**RFP VR-2022-4 Greater New England Blindness and Employment Conference**

**Responses to Questions : 6/1/22**

1. **How many participants are anticipated for this Conference?**

**Answer:** While we cannot say with absolute specificity how many participants are anticipated to join in this conference, we are aiming for 250 conference participants, along with our Services for the Blind and Vision Impaired (SBVI) staff and leadership of Vocational Rehabilitation—New Hampshire. We do not, however, have an upper limit, except that imposed by the capacity limit of the venue that the successful bidder will help SBVI to identify.

1. **How many sessions and presenters are anticipated?**

**Answer:** SBVI will be entirely in charge of developing the substance of the program for this conference. Our Conference Planning Committee, once the vendor for this RFP is identified, will commence its work on planning the conference structure. We know that this will be a two-day conference, likely representing a full first day of activity, and an evening banquet, and likely a three quarters day of programming, to facilitate participants returning to their homes in New Hampshire. We anticipate several plenary keynote speakers, several follow-along panel discussions to amplify the messages conveyed by the keynote presenters, and break-out sessions following the panel presentations. I suspect that this pattern will be repeated four to five times during the two-day conference and contingent on the subject matter being discussed, availability of keynote and panel members, time for stretch and other appropriate pauses, and the like. In general, a panel will have three presenters and each break-out session will be co-facilitated by two substantive experts.

1. **Will the contractor be responsible for the layout of the agenda or any other graphic design?**

**Answer:** While SBVI’s Conference Planning Committee will be responsible for the substance of the program, we will expect the successful bidder to arrange the layout of the print agenda. Vocational Rehabilitation-New Hampshire has recently contracted with a marketing firm that has supported our agency in the adoption of logos and the like. We would expect that these logos would be used in the formatting and graphic design of the print agenda. SBVI will be responsible for having the agenda formatted, transcribed, and embossed into Braille, unless the successful bidder has this experience and capacity.

1. **Should the contractor include pricing for materials such as agendas, name tags, signage, tote bags, or other giveaways in the quote?**

**Answer:** Yes for most items listed. The exception being according to the Uniform Grant Guidance in CFR 200.421:

*The term advertising costs means the costs of advertising media and corollary administrative costs. Advertising media include magazines, newspapers, radio and television, direct mail, exhibits, electronic or computer transmittals, and the like.*

*(b) The only allowable advertising costs are those which are solely for:*

*(1) The recruitment of personnel required by the non-Federal entity for performance of a Federal award (See also* [*§ 200.463*](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/section-200.463)*);*

*(2) The procurement of goods and services for the performance of a Federal award;*

*(3) The disposal of scrap or surplus materials acquired in the performance of a Federal award except when non-Federal entities are reimbursed for disposal costs at a predetermined amount; or*

*(4) Program outreach and other specific purposes necessary to meet the requirements of the Federal award.*

*(c) The term “public relations” includes community relations and means those activities dedicated to maintaining the image of the non-Federal entity or maintaining or promoting understanding and favorable relations with the community or public at large or any segment of the public.*

*(d) The only allowable public relations costs are:*

*(1) Costs specifically required by the Federal award;*

*(2) Costs of communicating with the public and press pertaining to specific activities or accomplishments which result from performance of the Federal award (these costs are considered necessary as part of the outreach effort for the Federal award); or*

*(3) Costs of conducting general liaison with news media and government public relations officers, to the extent that such activities are limited to communication and liaison necessary to keep the public informed on matters of public concern, such as notices of funding opportunities, financial matters, etc.*

*(e) Unallowable advertising and public relations costs include the following:*

*(1) All advertising and public relations costs other than as specified in* [*paragraphs (b)*](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/section-200.421#p-200.421(b)) *and* [*(d)*](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/section-200.421#p-200.421(d)) *of this section;*

*(2) Costs of meetings, conventions, convocations, or other events related to other activities of the entity (see also* [*§ 200.432*](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/section-200.432)*), including:*

*(i) Costs of displays, demonstrations, and exhibits;*

*(ii) Costs of meeting rooms, hospitality suites, and other special facilities used in conjunction with shows and other special events; and*

*(iii) Salaries and wages of employees engaged in setting up and displaying exhibits, making demonstrations, and providing briefings;*

*(3) Costs of promotional items and memorabilia, including models, gifts, and souvenirs;*

*(4) Costs of advertising and public relations designed solely to promote the non-Federal entity.*

*[*[*78 FR 76808*](https://www.federalregister.gov/citation/78-FR-76808)*, Dec. 26, 2013, as amended at* [*85 FR 49564*](https://www.federalregister.gov/citation/85-FR-49564)*, Aug. 13, 2020]*

1. **Is there an existing Website that the contractor would be required to use?**

**Answer:** No, there is no existing Website that the contractor would be expected to use to identify and purchase necessary materials and supplies for the conference. The State is undertaking to engage with a private contractor so as to give the contractor as much flexibility as possible, save adherence to any governing Federal laws or regulations. As far as we understand, there are no Federal laws or regulations that require a contractor to purchase critical materials or supplies for such a conference from any particular website.

1. **Could you clarify “confirm the availability of name tags and make sure that a system supporting the development, distribution, and delivery of the name tags is created” – is SBVI expecting nametags to be mailed to participants?**

**Answer:** SBVI is not necessarily expecting name tags to be mailed to registered conference participants, unless the successful bidder makes an argument that is persuasive on this point. In general, we are reluctant to have name tags mailed, where some would inevitably be lost in transit. We simply meant, by our language, that name tags should probably be secured and printed for registered participants, and ready for distribution to them, when they arrive for on-site check-in at the conference venue. Each bidder, though, has the discretion to propose any system for the development, distribution, and delivery of name tags that it believes would be most efficient for the operation of the conference.

1. **Is SBVI open to locations in New Hampshire other than Concord?**

**Answer:** In general, SBVI has determined that this city will be the most accessible and central for most participants in New Hampshire and any neighboring States. If the successful bidder, however, can make a persuasive case that another location in New Hampshire would be more accessible and central than Concord, given the priority statewide and then region-wide audience that we are endeavoring to attract, we would be open to receiving the idea. Where Vocational Rehabilitation-New Hampshire and SBVI will be expecting the successful bidder to identify and manage transportation costs and providers for those participants residing in New Hampshire, we strongly encourage the bidders to remain focused on Concord as the primary site for this event.