

**NYS Department of State  
Office for New Americans  
Golden Door  
RFA #22-ONA-25**

*The responses to questions included herein are official responses by the Department of State (DOS) to questions submitted by potential proposers and are hereby incorporated into the Request for Applications RFA # 22-ONA-25 issued on December 8, 2022. In the event of any conflict between the Request for Proposals and these responses, the requirements or information contained in these responses will prevail.*

**1. Section II. Funding and Project Period is hereby amended to read:**

If an agency wishes to apply for more than one region, a separate application must be submitted for each region. Multiple applications should not be submitted for the same region.

**2. Section III. Applicant Eligibility is hereby amended to read:**

If subcontracting is anticipated, an applicant must complete and execute a letter of intent with each subcontractor that specifies all services each partner agrees to provide. Letters of Intent/MOUs are required to be submitted with the application to substantially demonstrate capacity. Failure to provide Letters of Intent/MOUs may disqualify the applicant. If an applicant is not planning to subcontract, a letter of intent from a subcontractor is not required.

**3. Section V. General Program Services is hereby amended to read:**

Three group therapy sessions are required to be held concurrently. Two of the three sessions must be in-person and held in two distinct zip codes within the region for which the application is being submitted. The third session may either be in person and held in a third zip code within the region or virtual. Virtual services must adhere to NY IT policies as noted in Section VI.

The target population for these funds are immigrants, regardless of status, residing in New York and in need of mental health services and support networks. Grantees will be expected to verify New York State residency before any services are delivered under this grant. Services provided with these funds must be free of cost to clients.

**4. Section VI.2. Required Activities – *Develop Curricula* is hereby amended to read:**

A brief survey should be developed. The survey should measure the participants knowledge and interest about session topics at the beginning and should be used at the end of each session determine the effectiveness of disseminating information.

**5. Section VI.3. Required Activities – *Host regular group sessions for social service support and mental health therapy* is hereby amended to read:**

The grantee will be responsible for coordinating the availability of group therapy sessions in either three different geographic locations (meaning different zip codes) within the region or two different geographic locations (meaning different zip codes) within the region with the third session being held virtually. Applications should include a justification for the specific locations proposed and the use of a virtual session, if proposed, to demonstrate that the needs of the region are being met. The grantee may host group therapy sessions at their own locations, as long as these sites are geographically distributed throughout the region....

...Licensed Mental Health Professional(s) will provide twelve group sessions a year per host location, for a total of 36 sessions. Each group or host location should be run concurrently.

...Group sessions should be culturally and linguistically responsive, and trauma informed. Surveys should be given at the beginning of each session to measure the participants knowledge and interest of session topics, and at the end of each session to evaluate the effectiveness of the session.

**6. Section IX.E.6. Completing the Application – *Program Proposal* is hereby amended to read:**

Describe geographic location(s) within the proposed region where in-person sessions will be held as well as a justification for the specific locations proposed and the use of a virtual session, if proposed, to demonstrate that the needs of the region are being met....

**7. Section X.C..6. Evaluating the Application – *Program Proposal* is hereby amended to read:**

Applicant described geographic location(s) within the proposed region where in-person sessions will be held as well as a justification for the specific locations proposed and the use of a virtual session, if proposed to demonstrate that the needs of the region are going met....

**8. Attachment C.I. Sample Workplan – *Target Population* is hereby amended to read:**

The target population for these funds are immigrants, regardless of status, residing in New York and in need of mental health services and support networks. Grantees will be expected to verify New York residency before any services are delivered under this grant. Services provided with these funds must be free of cost to clients.

## Questions and Answers

**Q1.**

- **Is there a general estimated timeline for when applicants will hear about Golden Door decisions? Knowing this approximate timeline will help when it comes to securing the staff member who we want to take over grant activities. Thank you**
- **When is the anticipated date for notification of awards?**
- **When is the program start date / first date of funding cycle?**

A1. Applicants are expected to be informed about awards in March 2023. The anticipated Program start date is 5/1/2023.

**Q2. Is this program only for immigrants ? What if you are not an immigrant and already work as a care manager can you apply for the program?**

A2. This program is geared towards new Americans and groups should be tailored to new Americans experience. However, immigration status will not be checked as a pre-requisite for attending groups.

To apply for a grant under this RFA, an organization must meet all the requirements outlined in Section III Applicant Eligibility.

**Q3. I am writing on behalf of Upstate Cerebral Palsy Inc. to submit a question in regards to NYS Grant Opportunity: Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Trauma-informed MH Supports for New Americans. Is there not an opportunity for Mohawk Valley Counties (Oneida, Herkimer, Etc...) to apply to this RFA? We run Behavioral Health services in the MV region and have extensive experience in utilizing trauma-informed care when providing service with the New American and Refugee population in Utica and other communities in the region and we are interested in applying for this opportunity.**

A3. Applicants are required to demonstrate their ability to serve one of the regions listed in Section 2 of the RFA for which they are applying, however grantees may propose in their application to serve clients both within the region for which they are applying and regions not covered by the RFA.

**Q4. I see that there are no maximum page limits. Are there any formatting requirements? Preferred font, font size, margins, single or double spaced, etc.?**

A4. No, there are no formatting requirements.

**Q5. Is a letter of intent required if not subcontracting? If so, when is the letter of intent due?**

A5. If an applicant is not planning to subcontract, a letter of intent from a subcontractor is not required. If subcontracting, all letters of intent are due with the application.

**Q6. Are there any partnership agreements required?**

A6. A formal partnership agreement is not required; however, the grantee should plan to partner with community-based organizations for the purposes of outreach to promote the program.

**Q7. Is there an agency match required / suggested for the budget?**

A7. Matching funds are not required for this grant and no preference will be given to organizations that provide matching funds under this grant.

**Q8. The majority of new Americans in our communities speak primarily Spanish. If someone comes to us needing services in a language other than English or Spanish, what level of service are we required to provide? Would we be able to refer them to appropriate services at a different agency?**

A8. Per Section VI of the RFA, under required activities, grantees will be required to provide and/or procure language/interpretation services and accessibility services for non-English proficient immigrant clients and immigrant clients with communications-related disabilities.

No client should be turned away from any services under this grant due to language abilities and/or communication-related disabilities.

**Q9. Can one of the 3 required geographic locations be virtual?**

A9. Yes, one group session may be virtual however the other two sessions must be in person within the Region for which the application is submitted.

**Q10. Are there specific requirements for the frequency and duration of the groups and sessions? (For example, can we facilitate 1 session weekly for 12 weeks for group 1, and then go on to facilitate 1 session weekly for 12 weeks for group 2, and then the same for group 3?)**

A10. Each group, or host location, should be run concurrently and is expected to meet all the requirements in terms of frequency and duration as outlined in Section VI.3 of the RFA. At each site, sessions should be scheduled equally throughout the contract year to the best extent possible. Grantees can submit reasonable justification for difficulty convening during certain times of the year to allow flexibility with scheduling sessions.

**Q11. If awarded the grant, when would we be expected to begin the groups?**

A11. The contract is expected to begin on May 1, 2023, at which time all requirements including the groups, would be expected to begin.

**Q12. What are the requirements for evaluation of these groups? Are we required to do a pre- and/or post-survey at the end of every session? Or can they be done at different times (ie after 3 sessions, 6 sessions, 12 sessions). Are there specific outcomes that we are expected to measure?**

A12. A brief survey should be conducted at the beginning and at the end of each session. The surveys should measure the participants knowledge and interest about session topics at the beginning and at the end to determine the sessions effectiveness at disseminating information.

**Q13. We currently have a team of full-time bilingual/bicultural providers who work with Latinx individuals, including new Americans. For this grant application, do we need to identify a specific individual who will carry out the programming for the entirety of the grant, or can we identify the members of our current team of providers already on staff who will each devote a portion of their time (adding up to at least 100% FTE) to carry out the programming?**

A13. An FTE model is not allowed for the required Licensed Mental Health Professional who will be dedicating 100% of their time to grant activities. As per Section VI, each applicant is required to have at least one qualified Licensed Mental Health Professional on staff dedicating 100% of their time to grant activities throughout the entirety of the grant.

However, outside of that individual, additional Licensed Mental Health Professionals may be recruited or hired under this grant. Additional positions to support grant activities may utilize an FTE staffing model.

**Q14. Relatedly, does the person providing the group services have to be the same individual who is devoting 100% of their time to grant activities? For example, can one person on staff be responsible for outreach, grant management, data collection and analysis, and overall program development, and others be responsible for the provision of clinical services (e.g. curriculum development, case management, and leading/co-leading the groups)?**

A14. The individual devoting 100% of their time to grant activities must be leading groups, participating in curriculum development and performing case management. Other staff may perform any required activities outside of these functions.

**Q15. I do not see the Application in Grants Gateway for the Office for New Americans Golden Door Community Support Program RFA. Are applications no longer being accepted? Thank you.**

A15. Applications may be submitted until January 24, 2023. Applications for this grant are not being submitted via Grant Gateway. Please see Section IV for instructions on how to submit.

**Q16. If applying for two counties in separate groups in Region 4 (Finger lakes and WNY), do we need to submit multiple applications?**

A16. If an agency wishes to apply for more than one region, a separate application must be submitted for each region. In the case of Region 4, if an applicant wishes to apply for more than one of the designated areas in Region 4 as outlined in Section II of the RFA, an application should be submitted for each designated area within Region 4. Multiple applications should not be submitted for the same Region.

**Q17. Are the groups expected to be closed or open? Can people come in and out of the group or do they need to attend consistently?**

A17. Groups should be open; however, group members should be encouraged to attend consistently.

**Q18. Do we need to track that referrals were picked up by the external agency? Or just that we made the referral?**

A18. Grantees will be expected to track what referrals were made, the date, and the referral source. A grantee does not need to track if the referral was picked up by the external agency.

**Q19. We utilize several evidence-based models for therapeutic care currently, specifically for refugee and immigrant communities. Are we required to build out an entirely new curriculum for clients? Or can we adapt or expand upon the existing models we currently use?**

A19. ONA does not dictate a specific model; existing models may be used provided that they meet the needs of the new American community within the region that they are serving.

**Q20. The RFA indicates that the case management services are supposed to be provided by the licensed clinician. We have case workers and cultural brokers that are trained specifically to provide these services in collaboration with the counseling team.**

- **Does it have to be specifically the licensed counselor providing the case management services, or just engaged in the overall delivery of the services?**
- **The RFP specifies that the Licensed Mental Health Provider provide case management support. Can only the Licensed Mental Health Provider perform this service or can other staff that is partially working on this project perform this service?**

A20. Per Section VI. of the RFA, the Licensed Mental Health Professional will provide case management support and will facilitate referrals.

**Q.21. Does the ONA expect that these locations will be representative of the entire geographic area (i.e. Finger Lakes region) or can a provide only identify locations within a specific county where the majority of the target population resides?**

A21. Applications should include a justification for the specific locations proposed and the use of a virtual session if proposed to demonstrate that the needs of the region are being met.

**Q22. Does the proposing organization need to deliver the sessions in the same 3 locations each month?**

A22. Per Section VI of the RFA, grantees are encouraged to retain the same participants throughout the contract year. It is preferred that the sessions are in the same locations each month in order to more easily allow for participant continuity from session to session.

**Q23. Can outreach services include delivering training to other mental health or immigrant providers on topics related to immigrant mental health needs?**

A23. For the purposes of this grant, outreach should be for promotion of the groups only.

**Q24. The RFP specifies a minimum of 8 participants for each session. If the provider enrolled 10 persons in a session but only 7 attended, does that session with fewer than 8 attendees count as a delivered session for reporting purposes?**

A24. ONA will work with grantees to assess the good faith efforts made to reach the minimum number of participants and how to report those sessions that do not meet the minimum number.

**Q25. Are client support and referral services only for those clients that participate in group therapy sessions?**

A25. Yes, client support and referral services should be limited to clients that participate in group therapy sessions.

**Q26. Are administrative / overhead expenses limited to 10% of the total award or 10% of the total of direct costs?**

A26. As stated in Section VII of the RFA, ONA will allow an administrative cost rate of up to 10% of direct costs.

**Q27. Are client travel expenses (such as bus passes, or use of agency van allowable?**

A.27. Client travel expenses incurred by the grantee to transport clients to a group session, such as use of an agency van, may be allowable. Incentives to participate in sessions such as bus cards or other individual travel stipends or passes are not allowed under this grant.

**Q28. Are participant incentives allowable?**

A28. No. Participant incentives are not allowable.