

# **RFP 169 – New York State Career Technical Education Technical Assistance Center (NYS CTE TAC)**

## **Questions and Answers Summary**

**Q1. Could you please clarify if there are any specified indirect cost rates mentioned in the RFP? If so, what is the maximum allowable rate?**

A: There is no specified approved restricted indirect cost rate for this RFP. However, all proposed costs will be reviewed for reasonableness. Please also keep in mind that this RFP employs a “best value” method of procurement, with 30 percent of the overall points awarded based on cost. (See “Criteria for Evaluating Bids” section of the RFP for additional information). Bidders are encouraged to submit budgets that are cost-effective.

**Q2. Is a Data Security and Privacy Plan required for this proposal submission?**

A: No; however, any Cloud Service Provider (CSP) under consideration must have in place a baseline of data protection security configurations implemented along with documentation that demonstrates annual testing of the same. CSP must also have a compliance process within their environment to ensure proper access control. The compliance process will encompass auditable access and timely access termination procedures. This applies to any cloud services that contain any NYSED data. This includes but is not limited to Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS), Software as a Service (SaaS), and Platform as a Service (PaaS).

**Q3. Will NYSED allow a font size smaller than 12 for tables and graphics?**

A: No.

**Q4: Under "Deliverables and Proposed Timeline" item 1 states that an initial planning/discussion meeting should be held on or before January 16, 2026, but this is before the anticipated start date of February 1, 2026. Likewise, item 2 states a work plan due date of February 13, 2026, which is shortly after the anticipated start date of February 1, 2026. Would you consider altering those proposed due dates listed in the RFP?**

A: Alterations to the dates identified in the Deliverables and Proposed Timeline section of the RFP will be considered only if there is a delay in the notice of contract award. Otherwise, the deadlines of January 16, 2026, and February 13, 2026, will remain in effect.

**Q5: Under "Deliverables and Proposed Timeline," there is mention of “each quarter” in item 4. Could you please specify your preferred months for the quarterly period? For example, since the contract is slated to start February 1, 2026, would the first quarter be February to April 2026? Alternatively, would you prefer the standard quarterly structure, such as February to April, May to July, August to October, and November to January?**

A: Quarterly reports will be submitted according to the following schedule: February through April, May through July, August through October, and November through January.

**Q6. Under "Deliverables and Proposed Timeline" there is mention of the "program year" in item 5. Can you provide the start and end date of the program year?**

A: For the purposes of the Deliverables and Proposed Timeline section of the RFP, program year means February 1 through January 31 of each contract year.

**Q7: Can you provide a definition of "local recipients" as used throughout the RFP?**

A: Local recipient refers to secondary and postsecondary recipients of Perkins funding as well as potential applicants for Perkins funding.

**Q8: Will the courses currently available on the CTE TAC website remain the property of the state and be retained for continued use in the event a new contractor is selected?**

A: Yes.

**Q9: Can NYSED clarify any requirements for the format of the Year One Work Plan?**

A: The Year One Work Plan must propose month-by-month activities and services of the NYS CTE TAC. Specific benchmarks and due dates must be indicated and explained.

**Q10a: Can NYSED clarify whether the requirement to “develop an outline and prototype of a website” refers to creating an entirely new website or enhancing the existing NYS CTE TAC website? Specifically, should offerors assume that the current website and its contents will not be available to a new contractor, requiring full redevelopment and hosting?**

A: The contents of the current NYS CTE TAC website will be available to the selected applicant; however, development and hosting of the website will be the selected bidder’s responsibility.

**Q 10b: If a new website is required:**

**Will the new contractor be responsible for providing hosting and domain management, or will NYSED manage these services?**

A: The selected applicant will be responsible for providing hosting and domain management for the NYS CTE TAC website.

**Q10c: Will NYSED provide access to any existing content, databases, or media currently housed on the CTE TAC website for potential migration?**

A: Yes.

**Q 10d: Are there specific technical platforms, accessibility standards, or design frameworks (e.g., WordPress, Drupal, NYSED templates, etc.) that must be used?**

A: No. There are no specific technical platforms or design frameworks that must be used. However, all documents, web-based information and applications, or programming delivered pursuant to this contract or procurement, must comply with New York State Education Department Web Accessibility Policy as the policy may be amended, modified or superseded. This policy requires that state agency web-based information, including documents and applications, be accessible to persons with disabilities. Documents, web-based information, and applications must conform to NYSED-WEBACC-001 as determined by quality assurance testing. Such quality assurance testing will be conducted by a NYSED employee or contractor, and the results of

such testing must be satisfactory to NYSED before web-based information and applications will be considered an acceptable deliverable under the contract or procurement.

**Q 10e: Should offerors include website maintenance, content updates, and security monitoring in the proposed budget, or will these be handled separately under NYSED oversight?**

A: Yes, website maintenance, content updates, and security monitoring should be included in the proposed budget.

**Q 11: As outlined on page 8 of the RFP, under item # 6, the requirement states: "At minimum this includes developing and maintaining a robust and up-to-date website that includes resources, tools, and evidence-based research to support secondary and postsecondary CTE programs." Can NYSED clarify whether the intended audience for the new or enhanced CTE TAC website referenced here is limited to secondary and postsecondary CTE educators and administrators, or whether it should also include resources and outreach for additional stakeholders such as business and industry partners, students, and families?**

A: The primary audience for the NYS CTE TAC website is secondary and post-secondary CTE administrators, educators, counselors, paraprofessionals, and other CTE professionals providing CTE opportunities to students in New York State. Additional resources may be included for other stakeholders, including business and industry partners, community organizations, and students/families.

**Q12: What time is the proposal due?**

A: All proposals must be submitted electronically by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on November 21, 2025. While we encourage vendors to submit by 3:00 PM, proposals will be accepted any time before midnight on the due date. Please note: Submissions time-stamped on November 22 will not be considered.

**Q13: Is there a required minimum or maximum page length for the Budget Narrative?**

A: There is no required minimum or maximum page length for the Budget Narrative.

**Q14: Does a physical copy of the proposal need to be submitted by mail as well as electronically?**

A: Hardcopies are not required.

**Q15: Would a new contractor be required to use the current CTE TAC website, and if so, how would the transfer be facilitated?**

A: The transfer of the current NYS CTE TAC website materials, resources, etc. will be facilitated by NYSED. Development, design, hosting, and maintenance of the website would be the responsibility of the selected applicant with required approval from NYSED.

**Q16: Would a new contractor be given access to any existing social media accounts? How would that be passed off?**

A: This will be determined at the time of award.

**Q17: The Staffing Guidelines and template for Cost Proposal indicate a preference for developing cost based on full-time employees over a 12-month period, 37.5 hours per week. Is NYSED open to a deliverables-based cost structure with a fixed fee per deliverable instead?**

A: No.

**Q18: The Description of Services outlines the activities expected of the contracted partner, but it does not specify a minimum or range of services to be delivered. Could NYSED provide a minimum expected level or historical range of these services on an annual basis? For example, how many trainings should the partner deliver each year.**

A: There is no minimum or maximum number of trainings required through this RFP. Applicants are encouraged to review the Description of Services and develop a proposal that reflects an understanding of the current state of New York State CTE and identifies how they will deliver these services on an annual basis.

**Q19: The RFP cost structure is developed based on specific staffing guidelines and dedicated project commitment. Will NYSED accept proposals that include an acknowledgement that staff may need to be hired to fulfill the dedicated positions requested in the proposal?**

A: No. The proposal must include the following staff: one (1) full-time Director, a minimum of two (2) full-time Center Staff/Program Specialists, and a minimum of five (5) FTE regionally based field staff.

**Q20: Are there limitations on how the budget is allocated in Year 1?**

A: Expenditures should be aligned with the Year 1 deliverables to be achieved. All costs should be reasonable and necessary to the program. RFP 169 is a best-value procurement, with a maximum of 70 points being awarded for a bidder's Technical Proposal and up to 30 points based on the five-year total of the Cost Proposal.

## **MWBE Matters**

**Q21: Please confirm that an MBE or WBE prime contractor may count its own participation toward fulfillment of the corresponding portion of the M/WBE participation goal (for example, an MBE prime performing at least 17% of the contract value would satisfy the 17% MBE goal).**

A: Yes, if your firm is certified as a Minority- or Women-Owned Business Enterprise (M/WBE) by Empire State Development, you may meet the M/WBE utilization obligation through self-performance. Be sure to list your company on the MWBE Purchases form, indicating that your firm will be performing the work.

**Q22: Does an MBE prime bidder need to meet the 13% WBE goal or show good faith effort?**

Yes, an MBE prime bidder should still meet the 13% goal for WBE utilization. If the bidder is unable to meet the 13% WBE despite documented good faith efforts, attaining the overall 30% MWBE participation is still considered a meaningful step toward compliance. If the bidder is unable to achieve the goal, they should request a waiver for any utilization below 13% WBE.

**Q23: Does an EEO 100: Staffing Plan need to be submitted by the bidding agency AND any/all sub-contractors or only the bidding agency?**

A: All Bidders and each subcontractor identified in the bid or proposal must complete an Equal Employment Opportunity Staffing Plan (EEO 100) and submit it as part of the bid or proposal package. If you can clearly tell which workers will be working on the state contract, then just fill out the form with those specific workers. But if you can't separate the workers for the state contract from your overall team, then fill out the form using your entire workforce.

**Q24: Given the MWBE participation goal is 30%, 17% for MBEs and 13% for WBEs. Should we be considering the participation goal holistically or individually between MBEs and WBEs? Meaning, is it more important that we meet the 30% with any combination of MBEs and WBEs or that we meet the 17% MBE and 13% WBE exactly?**

A: The New York State MWBE participation goals are set at 17% for MBEs and 13% for WBEs, totaling 30%. It is strongly preferred that bidders meet each individual goal as specified. However, in circumstances in which achieving the 17%/13% split proves challenging despite documented good faith efforts, attaining the overall 30% MWBE participation is still considered a meaningful step toward compliance. If you are unable to achieve the goals, you should request a waiver for any utilization below 17% MBE and/or 13% WBE. For example, if you have 10 percent utilization for MBE and 20 percent utilization for WBE, you must request a 7 percent partial waiver for MBE and complete documentation demonstrating good-faith efforts.

**Q25: If we meet 17% (or more) for MBEs, but not the 13% for WBEs, do we need to provide documentation of good faith efforts for finding MBEs? Or do we only need to provide documentation to support our good faith efforts to solicit/find WBEs?**

A: You would not need to demonstrate good faith efforts for the MBEs in your example because you are meeting the utilization goal. In circumstances in which achieving the 17%/13% split proves challenging despite documented good faith efforts, attaining the overall 30% MWBE participation is still considered a meaningful step toward compliance. If you are unable to achieve the goals you should request a waiver for any utilization below 17% MBE and/or 13% WBE. For example, if you have 10 percent utilization for MBE and 20 percent utilization for WBE, you must request a 7 percent partial waiver for MBE and complete documentation demonstrating good-faith efforts.