following participants attended the Bidders Conference:

|  | **Company Name / Address** | **Representative** | **Contact Information** |
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|  | **Refugee & Immigrant Transitions (RIT)**  **1811 11th Avenue, Oakland CA 94606**  **& Burma Refugee Family Network (BRFN) 1811 11th Ave, Oakland 94606** | **Zar Ni Maung** | Phone: **510-830-6863 & 925-257-4002** |
| E-Mail: **zarimaung70@gmail.com** |
| Prime Contractor: **N/A** |
| Subcontractor: **N/A** |
| Certified SLEB: **N/A** |
|  | **International Rescue Committee**  **440 Grand Ave #500**  **Oakland, CA 94610** | **Kate Landberg** | Phone: **(510) 452-8222** |
| E-Mail: **kate.landberg@rescue.org** |
| Prime Contractor: **N/A** |
| Subcontractor: **N/A** |
| Certified SLEB: **Exempt** |
|  | **Asian Refugees United (ARU)** | **Robin Gurung** | Phone: **510-703-1631** |
| E-Mail: **robin@asianrefugees.org** |
| Prime Contractor: **N/A** |
| Subcontractor: **N/A** |
| Certified SLEB: **N/A** |
|  | **Lao Family Community Development**  **2325 E 12th St, Ste 226**  **Oakland, CA 94601** | **Brad Meyer** | Phone: |
| E-Mail: **bmeyer@lfcd.org** |
| Prime Contractor: **Yes** |
| Subcontractor: **No** |
| Certified SLEB: **Yes** |
|  | **Refugee & Immigrant Transitions (RIT) 1811 11th Avenue**  **Oakland, CA 94606** | **Laura Vaudreuil** | Phone: |
| E-Mail: **laura@reftrans.org** |
| Prime Contractor: **Yes** |
| Subcontractor: **Yes** |
| Certified SLEB: **Exempt** |
|  | **Refugee & Immigrant Transitions 870 Market St Ste 558**  **San Francisco, CA 94102** | **Farhad Khyber** | Phone: |
| E-Mail: **farhad@reftrans.org** |
| Prime Contractor: **Yes** |
| Subcontractor: **Yes** |
| Certified SLEB: **Exempt** |
|  | **Refugee & Immigrant Transitions 870 Market St Ste 558**  **San Francisco, CA 94102** | **Julia Glosemeyer** | Phone: **415-989-2151** |
| E-Mail:[**julia@reftrans.org**](mailto:julia@reftrans.org) |
| Prime Contractor: **Yes** |
| Subcontractor: **Yes** |
| Certified SLEB: **Exempt** |

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|  | **Burma Refugee Family Network (aka Burma Refugee Families & Newcomers)**  **1811 11th Ave**  **Oakland 94606** | **Jodi de la Pena** | Phone: **510-519-7391** |
| E-Mail:[**burmarefugeefamilynetwork@gmail.com**](mailto:burmarefugeefamilynetwork@gmail.com) |
| Prime Contractor: **Yes** |
| Subcontractor: **Yes** |
| Certified SLEB: **No** |
|  | **International Rescue Committee**  **440 Grand Ave #500**  **Oakland, CA 94610** | **Jordane Tofighi** | Phone: **(510) 452-8222** |
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| Prime Contractor: **N/A** |
| Subcontractor: **N/A** |
| Certified SLEB: **Exempt** |
|  | **Global Communication Education & Art (GCEA)**  **4799 Shattuck Ave.**  **Oakland, CA 94609** | **Almaz Yihdego** | Phone: **510-560-5520** |
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| Prime Contractor: **N/A** |
| Subcontractor: **N/A** |
| Certified SLEB: **N/A** |