

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser**



Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education

**2020 UPSFF Study Grant Pre-Proposal Meeting Questions & Answers**

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**Submitted Questions**

**Q1: To what extent will the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME) allow and/or facilitate access to Working Group members, or other stakeholders like LEA leaders, for interviews?**

A1: The Working Group's report should be sufficient to understand their recommendations. Further, DME has expertise on the UPSFF and will be available as a resource throughout the grant period. However, if the applicant would like to talk to LEA stakeholders about the at-risk and ELL components, and/or foundation level cost drivers, the applicant should detail how much of the project time and cost will be dedicated to those interviews in their proposal. It should be a small part of the project.

**Q2: Is the expectation that the products' recommendations provide a menu of options for DME to make funding changes, or that the products present a single cohesive solution?**

A2: Each report phase should provide analysis, options for consideration, the proposed pros/cons for each option, including associated cost analyses, and an executive summary. DME anticipates a menu of options is the more appropriate product outcome of the study from an implementation perspective.

**Q3: Can a subcontractor serve as advisor on two separate proposals?**

A3: Yes.

**Q4: Regarding the "At-Risk Concentration" scope item, does DME intend to look at school-level or Local Education Agency (LEA)-level concentration? Much of the study refers to LEA-level analyses and allocations, while this item specifically references "school-level at-risk share characteristic."**

A4: All UPSFF funding, including at-risk funding, is distributed to the LEA and then distributed by the LEA to its school(s). While this is how local UPSFF funding is dispersed, LEA budgets are developed at the school/campus level and then aggregated to the LEA level. Therefore, this study section on At-Risk Concentration should focus initially at the school-level, consistent with the way that UPSFF enrollment projections and budgets are developed.



**Q5: Does DME intend to ensure how funds are used as prescribed through UPSFF, or can DCPS and/or other LEAs allocate funds as they see fit once they receive them from the District (State)?**

A5: LEAs distribute funding received from the District via the UPSFF to their school(s) through funding mechanisms determined by each LEA. Some funding, like at-risk funding, comes with specific restrictions and/or requirements (e.g. D.C. Official Code § 38–2907.01(a)(3)). The grantee should assume that the same laws are in effect.

**Q6: As part of this study, does DME intend to, or have the interest in, understanding the fiscal impact of changes to the UPSFF formula on the LEA and/or the school level (i.e. LEAs/schools that may gain funding, and those that may have funding reduced, by changes to the formula)?**

A6: Yes, DME intends to understand these impacts on the LEA and school levels, to the extent that analysis is possible. However, DME does not intend to publish individual, non-anonymized LEA and/or school impacts; instead, the grantee should write up a summary of the impact for the report.

**Q7: We would like to confirm that SPED funding is not included in this report, as it was noted as the second highest area of focus in the Working Group report.**

A7: Special Education funding is not within the scope of the 2020 UPSFF Study. However, to the extent that it may interact with other questions of the study within the scope, DME requests the grant partner to note those interactions as applicable in the report phases.

**Q8: Should this study also address, even peripherally, how changes to the four contemplated scope items could impact other components of the UPSFF not included in this analysis?**

A8: Yes, although peripherally is appropriate.

**Q9: From RFA p. 10, “How can the UPSFF be managed across these various school models?” Please clarify “be managed” - is this by schools or the LEAs, DME, OSSE, etc.?**

A9: Managed in this regard refers to how the Mayor’s budget could include revisions to future UPSFF foundation or weight structures.

**Q10: What is a “team member” as opposed to “key personnel”? Do subject matter experts and/or advisors to [our organization] count as team members or key personnel?**

A10: The RFA does not differentiate between team members and key personnel. By team members, DME means the team the applicant proposes to work on the project (either as project staff or advisors). If the proposed team includes subject matter experts and/or advisors, the applicant should include those individuals in the proposal.



**Q11: Can you confirm (or clarify) that the “community support letters” are recommendation letters from current and/or past clients? Additionally, could you confirm that the request for community support letters is the same on page 1 (evidence of community support) and page 15 (Appendix 6)?**

A11: Yes, community support letters are recommendation letters from current and/or past clients. The requests on page 1 and page 15 refer to the same documentation.

## **Meeting Questions**

**Q12: What cost drivers are you most interested in focusing on for the foundation level part of the study (within the scope of Report Phase Two)?**

A12: DME is most interested in understanding personnel costs, including what those costs are, at what pace they are increasing, how they differ across LEAs, schools, and various school models (i.e. dual-language schools, schools with CTE programs, and dual-enrollment schools), and how the UPSFF might be managed to address those costs. We intend for this part of the report to help us with longer-term budgeting.

**Q13: Would you consider evaluating LEAs’ use of UPSFF funds? Are you anticipating looking at how those funds will be used?**

A13: Evaluating LEAs’ use of funds (i.e. whether LEAs are spending funds specific to the UPSFF targeted group (outside of requirements by law) or are making best use of the funds) is not within the scope of the 2020 UPSFF Study. The District distributes UPSFF funding to LEAs, and each LEA determines how that funding is allocated to its school(s). However, through the course of the study’s analysis, applicants should assume that current laws are in effect, including the at-risk funding restrictions articulated in D.C. Official Code § 38–29.

**Q14: What do you anticipate will happen in terms of work between February 7, 2020, when the second deliverable (Report Phase Two) is due, and the end of April, when bi-weekly check-ins with DME conclude?**

A14: DME created the UPSFF Study timeline with the anticipated FY21 budget formulation process in mind, which will formally kick off shortly after Fiscal Year 2020 begins (October 1, 2019). Both deliverables are timed to potentially inform the Mayor’s budget submission to the DC Council, which typically occurs in March. While the final drafts of the report phases must be delivered by the dates detailed in the RFA (January 10, 2020 for Report Phase One and February 7, 2020 for Report Phase Two), DME will continue to monitor the grant recipient through April 2020. This monitoring period may include further collaborative edits to the drafts to finalize the deliverables for public release, and could potentially require some support to answer final remaining questions.

**Q15: What is the nature of the report deliverables? Are you expecting the same density as the 2013 Adequacy Study, or is there more flexibility?**

A15: The 2013 Adequacy Study is the most recent, thorough, and comprehensively researched examination of the UPSFF. The Adequacy Study should serve as the foundation for a more targeted study of the topic areas



addressed in the RFA scope (Section 3); however, the applicant should not expect to replicate the Adequacy Study. DME wants to make sure that the appropriate time is spent on the analysis and recommendations. Further, DME is flexible in the format of the deliverables, including accepting presentation decks. The applicant should clearly describe in which format they would like to submit their final deliverables.

**Q16: How much impact analysis on individual schools and LEAs should be delivered? Do you want a description of “winners and losers”?**

Q16: Impact analysis is expected in the analysis portion of the report phases. We suspect that the analysis should be at both the school and LEA levels, because that is how budgets are developed. However, we do not expect the final reports to specifically name the schools and LEAs that gain or lose under this scenario. Instead, DME expects a summary write up of these findings for the report.

**Q17: Are you interested in recommendations/solutions that can be phased in, and may have longer-term implications?**

A17: Yes, DME is interested in thinking beyond a one-year budget timeframe, including implementation mechanisms that phase in the grantee’s identified options and recommendations, if applicable.

**Q18: What data can applicants get access to in order to turn around this fast timeline? Will DME assist in data agreements? At a minimum, can the awardee receive school level budgets and costs/expenditures, as well as school level at-risk indicators (i.e. the number of students who are in foster care, who are homeless, who live in low-income families eligible for TANF, who qualify for SNAP, and/or are high school students one or more years over the expected age for their grade)?**

A18: In their proposal, applicants should clearly list what data (metrics and level of analysis) they will need to complete the project. DME will work to the extent possible to support the applicant with the background information needed. Applicants should also be prepared to finalize data sharing use and confidentiality agreements with the District quickly after the award of the contract. In the proposal, applicants should include information about their processes and timeframe required to review and sign data-sharing and data-use agreements.

**Post-Meeting Questions**

**Q19: For proposals that involve more than one organization, should all parties submit background documents as specified in Tab Nine – Required Appendices? Should parties only submit these documents if they would receive a certain threshold of funding?**

A19: Yes, for those proposals that involve more than one organization, all parties should submit the background documents as specified in Tab Nine.

**Q20: Is there an Application Cover Sheet template we should use (Section 4.1)?**



A20: No, applicants may use an application cover sheet layout of their choosing.

**Q21: Do these criteria (Section 4.2.3) need to be met by only the prime, or by the prime and sub awardees collectively?**

A21: The required qualifications criteria detailed in RFA Section 4.2.3 can be met by the primary and sub grant awardees collectively. In other words, between the primary and sub grantee(s), both criteria must be met; however, both criteria do not necessarily need to be met by a single grantee in that scenario. Those criteria are reprinted here:

The Applicant must meet the following criteria in order to be considered for this grant:

- Must have experience completing funding formula studies for a minimum of two (2) educational agencies (state-level, local-level, and/or LEA-level) within the past ten (10) years or less from the date of advertisement.
- Must have experience completing a funding formula study for a state-level, local-level, and/or LEA level agency serving at least 50,000 students.

**Q22: Can you clarify if we need to provide the professional bios for each individual associated with the proposed project, or if we should treat each organization in the proposal as an individual? E.g., if there are multiple organizations in the proposal, would we provide professional references for each individual in each organization, or the professional references for the organization as a whole (Section 4.2.6)?**

A22: Please provide the professional bios for each individual associated with the proposed project, not bios for the organizations as individuals.

**Q23: Can you clarify what is meant by “legal status of each key team member” (Section 4.2.6)?**

A23: In this instance, the RFA is requesting the legal status of each *organization* put forth in the applicant’s proposal, including the state under whose laws the organization/corporation is organized and operating. This includes the other documentation requested by the RFA for applicant organizations, as applicable (e.g. a valid 501(c)(3) designation letter from the Internal Revenue Service, a DC Clean Hands Certificate from the DC Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR), a Certificate of Good Standing for the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA), etc.).

**Q24: Is there a specific affidavit template you would like us to use (Section 4.2.9)?**

A24: DME requires documentation of no conflict of interest, per Section 7.2 of the RFA; there is no specific affidavit template.



**Q25: We are still waiting to receive our Certificate of Good Standing from the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs and a DC Clean Hands Certificate from the DC Office of Tax and Revenue. How might we address pending receipt of this required documentation?**

A: Please submit as much requested documentation as you have available. For outstanding documentation, please provide evidence of your progress toward securing that documentation, including an anticipated receipt date. Documentation should be submitted as soon as it is received. If the documentation is not received by 5:00 pm on Monday, 9/23, the application will not progress any further for consideration.

