

2014-2015 Aid to Crime Labs RFA Questions

1. Question:

In preparation for this grant application I am trying to put together equipment that my laboratory would like to purchase. We are in desperate need of at least 8 desktop computers and 4 laptops that I would like to purchase through the 2014-2015 Aid to Crime Labs Grant. Are computers (both desktop and laptop) allowed to be purchased under the equipment category of this grant?

Response:

While computers are not excluded from purchase with Aid to Crime Lab funds, they are only allowed if it can be demonstrated that they are necessary to improve the timeliness or quality of forensic services. For example, computers that are necessary for the operation of laboratory equipment are acceptable, but computers for general office/communication purposes would not be approved. If computers are included in the proposed budget, the justification line should clearly indicate how they will be used to improve the timeliness or quality of forensic services. In addition, funding cannot be used to supplant other funding sources, so if the provision/replacement of computers would otherwise be paid for by your county, such use of grant funding would be unacceptable.

2. Question:

I would like to inquire as to whether or not an upgrade to our security system is an acceptable expenditure for the Aid to Crime Labs Grant?

Response:

An upgrade to a lab security system is an acceptable expenditure as increased security relates to the reliability of forensic services.

3. Question:

Regarding Appendix D: Encouraging Use of New York State Businesses in Contract Performance "Will New York State Businesses be used in the performance of this contract? ___ Yes ___ No"

Should we answer "Yes" if it is the intention for our County to use NYS Businesses in the performance of our contract where available?

If not, how should we respond to this question as we do not yet know what vendor options will be available (and other factors such as price) when we submit a requisition after receiving the award? Or, should we answer this based on vendors used in the current Aid to Crime Laboratories grant that we plan to continue using in the 2014-15 Aid to Crime Laboratories application?

Response:

If it is your intention to use NYS Businesses on the contract, you can indicate "Yes" to the question. If you do not yet know which vendors you will be using, you can indicate that you intend to use NYS businesses when possible but that actual vendors will not be known until services/goods are procured.

Your response should be based on your intended spending for this contract, not based on prior contracts (although the spending/vendors may be the same).

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4. Question:

We will be requesting funding to contract with an experienced consultant to perform casework analysis. Would this funding be considered “discretionary” for purposes of the MWBE requirements?

If the consultant contracted is from New York State, would this qualify toward "using New York State Businesses" in the performance of the grant contract?

Response:

Funding for the consultant would be considered discretionary. It may be eligible to be excluded if it can be demonstrated that there is a sole or single source that can provide the services, but completion of the OPDF Sole Source or Single Source Exemption Request Form (available at <http://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/ofpa/forms.htm>) would be required. An exclusion might also be allowed if you have a pre-existing contractual obligation with the consultant. In this case you would have to provide the dates of the pre-existing contract period.

If the consultant is from New York State, this would qualify as using New York State Businesses in the performance of the grant contract.