# Questions and Answers regarding the RFI "Proposed Grant to Further Engage NYS Educators in the Enhancement of EngageNY.org Curricular Modules"
## Please note that these responses are intended only to clarify the Department's current intent. This document is non-binding and the guidance may change as the Department reviews the formal responses to the RFI and finalizes the requirements posted in the RFP

## General questions

1. I was initially very interested in the broad idea of these "regional Institute Fellows." The idea of having regional institutes is awesome and perfectly aligned with the spirit of the COMMON Core State Standards - building local capacity and sharing resources across district lines works towards the 'common' part of the CCSS. But then I read farther to see that it is solely to support implementation of the modules. Is there any talk of broadening this to include supporting other ways of implementing the CCSS?

   *Yes, if this model of engagement is successful, the Department would consider using a similar model in the future for other initiatives.*

2. Could two or more BOCES work together to apply?

   *Two or more BOCES can apply for the Document Management award, but will need to apply separately for the Common Core Fellows award.*

3. May multiple BOCES submit one letter of interest? Is there any limit on the number of BOCES? If allowable, what should the BOCESs be considering in terms of pros and cons?

   *Each BOCES must submit an individual letter of interest. If submitting a letter of interest for the document management award, BOCES may indicate their intention to partner with other BOCES to reach the capacity required by the full award.*

4. Should the letter of interest be single- or double-spaced?

   *There are no specific formatting requirements for the letter of interest. Please be sure the formatting allows for easy reading and printing.*

5. Are there any other formatting requirements for the letter of interest, such as font type or size, or margin size?

   ***There are no specific formatting requirements for the letter of interest. Please be sure the formatting allows for easy reading and printing.***

6. Is a letter of interest required for organizations that ultimately want to apply for funding? In other words, if we don't submit a letter of interest, can we still nominate an educator later?

   ***No, a letter of interest, received by the indicated deadline, May 9th, is not required to respond to the RFP. Participation in this RFI is voluntary. It is an invitation to provide the NYSED with information about level of interest in and suggestions on the design of a grant of this type.***

7. What time is the letter of interest due on May 9?

   ***Responses to the RFI are due by close of business on May 9 (no later than 5pm).***

8. If we are interested in both types of awards (Institute and document management) should we submit two letters of interest? Or can we send one combined letter?

   ***Please submit two separate letters of interest - one for the Institute and a one for document management.***

9. Is the funding for one year only?

   ***Yes, the funding will be for the 2014-2015 school year only.***


**Questions specific to the award for Common Core Institutes**

10. Thanks for sharing this information. I was wondering why the work in ELA is limited to grades 9-12?

    ***While we may widen the scope of work in English Language Arts (ELA), the current plan is to only focus the work of the Common Core Fellows on high school ELA.***

11. Would the common core implementation/professional development work fellows are expected to deliver be in the fellow's local district/BOCES region only?

    ***The professional development and support for implementation of the CCLS would be primarily focused in the local region with some travel to other regions of the state.***

12. How often will there be collaboration opportunities? Or will an educator be working primarily by themselves on this?

*Educators will work in pairs on revising and enhancing the modules. Regular collaboration will be encouraged. Fellows will also be provided with program-wide professional development and training.*

13. Would it be geared more toward a math specialist? A special ed. person? An ELL person? Or will all of these types of educators be represented in the final pool?

    *We are looking for highly-qualified educators, who have been engaged in Common Core curriculum development and instruction. We expect our final group of Fellows will represent various backgrounds including content experts, ELL experts, and Special Education experts.*

14. It sounds like there is a need for instructional edits (content/concepts, models, scaffolds, etc.) and also format edits (typographical, layout, "user-friendliness"). Does the teacher need to be proficient in some type of equation-writing software for this?

    *Educators need to have content expertise; NYSED will provide any necessary training to support technical editing requirements.*

15. The timeline is one year? If a teacher is chosen, would they be on a sabbatical (no retirement accrual) or an educational assignment (so all of their contractual benefits still apply)?

    *Yes, the timeline is one year. The Department expects that Fellows would remain full-time employees of their school/district/BOCES. NYSED will reimburse the school/district/BOCES for the cost of their salary, benefits, overhead, etc. The Department will finalize these requirements following the feedback received through the RFI.*

16. Our BOCES has coaches – certified teachers who previously were classroom teachers but now work with teachers in multiple districts – who would be excellent as Common Core Institute Fellows. Would they be eligible?

    *Yes, as long as there is evidence to support that these educators have been deeply involved in Common Core implementation, and possess the requisite content expertise.*

17. What does the statewide coordination for the fellows look like – i.e., how will SED coordinate the module revision work, and the common core implementation support – who will do that coordination?

    *The Department is evaluating options for coordinating and supporting this work.*

18. Would Common Core Institute Fellows work with Network Team members when it comes to professional development?

    *This is a local decision. As Common Core Fellows and their supervising organization develop plans for their support of Common Core Implementation, they should consider the role of Network Team members.*

19. How will SED insure Common Core Institute Fellows are not in conflict with work already in progress by the BOCES Network Teams?

    ***This is a local decision. As Common Core Fellows and their supervising organization develop plans for their support of Common Core Implementation, they should consider the role of Network Team members.***

20. How many Common Core Institute Fellows will be selected? How many at each grade level?

    ***We anticipate roughly 30 fellows will be selected across both ELA and Mathematics. We anticipate selecting two fellows per grade level.***

21. What are SED's expectations for the Network Teams since they have invested millions of dollars over the past four years training those individuals and building capacity across the state?

    ***We expect that the work of Common Core Institutes will enhance the work of Network Teams.***

22. We have a few excellent retired teachers serving as consultants who have great expertise in their content areas. Would they be eligible to do this work part-time, since we still need them to do regional and onsite training?

    ***Only employees are eligible to be included in the application as the Fellow for a Common Core Institute.***

## Questions specific to Deliverables

23. Could you elaborate more on the deliverables? In other words, is there a set number of modules (per fellow) that would be revised and/or re-written?

    ***Two fellows would be expected to revise and enhance a full year of curricular materials (lesson plans, assessments, overview materials, etc) for a subject and grade level.***

24. Are there other specific outcomes, particularly re the local professional development / roll-out, that could be articulated? (ie: number of districts, schools, "piloting" teachers, etc.)

    ***The Department will finalize these requirements following the feedback received through the RFI.***

## Questions specific to a shared position

25. Would it be possible to write a proposal for some kind of shared position, i.e. where two (2) BOCES coordinators work together on the grant deliverables? (perhaps funded at a .5 level)

*The program is intended to support a full-time fellow for the 2014-15 school year. Although the Department will finalize requirements following the feedback received through the RFI, we may consider funding proposals that include two exceptionally qualified educators that split the fellowship.*

26. Our BOCES has three Graphic Aides. Would it be possible to use multiple staff members to do the document management work required instead of dedicating one person?

    *The Department has not identified a minimum or maximum number of staff positions required for the Document Management award.*

## Questions specific to the award for Document Management

27. The second and fourth question in the letter of interest requirements don't apply to the document management work; should we ignore those bullets?

    *Yes*

28. Will one organization be selected to do the document management work for all the revised/enhanced curricular modules statewide? Or could SED select more than one agency – and perhaps split the work by region (or otherwise)?

    *The Department will finalize this decision following the feedback received through the RFI.*

29. Does SED have something specific in mind when it says "professional-level copy editing"?

    *Yes.  We are looking for organizations with the capacity to prepare documents free of errors.*

30. What does "packaging services" mean?

    *Packaging means organizing upgraded modules into finalized Word documents and PDFs and readying them for upload onto EngageNY.org*

31. Is the assumption that all modules will be posted online in PDF format?

    *Packaging means organizing upgraded modules into finalized Word documents and PDFs and readying them for upload onto EngageNY.org*

32. Will we know how many modules must be edited, formatted and packaged before formal proposals are due? (This would be critical to give us an accurate sense of the amount of staff time required.)

*All modules in the specified grades will require editing, formatting, and repackaging.  The number of modules can be found by referencing curriculum maps available on EngageNY.org*

33. Will this work include any editing/formatting/packaging of modules already posted on the EngageNY website (that aren't being revised)?

    *No, this work will only focus on modules being enhanced by Common Core Institute Fellows.*

34. Potentially March to June may be a tight turn-around on editing and formatting all revised modules – is it possible that timeline can be adjusted?

    *March to June is the expected timeline, with modules being delivered for formatting, editing, and packaging on a rolling basis.  While it is possible that modules will arrive earlier, you should calculate your capacity to do this work based on the March to June timeline.*

35. Is the time needed for completion of the Document Management project five months in total? The time-line looks to span only from March-July of 2015. Due to the relatively short window for the task, it may be a better use of time to spread the work load between multiple staff members to reduce the overall time needed to make revisions.

    *March to June is the expected timeline, with modules being delivered for formatting, editing, and packaging on a rolling basis.  While it is possible that modules will arrive earlier, you should calculate your capacity to do this work based on the March to June timeline.*

36. Are there certain minimum educator qualifications for the Document Management Award?  The Graphic Aides are all Civil Service positions and all staff have completed the certification process. They each also possess at least one undergraduate degree; and have multiple years of experience in text editing, layout, file manipulation, etc.

    *No, there are no specific minimum educator qualifications for the document management award.  The only qualifications for this award are the demonstrated organizational and technical capacity to meet the requirements of the award.*

37. Will there be multiple organizations responsible for a single grade level, or one organization responsible for all grade levels of the Document Management project?

    *The Department will finalize this decision following the feedback received through the RFI.*

38. Is there opportunity to include revision dates on the curricular modules? This will help reduce the time needed to ensure that the most current version of the modules are being downloaded from EngageNY.org, or eliminate the need to do so all together if it has already been downloaded.

*There are posting dates on all currently available curricular materials on EngageNY.org. This practice will continue to be a requirement on the enhanced modules.*

39. Will there be any printed materials that the awarded entity is responsible for, or is this strictly electronic copy? Our BOCES Print Shop has the capacity to print materials, but would need to know the extent of such a request beforehand to prepare for the additional workload.

    *The document management award does not require any printing. Only electronic copies (Word and PDF) will be required.*

40. Will administrative access be granted to the EngageNY.org website to upload the enhanced modules or will files be submitted electronically to a NYSED administrator to post? Again our BOCES has experience with packaging materials for submission, an FTP site that is hosted on our server, as well as experience posting files to websites if needed.

    *The awardee(s) of the Document Management Award will not be required to upload documents to EngageNY.org. The awardee will only need to deliver finalized files to NYSED via a to be determined process.*

41. What types of materials and/or files will be provided (ex. file format)? Also, what types of software and fonts will be needed?

    *Files will be delivered to the awardee in Word format. The expectation is that finalized versions of the materials will be available in Word and PDF. For Mathematics revisions, MathType will be required. No other specialized software or fonts are necessary.*

42. What types of revisions will be required (ex. piecing from multiple documents, formatting only)? And will there be room for constructive input (ex. adding a blank page to make 2-sided copying more efficient, more effective finish sizes for end users to print easily, black and white headers and footers to reduce copying costs, etc

    *The Document Management awardee is expected to take lessons enhanced by educators and copyedit, format, package and make them print ready. This will require taking individually formatted lessons and combining them into unit and module level files. Input on final formatting will be considered by NYSED during the RFI process.*