



Information Item No.2

Date of Information Item No.1: February 8, 2024

Arlington Public Schools
Procurement Office

Request for Proposal 22FY24

Request for Proposal Title: Educational Interpretation Services

Request for Proposal Number: 22FY24

Request for Proposal Issue Date: January 22, 2024

Pre-Proposal Conference: January 26, 2024, (Refer to Request Title Page 2)

Proposal Due Date and Time: February 16, 2024, No Later Than 11:59 P.M.
(Local Prevailing Time)

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- The following information is provided to help Offerors submit an Offer in response to RFP No. 22FY24:

Q1. Could I talk to someone that can help me guide how to place a bid?

A1. Please refer to the Request for Proposal - Title Page 1-5 for details on submitting a proposal in response to this RFP.

Q2. Scope of Services: Given our existing relationship and understanding of APS's needs, we would like to know if it's permissible for us to bid exclusively on remote interpretation services as outlined in the RFP, without including in-person interpretation services.

A2. No. APS is seeking to award a minimum of one (1) Contract for Spoken World Language Interpretation Services, a minimum of one (1) Contract for ASL Interpretation Services, and a minimum of one (1) Contract for Cued Language Transliteration Services. Offerors can submit a Proposal for one (1), two (2), or all categories.

Q3. Language Requirements: Could you provide more details on the importance of the core and non-core languages listed in the RFP, and how this aligns with APS's current and future needs?

A3: Our core languages could change from year to year, but we have set those four languages aside because they are our most predominant ones. However, Non-Core Language has been less frequently requested.

Q4. Evaluation Criteria: As an existing service provider, how will our proposal focusing primarily on remote interpretation services be evaluated in comparison to those offering a broader range of services?

A4. If an offer is being submitted only for remote interpretation, it will be deemed non-responsive. Please see the answer to question No.2 for a detailed explanation.

Q5. Contract Duration: We are interested in understanding the expected duration of the upcoming contract, including any provisions for extension based on our performance history and service quality.

A5. Please refer to Section 1 (Contract Term) of Appendix E (Sample Form Agreement).

Q6. Budgetary Considerations: Does APS have a preferred budget range or cost ceiling for the services requested in this RFP?

A6. APS will not share the budget for this project.

Q7. Would you please provide an estimate of the annual spend for language services?

A7. In previous years, the estimated yearly expenditure on Interpretation Services has been approximately \$600K-\$650K.

Q8. We provide sign language interpretation services, and I was wondering if there is a need we could fulfill for your school district? There was not any other information for me to go on via the EVA portal.

A8. The RFP is available at eVA and APS websites for download. [Link to APS Website](#), [Link to eVA Website](#).

Q9. Who is the current contract holder?

A9. The current contract holders for ASL and Cued Languages are ASL Interpreters Inc, Stillman Solution Team LLC, Graham Staffing and HIS Sign LLC. The contract Holder for Face-to-Face Interpretation Service for Non-ASL is Volatia Language Network.

Q10. Can one submit for all services except for Cued transliteration?

A10. Yes. Please refer to the Request for Proposal - Title Page 1-5 for details on submitting a proposal in response to this RFP.

Q11. Any pain points experiences during your current contract?

A11. We are seeing consistently higher costs for Spoken Simultaneous jobs because of the higher need related to coverage consideration. Interpreters' competence and qualification are also a challenge for APS. Additionally, specifically for spoken language, APS has a high need for both in-person and remote interpretation.

Q12. I would like to ask you if you will please send me the bid documents so that we can begin work on this.

A12. Please see answer to Question No.8.

Q13. Does Arlington Public Schools honor hourly minimums for service? (i.e. 2 hour service minimum for on-site services and a 1 hour minimum for virtual services)

A13. Please see the revised scope of work in Addendum No.1.

Q14. Can we bill travel for on-site appointments?

A.14. No. Pricing must include all other expenses required to provide the Services at all APS buildings and are not subject to change for the Initial Contract Term.

Q15. Can an additional pricing page be submitted with the response?

A.15. No. Pricing must be submitted using Addendum No.1 .

Q16. The bid packet states that the awarded bidder needs to furnish virtual interpretation related equipment to Arlington Public Schools, what does this equipment include?

A16. Please see the revised scope of work in Addendum No.1.

Q17. Are there any parking fees for on-site appointments?

A.17. Depends on the school, some locations can provide validated parking in approved garages if an APS parking lot is not available. APS does not reimburse for metered parking, or any tickets incurred by contractors.

Q18. Would you like the income statement and balance sheet to be audited?

A18. The Offeror shall provide their most recently filed income statement and balance sheet form the most recent annual reporting period.

Q19. We have not subjected ourselves to a financial audit due to the associated cost. I want to confirm before I take us out of the running - audited financials are required in this submission?

A.19. Please see answer to Question No.18.

Q20. We would love to partner with you on OPI and VRI services, however, completing an RFP without an estimate of volume would be challenging. Our leadership team requires an estimate before proceeding due to the time it takes our team to go through this process. Is that something you might be able to share with us?

A20. Please see answer to Question No.4.

Q21. Is there a preference for Small Businesses, WOB, SDVOB, etc.?

A21. No.

Q22. Section III states "Proposals must be submitted electronically through the Platform.". However, the platform states "Solicitation only accepts paper responses." Kindly indicate if this is a glitch that will be fixed shortly.

A22. Please see answer to Question No.1.

Q23. Are multiple awards expected for the SAME service?

A23. Yes. Please see answer to Question No.2.

Q24. How will the work be apportioned?

A24. Please refer to the Request for Proposal - Title Page 1-5 for details on how APS will appoint the Tasks.

Q25. What is the estimated value/budget of the contract?

A25. Please see answer to Question No.6 and No.7.

Q26. What is the Period of Performance?

A26. Please see answer to Question No.5.

Q27. Could you please share past usage statistics broken down by service and language?

A27. Please follow this link for demographic breakdown of APS families' home languages.

https://analytics.apsva.us/public/equity/aps_membership.html

Q28. What is the name of the incumbent(s) and their contract number(s)?

A28. The current contract holders for ASL and Cued Languages are ASL Interpreters Inc, Graham Staffing and HIS Sign LLC with Contract No.38FY19 and Stillman Solutions Team LLC with Contract No.38FY18. The contract Holder for Face-to-Face Interpretation is Volatia Language Network with Contract No.20FY20.

Q29. Did the incumbent cover every single assignment successfully?

A29. There were times APS Contractors were not able to secure an interpreter.

Q30. What challenges have you faced with a similar scope of work from vendors you worked with?

A30. Please see the answer to Question No.11.

Q31. In order for the incumbent not to have an advantage over the other bidders, could you please provide the incumbent rates for each of the services requested in this solicitation?

A31. The Contracts for ASL and Cued Language are available in APS website under current Contracts (Contract No.38FY19). For Face to Face Interpretation, below is the pricing schedule.

Face to Face Interpretation Services		
Description of Services	Unit Price	Unit of Measure
Spanish Only	\$0.87	Per Minute
Spanish Only	\$52.50	Per Hour
Core Language (Except Spanish)	\$1.26	Per Minute
Core Language (Except Spanish)	\$75.60	Per Hour
Other Services		
Description of Services	Unit Price	Unit of Measure
Non-Core Language	\$1.31	Per Minute
Non-Core Language	\$78.75	Per Hour
Video Remote Spanish	\$1.94	Per Minute
Video Remote Spanish	\$116.55	Per Hour
Video Remote Core (Except Spanish)	\$2.05	Per Minute
Video Remote Core (Except Spanish)	\$122.85	Per Hour

For Stillman Solutions Team LLC, below is the pricing schedule.

In-Person Sign Language Interpretation (English to ASL)	
Hourly Rate:	\$79.56
Daily Rate:	\$556.92
Number of Hours included in Daily Rate:	7.0 hours
In-Person Cued Speech Translation	
Hourly Rate:	\$79.56
Daily Rate:	\$556.92
Number of Hours included in Daily Rate:	7.0 hours

In-Person Sign Language Interpretation (English to ASL) Specialized Services in Technical Fields (medical, legal, etc.)	
Technical fields offered: Medical, Legal	
Hourly Rate:	\$91.31
Daily Rate:	\$639.17
Number of Hours included in Daily Rate:	7.0 hours

Description of Service Fee	Rate	Unit of Measure (UOM)
1. Urgent Request Fee	\$25.00	Per request
2. Tactile Interpreting Surcharge	\$ 5.00	Per hour in addition to the proposed hourly rate for the service
PRICING NOTES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urgent Request Fees will be invoiced for requests received within less than 24 hours of the assignment. 		

Q32. Can we ask for a debriefing in case we are not awarded?

A32. Yes, Offeror can submit debriefing request during the Notice of Intent to Award Period.

Q33. Is simultaneous interpreting needed too?

A33. Yes!

Q34. What is the average length of an interpreting assignment?

A34. For most spoken/ world language interpretation, assignments are 1-2 hours. For ASL/CLT, it is generally 7.5 hours/day. The requests for short assignments (1-2 hrs) for ASL/ CLT are maybe 1-2 times/week.

Q35. Where would face-to-face interpreting assignments take place?

A35. Mostly in school buildings, but often in our central office or as a part of a home visit.

Q36. What mathematical calculation will be used to evaluate pricing?

A36. The Lowest Price Offeror will be received a complete 20%. The scores for other offerors will be calculated using the formula provided below.

Score of the Offeror = Price of Lowest Offeror/ Price of the Offeror under Consideration *20%

Q37. If an on-site interpreter is not available, are you amenable to a remote Interpreter?

A37. APS preference is to honor the initial request. Any changes will be determined case by case.

Q38. As fuel reaches new record high prices and parking costs skyrocket, will you reconsider the limitation on travel reimbursements for fair compensation of interpreters?

A38. Please see answer to Question No.14.

Q39. if we are not submitting for a service (like Cued Language) we still have to fill it out and then, in tab 5, say that we are not proposing for it.

A39. No. If you are not intending to submit a proposal for Cued Language, there is no need to complete sections related to Cued Language. Please see the Request for Proposal - Title Page 1-5 for details on submitting a proposal in response to this RFP.

Offeror wishes to submit an exception to APS terms and Conditions can submit their exception using Tab 5. The information requested in Tab 5 is applicable for all Categories. Creating Sub Tabs A, B and C is not required.

Q40. Can you provide a historical breakdown of usage by service item and quantity (ASL interpreting & CLT hours/minutes; VRI hours/minutes; on-site, in-person hours; and language (core / non-core)?

A40. The service hours for ASL interpreting and CLT services for FY23 amounted to 12,790 hours with a breakdown of 12,510 hours for in-person and 280 hours for VRI. For Spoken World Language, below is the usage during 7/1/2022- 6/30/2023, school year.

- Spanish 76%
- Arabic 7%
- Amharic 6%
- Mongolia 4%
- Bengali/ Tigrinya/ Other 8%
- Consecutive 91%
- Simultaneous 9%
- Onsite 65%
- Virtual 35%

Q41. Do you have an estimated Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 projection breakdown of usage by service item and quantity (ASL interpreting & CLT hours/minutes; VRI hours/minutes; on-site, in-person hours), and language (core / non-core)?

A41. The projected service hours for ASL and CLT interpreting Services for this year amount to 33,260 hours, with an anticipated breakdown of 16,600 hours for in-person services and 50 hours for VRI. The projected Interpreting Services for Spoken World Language will remain the same as previous years. (Please see the answer to question No.40)

Q42. If multiple awards are made, how will the work be apportioned?

A42. Please see answer to Question No.24.

Q43. Is this a new contract or an existing requirement? If the answer is yes

- a. Who is the incumbent? Answer: Please see answer to Question No.9 and No.31.
- b. Could you please provide the incumbent rates for each of the services requested in this solicitation? Answer: Please see answer to Question No.31.

- c. What challenges have you faced with a similar scope of work from vendors you worked with? Answer: Please see answer to Question No.11.

Q44. Is there a budget allocated to this contract? If yes, how much?

A44. Please see answer to Question No.6.

Q45. Is there an incumbent currently providing these services? If so, please share the rates.

A45. Please see answer to Question No.31.

Q46. Based on historical data from past years and projections for 2024: What is the approximate volume of work needed?

A46. Please see answer to Question No.40 and 41.

Q47. What challenges have you faced with similar scope of work from vendors you worked with?

A47. Please see answer to Question No.11.

Q48. What percentage of your interpreting assignments are rush request, with less than 2 full business days' notice?

A48. For Spoken/ World Languages, nearly all requests come with at least 2 days advance notice. For ASL/ CLT Interpretation services, while many requests are for full-time positions, a significant number of daily requests will come in with less than 2 days advance notice.

Q49. What is the average length of an interpreting service requested?

A49. Please see answer to Question No.34.

Q50. In relation to Special Provisions Section B(1), does a vendor with a video interpretation solution that does not require specialized equipment need to provide any equipment or are the classrooms, offices and other locations equipped with computers?

A50. Please see answer to Question No.16.

Q51. Is it acceptable to provide the State Corporation Commission (SCC) Identification Number prior to the contract award not with the bid?

A51. Per Request for Proposals Title Page Three, the SCC Identification Number is a mandatory requirement.

Q52. Please clarify your definition of subcontractor as opposed to an independent contractor. Independent contractors are a standard business model in the language industry.

A52. Please refer to Section 32 of Appendix F (Contract Terms and Condition), and Section 1.4 of Appendix J (Student Data Usage and Privacy Agreement).

Q53. Regarding the technological infrastructure, are there any limitations to us using Phrase?

A53. APS does not utilize Phrase and does not anticipate the interpreters needing these types of tools.

Q54. The RFP mentions "training upon award and annually on the prevention of abuse and molestation". Please clarify who will provide this training? Also, is the training a billable item?

A54. Please refer to section 49 of Appendix F (Contract Terms and Conditions).

Q55. Is partial bid acceptable? I want to apply for the world spoken languages but not for ASL.

A55. Please see answer to Question No.10.

Q56. What is the demand of in person interpretation versus OPI/VRI?

A56. Please see answer to Question No.40 and 41.

Q57. What are the common languages of the district. Arabic, Amharic, Mongolian, and Spanish?

A57. Yes.

Q58. What is the estimated volume for the services?

A58. Please see answer to Question No.40 and 41.

Q59. would you please share the current rates?

A59. Please see answer to Question No.31.

Q60. Who is the incumbent?

A60. Please see answer to Question No.9.

Q61. It's unclear if Arlington Public Schools (APS) requires daily interpreters to be on-site/remote or if they may request interpreters at any time. Can APS clarify if daily interpreters are needed and, if so, how many are required each day?

A61. Our needs change from day to day, and we hit certain periods throughout the year where request numbers are very high.

Q62. Can Arlington Public Schools provide historical data from the past year or projected for the next year (and please indicate which one) on:

A62. Please see answer to Question No.40 and No.41.

Type of assignment	Onsite	Remote
All-day on-call assignments (interpreters scheduled 7 or more hours per day on the same days each week)		
Assignments that were 3 hours or less		
Assignments that were 7 hours or more		
Evening/weekend work		
Advance-notice assignments (more than 5 business days' notice)		
Short-notice assignments (less than 5 business days' notice)		

Emergency assignments (less than 1 business days' notice)		
Requests outside of the main location?		
CART requests		

Q63. Cancellation & Inclement Weather on page 11 The industry standard is any cancellation or time change with less than 2 full business days' notice is billed (and paid to the interpreter) for the full, originally assigned time. Will Arlington Public Schools change the wording to “shall not be charged for calls scheduled then cancelled by Arlington Public Schools staff when notice of cancellation or time change is provided more than two full business days in advance.”?

A63. No

Q64. Insurance limits -\$3,000,000 annual aggregate. With numerous federal government and commercial contracts, some valued in the millions, DAS has never been asked to provide more than \$2,000,000 aggregate insurance coverage. Our insurance provider advises that obtaining this much coverage in one policy is unlikely due to its excessiveness for our business type. Increasing coverage to meet the \$3,000,000 requirement would be costly and result in higher vendor charges. Will APS accept the standard, industry-appropriate \$2,000,000 aggregate?

A64. APS will not make changes to the Insurance limits in RFP22FY24. Written requests for consideration of alternate coverage must be included in Tab 5: Exceptions Taken to Any Provision of the Contract Documents of the Proposal.

Q65. D.2- Sexual Abuse and Molestation (SAM) -page 48- The industry standard does not require Sign Language Interpreters to carry Sexual Abuse and Molestation coverage. Will APS remove this requirement.

A65. Please see answer to Question No.64.

Q66. Criminal background checks and sex offender checks on all employees-page 48- Many of our interpreters have undergone full government background checks through OPM/OSI and have obtained suitability and government badges. Will APS accept these background checks for interpreters with government agency suitability?

A66. For Spoken/ world Interpreters, the offeror must maintain documentation of required background checks that will be available to APS upon request. For ASL/ CLT Interpretation services, Interpreters may be requested to undergo a background check by APS' Human Resources.

Q67. In Appendix I – the Pricing Schedule is asking for the Unit price and extended price for three Units of Measure – per hour, per day, per week. Each column has a number but it is unclear as to what each number represents. For example- Per day has 100 – is that 100 days at 8 hours day? For per week, is that assuming each week is a total of 40 hours? Can Arlington Public Schools provide clarification on the “estimated quantity” column and what each number represents so vendors can quote correctly?

A67. Please see to Addendum No.1.

Q68. In Section V, Appendix I, Section B. ASL Interpretation Pricing Schedule, please clarify what is meant by “Level III or higher.”

A68. please see Addendum No.1.

Q69. Last-minute requests and last-minute changes to assignments require additional work, must be prioritized above other tasks, and in most cases, cause lost revenue. Will APS consider adding a line item to the pricing schedule, for last minute requests and last-minute changes (less than 48 business hours’ notice), so we do not have to figure these nuances into our base \$ rate?

A69. Please see addendum No.1.

Q70. If an interpreter is not available for any languages for in person interpretation, can we replace with VRI or OPI? It happens sometimes for uncommon languages.

A70. Please see answer to Question No.37.

Q71. We do not provide coverage for Sexual Abuse and Molestation in our policy. Can we request a waiver or exemption, as there will be no instances where our LPs are alone with a child?

A71. Please see answer to Question No.64 and No.65.

Q72. The language about the subcontractors is a bit confusing to us. Will we be okay using our language professionals?

A72. Please see answer to question No.52.

Q73. Regarding the technological infrastructure, are there any restrictions or limitations on using Phrase for written translation scope of the bid?

A73. Please see answer to Question No.53.

Q74. Can you explain the breakdown (hours, days, weeks) on the pricing sheet?

A74. Please see answer to Question No.67.

Q75. Can we provide a direct Certificate of Insurance (COI) instead of the insurance portion listed on this RFP?

A75. Submitting a COI is optional. However, all Offeror are required to submit the Insurance Checklist (Appendix D) with their proposal.

Q76. We do not provide coverage for Sexual Abuse and Molestation in our policy. Can we request a waiver or exemption, as there will be no instances where our LPs are alone with a child?

A76. Please see answer to Question No.64 and No.65.

Q77. Do you have an idea of what annual volume looks like for over the phone and video remote interpretation?

A77. Please see answer to Question No.40 and 41.

Q78. If your interpreters are only servicing the remote portion, do you still need insurance covering the molestation..etc..?

A78. The Contract will be awarded for both Remote and In-person services. Therefore, the offeror must provide insurance coverages as required under this RFP.

Q79. The pricing section is a bit confusing as it lists units per hour, per week, or per month. Could you provide clarity on that as well?

A79. Please see answer to Question No.67.

Q80. Can VRI services be provided with professionals based outside of the US? Or is it expected VRI services will be provided by the same interpreters listed in the proposal?

A80. Interpreters must meet the qualification listed in the scope of work.

Q81. We don't offer pricing per day or per week. How would you like us to show that we only offer by the hour/minute?

Q81. The pricing must be provided using Addendum No.1. Otherwise, the Offer will be deemed non-responsive.

Q82. Are you looking to replace the current vendor or a backup? For spoken languages.

A82. APS is seeking to award a minimum of one (1) Contract for Educational Interpretation Services per categories listed on Request for Proposals page 4 in the best interests of APS, that best meet the needs of APS.

Q83. Over the phone interpretation, Are you looking to replace current vendor or a backup? For spoken languages."

A83. See answer to question No.82.

Q84. The list of non-core languages is extensive. It may be difficult to gauge this but to what frequency are these languages expected?

A84. Please see answer to Question No.40 and 41

Q85. do you need remote interpretation?

A85. Yes

Q86. Can you provide the phone interpreting volume from your current vendor? They can provide an extensive report.

A86. This RFP is not for OPI services.

Q87. For the "Per Week" unit how many hours is that?

A87. Please see answer to Question No.67.

Q88. For ASL interpreting services, will you be willing to add a line item for last minute rates (requests submitted to the agency within 48 hours)?

A88. Please see answer to Question No.69.

Q89. Could you please inform us who your current incumbent service provider is?

A89. Please see answer to Question No.9.

Q90. What do you mean by remote interpretations? Does that include both video and telephone? But if you already are using a different vendor who specializes in this remote option, can we submit only for onsite interpretation?

A.90. This RFP is for In-person and VRI interpretation. No Offer for OPI will be accepted. If an offer is submitted only for onsite interpretation, the proposal will be deemed non-responsive.

Q91. Is your team issuing an extension?

Q91. Yes. Please see Addendum No.1

Q92. I was in the process of reviewing the above-mentioned RFP and just wanted to clarify that this is for per diem type/on-call interpreting services, correct? Will there be any need for full-time interpreters to work the school year or cover upcoming medical leaves?

Q92. Please refer to Section I (Special Provisions) of the RFP.

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