Creating and Managing a Resource Hub of Vaccine-Related Information and Materials for Organizations Working to Increase Vaccine Confidence and Coverage in the United States

RFP Applicant Questions
May 19, 2021

Q1. Can companies from outside the US apply for this?
A1. Yes.

Q2. Do we need to come to the CDC Foundation in-person for meetings?
A2. No.

Q3. Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside the USA?
A3. Yes, if the capability exists. Prospective applicants would need to determine if they are capable of performing the tasks from outside of the US.

Q4. Will users need to register before uploading or downloading materials? Are there are other levels of access and security that are pre-defined? Is the expectation that anyone in the public can provide potential hub materials or will submission of materials be limited to the Learning Community partners?
A4. All public users should be able to easily download materials. We do not however want to accept material submissions from the general public. Submission of materials will primarily be limited to the Learning Community partners. Applicants should propose how they would manage access and security.

Q5. Should the project include a digital marketing budget for advertising?
A5. This would be an allowable and reasonable cost to propose.

Q6. Currently, the assumption is that the Learning Community will be comprised of an estimated 300-400 organizations. Should we address in our proposal if there are significantly more (or fewer) initial organizations and materials that need to be processed?
A6. The majority of the 400-500 organizations will be identified by the end of June or early July before the Resource Hub would likely launch. The CDC Foundation plans to release a learning questionnaire (in partnership with the Urban Institute) that will solicit materials from some of the Learning Community members in May and June. This will allow for an initial batch of materials to be available to the Contractor for inclusion on the Resource Hub for its launch.

Q7. Is there a budget range for the funding opportunity? Is there an estimated level of effort? Please provide approximate budget cap for the project.
A7. Yes, please see the revised RFP.

Q8. Does the CDC foundation have subject matter experts (SME’s) who will review the materials, or will the contractor need to include SME’s in the proposal and budget?
A8. The Contractor will not be responsible for reviewing, evaluating or selecting materials for upload to the Resource Hub. The CDC Foundation will coordinate those activities.

Q9. Considering other Learning Community experiences (like NPIN), are there any key lessons learned that would help respondents develop their proposal?
A9. The CDC Foundation does not have any key lessons learned from other organizations to share.

Q10. Are there existing sites for which the CDC Foundation favors/preferences that may serve as an example to the Resource Hub to be built for this project?
A10. Here are some examples for illustrative purposes. This is not an endorsement of any of these sites.

Health-specific
The Guide to Community Preventive Services (The Community Guide)
Resources | SAMHSA

General or non-health
WWC | Find What Works! (ed.gov)
Home page | United States Preventive Services Taskforce (uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org)
Results First Clearinghouse Database | The Pew Charitable Trusts (pewtrusts.org)
Evidence Based Programs - Social Programs That Work Social Programs That Work
Reliable Research. Real Results. | CrimeSolutions, National Institute of Justice (ojp.gov)

Q11. Is translation of material completed before being uploaded to the website? Or does the website require an automated feature to translate to other languages? What assumptions should contractors make about the numbers of documents to translate for the purposes of budgeting? For each document, how many languages for translation? Please list out all the languages the training materials will need translated from and to?
A11. Materials will be received in different languages. The Contractor is not expected to translate any of the submitted materials into other languages. The website does not require an automated feature to translate to other languages.

Q12. Will hyperlinks remain accessible if we copy hyperlinked text into the online application?
A12. Yes, hyperlinks remain accessible.

Q13. Does the 4,000 character limit per response (as indicated in the instructions to the online application) apply to the item for a description of the strategies and activities? It appears that item will be evaluated for detail as well as feasibility per the evaluation criteria. If there is flexibility, could we have up to 4,000 characters for each of the four project components? If the 4,000 total characters limit cannot be expanded for the description of strategies and activities, may we use extra space in other items to add to the description of our plan? What is the size limit for required proposal document uploads (Annual Report, Annual Budget, Budget Narrative)? Please confirm that the 4000-character limit is without spaces.
A13. The CDC Foundation updated the application form to allow for greater flexibility of submissions. Specific details are available in the revised RFP.

Q14. Will the Resource Hub be an addition to the CDC Foundation website? In other words, will it be a microsite within the CDC Foundation site or a separate website with a unique URL?
A14. No, the Resource Hub should be a separate site with a unique URL.

Q15. Please explain the volume and characteristics of Learning Community partners other than the CBOs, and their relationship to CBOs and respective roles.
A15. CDC has funded about 20 National Organizations who are in turn funding a wide variety of national, state and local organizations, including medical associations, health departments, health clinics and
CBOs. The Learning Community will bring together these diverse organizations to collaborate, leverage resources, and share lessons learned.

Q16. Can you provide a tentative list of messaging platforms, community forums and whether any sort of integration capability is required to the said platforms & forums?
A16. We do not require this website to be integrated with any other community platform or forum. We may include links to other websites, but no integration.

Q17. Will the website/resource hub require a CDC eClearance review?
A17. No.

Q18. Will CDCF provide a list of the Learning Community participants? Does it include contact information?
A18. Yes, a list of the Learning Community partners and their contact information could be provided to the Contractor.

Q19. What “tools” does the CDC Foundation anticipate that Learning Partners will need to access? Does CDC Foundation want contractor to produce these “tools”?
A19. Tools might be planning checklists, guidance documents, campaign materials, videos, etc. The Contractor will not be asked to produce any vaccine-related tools or materials for the Resource Hub. The Contractor may be asked to provide a list of materials available on the platform to help with identifying any gaps in existing materials.

Q20. Do we need to provide any training to the users? Please let us know the mode of training to be required (online, in-person, etc.). Would training and instructions on the website need to be translated into various languages?
A20. Yes, Applicants should plan for providing training materials and training sessions to new users. Trainings would not be in-person, but could be provided by live webinars, videos or written guidance.

Q21. How often will new Learning Community partners be on-boarded? Does CDCF have existing regular communications with the Learning Community partners?
A21. The majority of the Learning Community partners will be on-boarded by end of June 2021. However, there will likely be a small tranche of additional partners joining the Learning Community later at the end of summer. The Learning Community will officially launch at the end of June or early July. The CDC Foundation does not currently have regular communications with Learning Community partners.

Q22. The CDC Foundation requests a copy of our organization’s annual budget. Is a copy of an annual report sufficient to demonstrate the financial capacity of an organization’s ability to complete the work? If the Annual Budget is contained in the Annual Report, should the contractor upload the Annual Report in the section for the Annual Budget also?
A22. This is no longer a requirement of the RFP.

Q23. Can we submit the proposals via email?
A23. No, Applicants are invited to submit their applications through our online portal. If there is a legitimate reason why an organization would be unable to submit in this manner, please let us know the reason.
Q24. Is the contract type a grant or cooperative agreement? What type of agreement will be issued for this work (contract, cooperative agreement, grant), and if a contract, what type of contract (firm fixed price, time and materials, cost plus fixed fee, other)?
A24. The CDC Foundation was awarded a five-year cooperative agreement from CDC for this project. The CDC Foundation plans to issue a firm-fixed price contract that is milestone-based.

Q25. Other than 508 compliance, are there other mandated requirements, such as OMB guidance on analytics, U.S. Web Design System, etc.? Do all materials included on the Resource Hub need to be 508 compliant?
A25. The Resource Hub website should be developed with Section 508 Compliance in mind, however, not all of the materials uploaded to the site are required to be 508 compliant.

Q26. Is there an assumed list of types or formats of materials, tools, and studies, such as PDFs and other formats? Does the Resource Center need to accommodate interactive file formats? What format does the CDC Foundation anticipate the information/resources being? PDFs? Text documents? Or, is it text inputted directly onto the site with a “Download as PDF” feature?
A26. The Resource Hub should accommodate multiple file formats, including PDFs and interactive file formats that can be downloaded.

Q27. In addition to the “search” and “download” feature that is common to all site users, can the CDC Foundation describe/provide any additional distinguishing needs/examples of site features for A) public visitors vs. B) learning community of CBOs (submit material) vs. C) site administrators?
A27. The user experience for funded partners/CBOs and public visitors should be similar. The website and downloadable resources on the site should be available to all organizations and not just Learning Community partners. The only difference is in materials submission. The project will only collect materials from funded Learning Community partners. Given this, we would expect the Contractor to present options in their proposal of how to provide additional accesses/permissions to “members” to allow for uploading content.

Q28. Is a custom Content Management System (CMS) required to be built? Or does the CDC Foundation plan to use an existing CMS?
A28. No, the project requires the use of a CMS that is open-source. We do not want a custom-built CMS. Using a robust, third-party hosting platform such as Drupal, WordPress, or Joomla, is required. CDC Foundation will be the proprietor of the site and all software/licensing required to build the site. The vendor will use the CDC Foundation login/info as needed. The CDC Foundation does not have a current CMS that would be used for this site.

Q29. Will the CDC Foundation host the Resource Hub website and database? And/or does the CDC Foundation already have a preferred vendor(s) for one or both website and database hosting? Who will be responsible for the hosting part? If it is a winning firm, do we need to provide a separate cost for hosting?
A29. The Contractor will be responsible for providing technical expertise and guidance on the selection of both web and database hosting. CDC Foundation will be the proprietor of the site and all software/licensing required to build the site.

Q30. Will the website require an Authorization to Operate (ATO)?
A30. No.
Q31. With the online application, can graphics be included, or will only text responses be accepted?
A31. Please see revised RFP.

Q32. Are there any technology guidelines or constraints that we need to be cognizant of?
A32. Please see revised RFP.

Q33. Does the client have a preferred cloud platform? Can the solution be designed for AWS? Does the solution need to be deployed in client managed AWS or other cloud platforms?
A33. AWS is a possible option, but there are no requirements on which platform is selected. We expect Contractor to set up and manage the platform but under a CDC Foundation account.

Q34. How would the CDC Foundation envision invoicing? Per month, at the time of key deliverables?
A34. The CDC Foundation envisions using an agreed upon milestone-based payment schedule. Upon acceptance of the contract deliverables, the Contractor would submit an invoice to the CDC Foundation.

Q35. Does/how does the CDC Foundation anticipate maintaining the Resource Hub after the first 11 months? Is there any maintenance required after the development? If yes, how long it would be?
A35. The CDC Foundation received a five-year cooperative agreement that includes this activity and we do envision maintaining the site beyond the initial eleven-month design and launch. The successful Contractor could be provided a costed extension based on performance and availability of funding.

Q36. Can you please provide the expected platform features (e.g. web portal, mobile application, user authentication etc.)?
A36. The Resource Hub should be a mobile-friendly website, but not necessarily a mobile app. Responsive design that works on a variety of devices is preferred.

Q37. What technical specifications for the resource hub and user interface must the contractor incorporate for the purposes of this bid?
A37. Please see revised RFP for more information on the technical specifications. The Contractor will be the technical expert providing guidance in the Design and Discovery phase and following best practices for a website of this nature.

Q38. Could you please let us know when do you require the portal to be live? What is the expected start date of the project?
A38. Selection notification will be made by June 8, 2021. The anticipated start date is June 15, 2021, and the Go-Live goal is August 2, 2021.

Q39. Our organization has a federally established Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA). Our rate agreement includes costs related to General and Administrative expenses. Are these costs allowable?
A39. Please see revised RFP.

Q40. Please confirm that markup is to be included in the Other Subtotal section.
A40. Please see revised RFP.

Q41. How many CDC Foundation, Learning Partners, and other stakeholders will require resource hub user accounts? How many total number of users would access the tool? How many number of concurrent users?
Q41. There will be upwards of 500 Learning Community members (organizations) that will be utilizing the Resource Hub. The overall total number of user accounts for members will be determined by how many users per organization register. In addition, this website will eventually be open to the public. Applicants could include strategies for encouraging Learning Community members to contribute to the Resource Hub. Applicants should include how many documents they aim to collect and upload to the platform.

Q42. What volume of documents and storage size does the CDC Foundation anticipate for this contract? What is the expected volume of data to be handled? Is there a minimum/maximum number of materials to be hosted on the Resource Hub? This is important to determine the size of the server to host the Resource Hub and determine the level of staff support needed to manage the Resource Hub.

A42. The number of documents and size of the data will depend on how responsive the Learning Community is with sharing their materials. It will also depend on how many documents the Advisory Board deems appropriate to share on the platform. Applicants should include how many documents they aim to collect and upload to the platform in the 10.5-month period. The server or cloud that hosts the Resource Hub should be scalable so that increases to the capacity can be made. CDC Foundation will be leaning on the selected contractor for recommended technology that can support this.

Q43. Could CDC clarify the number of capacity-building webinars envisioned to support Component 3 (Materials Dissemination)? For these capacity-building webinars that support Component 3, do you envision they would focus on peer-sharing of experience using the resources? If not, could you describe the expected focus of these webinars? Can you also clarify the timing for these capacity-building webinars? That is, would they begin prior to the operational phase of the Hub?

A43. CDC Foundation would expect 3-5 capacity building webinars. The webinars should be focused on training the users on how to maximize their experience on the website. This will include, but is not limited to, uploading, downloading, searching, and sharing content. The design of the webinars could begin as early as Phase I but we will be leaning on the selected contractor to identify the process for implementing the webinars.

Q44. Is there a preferred programming language for the resource hub?

A44. Preference would be given to more commonly used programming languages but there is no requirement.

Q45. Where do you anticipate the resource hub living (within CDC’s environment or externally hosted)?

A45. We anticipate the Resource Hub living on an externally hosted site that will be owned by the CDC Foundation, but identified with the technical support of the selected vendor.

Q46. Is there an anticipated level of effort for this work?

A46. Please see the revised RFP.

Q47. Please confirm that markup (fee/profit margin) is to be included in the Other Subtotal section box on the budget narrative form.

A47. We are no longer requesting that you use the CDC Budget Narrative Form. Please feel free to use another budget format that is in line with the requests in the RFP. You may use the CDC Budget Narrative form if it is convenient and makes sense for your proposal.

Q48. Have the resource materials with culturally appropriate messaging already developed or should applicants plan to develop these resources?
A48. No, the applicants should not plan to develop resources. The Learning Community members, upwards of 500 organizations, will be the main providers of the material. The contractor should plan to develop processes for members to upload content. Contractor should then establish a process to receive, review, and evaluate materials via an Advisory Board of subject matter experts. Contractor will also be required to tag, store, and upload the approved resources for dissemination.

Q49. Can a HUB be a coordinated effort at the school/neighborhood/county level to reach communities of color through existing partnerships and CBOs to distribute information? Or are you thinking of a Hub as an online platform or social media strategy?

A49. The proposed Resource Hub will be a scalable, searchable, online platform, containing educational and informational resources and materials, sourced from hundreds of partner organizations. Its purpose is to provide a one-stop-shop for information and materials related to adult immunization. The website will contain a vast collection of materials to support immunization efforts in diverse communities facing diverse challenges.

Q50. How long is the grant?

A50. The CDC Foundation was awarded a five-year cooperative agreement from CDC for this project. The CDC Foundation will issue a firm-fixed price contract that is milestone-based. This award will cover an implementation period of 10.5 months through April 29, 2022. Based on performance and budget, follow-on funding may be available.

Q51. Could CDC elaborate on the expectations for the vendor regarding dissemination? For example, will the selected vendor be required to design, develop, and deliver webinars, forums and other communications strategies?

A51. Yes, the selected vendor will be required to design, develop and deliver 3-5 webinars. Please see the revised RFP.

Q52. You mention the need for translation support. What languages are you expecting to need support for?

A52. Please see the revised RFP. Contractor will not need to translate any materials.

Q53. Are there any compliance requirements for that data that will be populating the hub?

A53. No, there is no compliance for the data. No personally identifiable or financial information will be stored. The website should be designed with 508 compliance requirements.

Q54. Do you have a technology preference? Open source? Drupal? WordPress? Django/Wagtail?

A54. CDC Foundation is requesting the use of third-party options for content management system, hosting, and/or server use. We are open to cloud-based options and open-source CMS. All accounts including development, test, and production will be owned by CDC Foundation. Contractor should make recommendations based on project need and expertise.

Q55. Is there a planned hosting solution? Do you need us to include a recommended hosting solution in our response?

A55. CDC Foundation is requesting the use of third-party options for content management system, hosting, and/or server use. We are open to cloud-based options. All accounts including dev, test, and production will be owned by CDC Foundation. Contractor should make recommendations based on project need and expertise.
Q56. Can you confirm the vendor is not expected to vet submitted resources for health or science accuracy? For example, if someone submits a resource that isn’t based on approved research or similar, are we responsible for flagging that resource? We assume this will be the responsibility of an individual or individuals.

A56. The Contractor will not be responsible for evaluating or selecting resources for the inclusion on the Resource Hub. An Advisory Board of subject matter experts, managed by the CDC Foundation, will be responsible for selecting the content.

Q57. What is your budget for this project? If you cannot provide precise budget numbers can you please provide budget ranges? We need to understand if we’re developing a solution for a $500k project or a $1M project to provide you with the most relevant solution possible.

A57. Please see revised RFP.

Q58. If selected, does it matter where the resource hub website is hosted? Can we host it through our own website?

A58. No, the selected contractor cannot host it through their own website. All technology required for developing and managing the website (CMS, hosting/server, domain name) will be recommended by the contractor but purchased and owned by the CDC Foundation.

Q59. Can we get some more information about the indicators (Page 4)? For example, is there a minimum number of monthly page views they are looking for in the proposal?

A59. Please see revised RFP.