

**New York State Department of Health  
and the  
New York State Health Research Science Board  
Request for Applications**

**PETER T. ROWLEY BREAST CANCER SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH PROJECTS  
(ROUND 4)**

<b>RELEASE DATE:</b>	<b>8/1/2017</b>
<b>LETTER OF INTENT DUE (Strongly encouraged):</b>	<b>9/1/2017</b>
<b>APPLICANT CONFERENCE REGISTRATION DUE:</b>	<b>8/22/2017</b>
<b>APPLICANT CONFERENCE:</b>	<b>8/25/2017 at 1:30 PM EST</b> By Webinar (WebEx) at: 1-844-633-8697 or 1-518-549-0500 Meeting # (access code) 310 171 740
<b>QUESTIONS DUE:</b>	<b>9/19/2017</b>
<b>QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND UPDATES POSTED:</b>	<b>9/27/2017</b>
<b>APPLICATIONS DUE:</b>	<b>10/26/2017 by 4:00 PM EST</b>

**DOH CONTACT NAME AND ADDRESS:**

Charles J. Burns  
Extramural Grants Administration  
New York State Department of Health  
Wadsworth Center  
Empire State Plaza, Room C345  
PO Box 509, Albany, NY 12201-0509  
(518) 474-7002 (phone)  
[hrrsb@health.ny.gov](mailto:hrrsb@health.ny.gov)

Staff will be available at the phone number and email address above to answer questions about the RFA during regular business hours and up to 4PM on the application due date.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION .....	3
A. Background .....	3
B. Purpose of the Funds .....	3
C. Available Funds .....	3
II. WHO MAY APPLY? .....	3
III. PROJECT NARRATIVE/WORKPLAN OUTCOMES.....	4
IV. ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS .....	5
A. Issuing Agency .....	5
B. Question and Answer Phase .....	5
C. Letter of Intent .....	6
D. Applicant Conference .....	6
E. How to File an Application .....	6
F. Department of Health Reserved Rights .....	8
G. Term of Contract.....	9
H. Payment and Reporting Requirements.....	9
I. Minority & Woman-Owned Business Enterprise Requirements.....	10
J. Limits on Administrative Expenses and Executive Compensation.....	11
K. Vendor Identification Number .....	12
L. Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire.....	12
M. Vendor Prequalification for Not-for-Profits .....	12
N. General Specifications.....	13
V. COMPLETING THE APPLICATION, REVIEW AND AWARD PROCESS .....	14
A. How to Apply .....	14
B. Freedom of Information Law.....	15
C. Review and Award Process.....	15
D. Application Format, Penalties and Summary Statements.....	16
E. Review Criteria .....	17
F. Health Resource Scientific Board Review .....	18
G. Award Decisions and Pre-Funding Requirements .....	18
H. Award Announcements.....	19
VI. ATTACHMENTS .....	19

## I. Introduction

### A. Background

Each year, nearly 15,000 New Yorkers are diagnosed with breast cancer.

The Health Research Science Board (HRSB) makes funding recommendations to the Commissioner of Health following review of applications for breast cancer research studies and education projects. To support the funded projects, the state's Breast Cancer Research and Education Fund (the Fund) was initiated. The Fund is financed primarily by individual and corporate income tax check-off contributions and donations. Those funds are matched by the state, essentially doubling funds available for breast cancer research and education awards. In addition, the Fund accepts proceeds from the sale of "Drive for the Cure" specialty license plates. Since 1996, the Fund has received in excess of \$10 million from over 750,000 contributions and over \$14 million has been awarded.

The HRSB also supports activities related to studying the possible links between exposure to pesticides and breast cancer, including review of researcher applications requesting confidential data from the Pesticide Registry maintained by the State Department of Environmental Conservation. The HRSB Biennial Reports and other useful information can be found at: <http://www.wadsworth.org/breastcancer/>.

The New York State Department of Health, Wadsworth Center, Extramural Grants Administration Program (Program) provides administrative support for the HRSB and the Fund.

### B. Purpose of the Funds

The HRSB wishes to stimulate and support research related to breast cancer biology, causation, prevention, detection or screening, treatment (including treatment of its effects), survivorship or cure. Any investigative approach appropriate to the application topic may be pursued, including, but not limited to, basic, translational, clinical, demographic, mapping, epidemiological, environmental, behavioral or psychosocial research.

### C. Available Funds

The number of awards will be contingent upon the quality of the applications received as well as the size and scope of the proposed projects. Approximately \$1.8 million is available to support approximately five awards from this Request for Applications (RFA). The funding is for a period of up to two years. The annual direct costs for a single award are capped at \$150,000 per year. Additionally, funds will be available to support Facilities and Administrative (F&A) costs up to 20 percent of modified total direct costs. Based on its assessment that the field is ready to pursue additional investigations, the HRSB may determine that additional funds should be made available under this RFA to support additional awards.

## II. Who May Apply?

**The applicant must be a not-for-profit organization or governmental organization in New York State.** Awarded organizations will be expected to monitor the use of funds, maintain individual accounts and fulfill other fiscal management criteria. Subcontracting and collaborating organizations may include public, not-for-profit and for-profit entities within or outside of New York State.

The eligible Principal Investigator/Project Director (PI/PD) is designated by the application organization, has the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to carry out the proposed Workplan, and is not a postdoctoral fellow or other dependent research staff.

An eligible organization is not limited to the number of applications it can submit in response to this RFA provided that each application is scientifically distinct. However, the eligible PI/PD may submit only one application in response to this RFA, regardless of the organization under which (s)he submits the applications. If an eligible PI/PD submits more than one application, all applications from that PI/PD will be disqualified and will not be forwarded to peer review.

Eligibility to apply also includes the following mandatory items:

- The PI/PD is not restricted from receiving Public Health Service (PHS) funding or debarred by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or any other federal or New York State government entity
- The applicant organization is Prequalified in the NYS Grants Gateway, if not exempt (see RFA Section IV. M.)
- The PI/PD has not submitted more than one application
- The application does not propose support for a research center
- The application does not propose support for a Phase III clinical trial
- The application does not propose expansion of enrollment for an ongoing clinical trial

Submission of an application certifies that the applicant organization and the PI/PD meet the eligibility criteria stated here.

### **III. Project Narrative/Workplan Outcomes**

Applicants may subcontract components of the scope of work. For those applicants that propose subcontracting, the subcontracting organization(s) should be named using RFA Attachment 4. Applicants that plan to subcontract are expected to state in the application the specific components of the scope of work to be performed through subcontracts. Applicants should note that the lead organization (contractor) will have overall responsibility for all contract activities, including those performed by subcontractors, and will be the primary contact for the Department of Health. All subcontractors should be approved by the Department of Health. Although collaborations are not required, they are strongly encouraged.

The Rowley mechanism provides researchers the opportunity to try new methods and approaches in breast cancer research. These projects are self-contained research projects. They are not intended to fund smaller components of larger research projects, solely for data collection, for incremental or correlative research aims, or for compression of a larger project into a smaller time frame.

Responsive applications include the following projects:

- highly speculative, exploratory, or high-risk – may not have preliminary data, but have the potential for high scientific payoff
- application or development of state-of-the-art technologies, tools or resources for breast cancer research
- innovative or developmental – focus on exceptionally promising topics and have some pilot data, but not yet sufficiently mature to compete successfully for funding for a full-scale study
- testing new hypotheses based on research grounded in a non-breast cancer research area

The HRSB seeks to fund research projects in which there is a high likelihood that the results will yield the opportunity to apply for future funding from other sources. NOTE: Funded projects shall not include program implementation which goes beyond the contract period; the contractor should plan to pursue other sources of funding for future implementation or further examination.

## IV. Administrative Requirements

### A. Issuing Agency

This RFA is issued by the New York State Department of Health (Department), Wadsworth Center, Extramural Grants Administration. The Department is responsible for the requirements specified herein and for the evaluation of all applications.

### B. Question and Answer Phase

All substantive questions must be submitted in writing to:

Charles J. Burns  
Extramural Grants Administration  
[hrrsb@health.ny.gov](mailto:hrrsb@health.ny.gov)

To the degree possible, each inquiry should cite the RFA section and paragraph to which it refers. Written questions will be accepted until the date posted on the cover of this RFA. This includes Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) questions and questions pertaining to the MWBE forms.

Questions of a technical nature can be addressed in writing or via telephone by calling Charles J. Burns at (518) 474-7002. **Questions are of a technical nature if they are limited to how to prepare the application (e.g., formatting) rather than relating to the substance of the application.**

Some helpful links for questions of a technical nature are below. Questions regarding specific opportunities or applications should be directed to the Department contact listed on the cover of this RFA.

- <https://grantsgateway.ny.gov/grantees>
- Grants Gateway Videos (includes a document vault tutorial and an application tutorial) on YouTube: <https://grantsreform.ny.gov/youtube>.
- Grants Gateway Team Email: [grantsgateway@its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsgateway@its.ny.gov)  
Phone: 518-474-5595  
Hours: Monday thru Friday 8am to 4:30pm  
(Application Completion, Policy, and Registration questions)
- Agate Technical Support Help Desk  
Phone: 1-800-820-1890  
Hours: Monday thru Friday 8am to 8pm  
Email: [helpdesk@agatesoftware.com](mailto:helpdesk@agatesoftware.com)  
(Technical questions)

Prospective applicants should note that all clarifications and exceptions, including those relating to the terms and conditions of the contract, are to be raised prior to the submission of an application.

This RFA has been posted on the NYS Grants Gateway website at: <https://grantsgateway.ny.gov> and a link provided on the Department's public website at: <http://www.health.ny.gov/funding/>. Questions and answers, as well as any updates and/or modifications, will also be posted on these websites. All such updates will be posted by the date identified on the cover of this RFA.

### C. Letter of Intent

The prospective applicant organization is strongly encouraged to complete and submit a Letter of Intent (see RFA Attachment 1). This form will be used to develop the review panel in a timely manner. Letters of Intent should be submitted via the Grants Gateway in the Pre-Submission Uploads section of the online application. The file name should include applicant organization and PI/PD name. A copy should also be e-mailed to [hrrsb@health.ny.gov](mailto:hrrsb@health.ny.gov). Please ensure that the RFA number is noted in the e-mail subject line by the date posted on the cover of the RFA.

Submission of a Letter of Intent is not a requirement or obligation upon the applicant to submit an application in response to this RFA. Applications may be submitted without first having submitted a Letter of Intent.

### D. Applicant Conference

Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to participate in the applicant conference to receive an overview of the RFA and ask specific questions. The conference will be held via webinar (WebEx) only on the date and time posted on the cover sheet of this RFA. The Department requests that potential applicants register for this conference by emailing [hrrsb@health.ny.gov](mailto:hrrsb@health.ny.gov). The Department will send a confirmation email with instructions for joining the conference to all registrants. The deadline for reservations is posted on the cover page of this RFA.

Applicants unable to participate in the webinar will have the option to view the applicant conference slides at their convenience. The applicant conference slides will be posted with the Questions and Answers document on the NYS Grants Gateway website at: <https://grantsgateway.ny.gov> by the date posted on the cover of this RFA. Failure to attend the applicant conference will not preclude the submission of an application.

### E. How to File an Application

Applications must be submitted online via the Grants Gateway by the date and time posted on the cover of this RFA. Reference materials and videos are available for Grantees applying to funding opportunities on the NYS Grants Gateway. Please visit the Grants Reform website at the following web address: <https://grantsreform.ny.gov/Grantees> and select the “Grantee Quick Start Guide: Applications” from the menu on the left. There is also a more detailed “Grantee User Guide” available on this page as well. Training webinars are also provided by the Grants Gateway Team. Dates and times for webinar instruction can be located at the following web address: <https://grantsreform.ny.gov/training-calendar>.

To apply for this opportunity:

1. Log into the Grants Gateway as either a “Grantee” or “Grantee Contract Signatory”.
2. Click on the “View Opportunities” button under “View Available Opportunities”.
3. In the Search Criteria, enter the Grant Opportunity name “Peter T. Rowley” and select the Department of Health as the Funding Agency.
4. Click on “Search” button to initiate the search.
5. Click on the name of the Grant Opportunity from the search results grid and then select the “APPLY FOR GRANT OPPORTUNITY” button located bottom left of the Main page of the Grant Opportunity.

Once the application is complete, prospective grantees are **strongly encouraged** to submit their applications at least 48 hours prior to the due date and time. This will allow sufficient opportunity for the applicant to obtain assistance and take corrective action should there be a technical issue

with the submission process. **Failure to leave adequate time to address issues identified during this process may jeopardize an applicant’s ability to submit their application.** Both Department and Grants Gateway staff are available to answer applicant’s technical questions and provide technical assistance prior to the application due date and time. Contact information for the Grants Gateway Team is available under Section IV. B. of this RFA.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Although Department and Grants Gateway staff will do their best to address concerns that are identified less than 48 hours prior to the due date and time, there is no guarantee that they will be resolved in time for the application to be submitted and, therefore, considered for funding.

The Grants Gateway will always notify applicants of successful submission. If a prospective grantee does not get a successful submission message assigning their application a unique ID number, it has not successfully submitted an application. During the application process, please pay particular attention to the following:

- Not-for-profit applicants must be prequalified on the due date for this application submission. Be sure to maintain prequalification status between funding opportunities. Three of a not-for-profit’s essential financial documents - the IRS990, Financial Statement and Charities Bureau filing - expire on an annual basis. If these documents are allowed to expire, the not-for-profit’s prequalification status expires as well, and it will not be eligible for State grant funding until its documentation is updated and approved, and prequalified status is reinstated.
- Only individuals with the roles “Grantee Contract Signatory” or “Grantee System Administrator” can submit an application.
- Prior to submission, the system will automatically initiate a global error checking process to protect against incomplete applications. An applicant may need to attend to certain parts of the application prior to being able to submit the application successfully. Be sure to allow time after pressing the submit button to clean up any global errors that may arise. You can also run the global error check at any time in the application process. (see p.66 of the Grantee User Guide).
- Grantees should use numbers, letters and underscores when naming their uploaded files. There cannot be any special characters in the uploaded file name. Also be aware of the restriction on file size (10 MB) when uploading documents.

The following table provides a snapshot of which roles are allowed to Initiate, Complete, and Submit the Grant Application(s) in the Grants Gateway.

Role	Create and Maintain User Roles	Initiate Application	Complete Application	Submit Application	Only View the Application
Delegated Admin	X				
Grantee		X	X		
Grantee Contract Signatory		X	X	X	
Grantee Payment Signatory		X	X		
Grantee System Administrator		X	X	X	
Grantee View Only					X

**NOTE: Waiting until the last several days to complete your application online can be dangerous, as you may have technical questions. Beginning the process of applying as soon as possible will produce the best results.**

Late applications will not be accepted. **Applications will not be accepted via fax, e-mail, hard copy or hand delivery.**

#### **F. Department of Health Reserved Rights**

The Department of Health reserves the right to:

1. Reject any or all applications received in response to this RFA.
2. Withdraw the RFA at any time, at the Department's sole discretion.
3. Make an award under the RFA in whole or in part.
4. Disqualify any applicant whose conduct and/or proposal fails to conform to the requirements of the RFA.
5. Seek clarifications and revisions of applications.
6. Use application information obtained through site visits, management interviews and the state's investigation of an applicant's qualifications, experience, ability or financial standing, and any material or information submitted by the applicant in response to the agency's request for clarifying information in the course of evaluation and/or selection under the RFA.
7. Prior to application opening, amend the RFA specifications to correct errors or oversights, or to supply additional information, as it becomes available.
8. Prior to application opening, direct applicants to submit proposal modifications addressing subsequent RFA amendments.
9. Change any of the scheduled dates.
10. Waive any requirements that are not material.
11. Award more than one contract resulting from this RFA.
12. Conduct contract negotiations with the next responsible applicant, should the Department be unsuccessful in negotiating with the selected applicant.
13. Utilize any and all ideas submitted with the applications received.
14. Unless otherwise specified in the RFA, every offer is firm and not revocable for a period of 60 days from the bid opening.
15. Waive or modify minor irregularities in applications received after prior notification to the applicant.
16. Require clarification at any time during the procurement process and/or require correction of arithmetic or other apparent errors for the purpose of assuring a full and complete understanding of an offerer's application and/or to determine an offerer's compliance with the requirements of the RFA.
17. Negotiate with successful applicants within the scope of the RFA in the best interests of the State.

18. Eliminate any mandatory, non-material specifications that cannot be complied with by all applicants.
19. Award grants based on geographic or regional considerations to serve the best interests of the State.

## **G. Term of Contract**

Any contract(s) resulting from this RFA will be effective only upon approval by the New York State Office of the State Comptroller.

It is expected that contracts resulting from this RFA will have the following time period: 8/1/2018 through 7/31/2020 for a multi-year term of up to two years. Contracts will not be renewable.

Continued funding throughout this period is contingent upon availability of funding and state budget appropriations. The Department also reserves the right to revise the award amount as necessary due to changes in the availability of funding.

A sample New York State Master Contract for Grants can be found in the Forms Menu once an application to this funding opportunity is started.

## **H. Payment and Reporting Requirements**

1. No advances will be allowed for contracts resulting from this procurement.
2. The grant contractor will be required to submit quarterly invoices and required reports of expenditures to the State's designated payment office (below) or, in the future, through the Grants Gateway:

New York State Department of Health  
Wadsworth Center  
Extramural Grants Administration  
Empire State Plaza, Room C345  
PO Box 509  
Albany, NY 12201-0509

Grant contractors must provide complete and accurate billing invoices to the Department's designated payment office in order to receive payment. Billing invoices submitted to the Department must contain all information and supporting documentation required by the Contract, the Department and the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC). Payment for invoices submitted by the CONTRACTOR shall only be rendered electronically unless payment by paper check is expressly authorized by the Commissioner, in the Commissioner's sole discretion, due to extenuating circumstances. Such electronic payment shall be made in accordance with OSC's procedures and practices. The CONTRACTOR shall comply with the State Comptroller's procedures to authorize electronic payments. Authorization forms are available at OSC's website at: <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/epay/index.htm>, by email at: [epayments@osc.state.ny.us](mailto:epayments@osc.state.ny.us) or by telephone at 855-233-8363. CONTRACTOR acknowledges that it will not receive payment on any claims for reimbursement submitted under this contract if it does not comply with OSC's electronic payment procedures, except where the Commissioner has expressly authorized payment by paper as set forth above.

Payment of such claims for reimbursement by the State (NYS Department of Health) shall be made in accordance with Article XI-A of the New York State Finance Law. Payment terms will be:

- The contractor will be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred as allowed in the Contract Budget and Work plan.
  - All claims for payment submitted by the contractor pursuant to this agreement shall be submitted to the State no later than 30 days after the end of the quarter for which reimbursement is being claimed.
  - Quarterly claims for payment will not be paid until all required progress reports for that period are submitted and deemed acceptable by Extramural Grants Administration staff.
  - The final claim for payment will be paid following the acceptance and approval of the final progress report.
  - In no event shall the amount received by the contractor exceed the amount approved by the State.
3. The grant contractor will be required to submit the following progress reports to the Department of Health at the address above and, in the future, through the Grants Gateway:
- Written progress reports in accordance with the forms and formats provided by the Extramural Grants Administration, no later than 30 days after the end of each reporting period.
  - A final cumulative progress report in accordance with the forms and formats provided by the Extramural Grants Administration, no later than 60 days after the end of the contract term.

All payment and reporting requirements will be detailed in Attachment D of the final NYS Master Contract for Grants.

## **I. Minority & Woman-Owned Business Enterprise Requirements**

Pursuant to New York State Executive Law Article 15-A, the New York State Department of Health (“DOH”) recognizes its obligation to promote opportunities for maximum feasible participation of certified minority- and women-owned business enterprises and the employment of minority group members and women in the performance of DOH contracts.

In 2006, the State of New York commissioned a disparity study to evaluate whether minority and women-owned business enterprises had a full and fair opportunity to participate in state contracting. The findings of the study were published on April 29, 2010, under the title "The State of Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises: Evidence from New York" (“Disparity Study”). The report found evidence of statistically significant disparities between the level of participation of minority- and women-owned business enterprises in state procurement contracting versus the number of minority- and women-owned business enterprises that were ready, willing and able to participate in state procurements. As a result of these findings, the Disparity Study made recommendations concerning the implementation and operation of the statewide certified minority- and women-owned business enterprises program. The recommendations from the Disparity Study culminated in the enactment and the implementation of New York State Executive Law Article 15-A, which requires, among other things, that DOH establish goals for maximum feasible participation of New York State Certified minority- and

women-owned business enterprises (“MWBE”) and the employment of minority groups members and women in the performance of New York State contracts.

### **Business Participation Opportunities for MWBEs**

For purposes of this solicitation, the New York State Department of Health hereby establishes a goal of 30% as follows:

- 1) For Not-for Profit Applicants: Eligible Expenditures include any subcontracted labor or services, equipment, materials, or any combined purchase of the foregoing under a contract awarded from this solicitation.
- 2) For-Profit and Municipality Applicants: Eligible Expenditures include the value of the budget in total.

The goal on the eligible portion of this contract will be 15% for Minority-Owned Business Enterprises (“MBE”) participation and 15% for Women-Owned Business Enterprises (“WBE”) participation (based on the current availability of qualified MBEs and WBEs and outreach efforts to certified MWBE firms). A contractor (“Contractor”) on the subject contract (“Contract”) must document good faith efforts to provide meaningful participation by MWBEs as subcontractors or suppliers in the performance of the Contract and Contractor agrees that DOH may withhold payment pending receipt of the required MWBE documentation. For guidance on how DOH will determine “good faith efforts,” refer to 5 NYCRR §142.8.

The directory of New York State Certified MWBEs can be viewed at: <https://ny.newnycontracts.com>. The directory is found in the upper right hand side of the webpage under “Search for Certified Firms” and accessed by clicking on the link entitled “MWBE Directory”. Engaging with firms found in the directory with like product(s) and/or service(s) is strongly encouraged and all communication efforts and responses should be well documented.

By submitting an application, a grantee agrees to complete an MWBE Utilization plan as directed in RFA Attachment 10. DOH will review the submitted MWBE Utilization Plan. If the plan is not accepted, DOH may issue a notice of deficiency. If a notice of deficiency is issued, Grantee agrees that it shall respond to the notice of deficiency within seven (7) business days of receipt. DOH may disqualify a Grantee as being non-responsive under the following circumstances:

- a) If a Grantee fails to submit a MWBE Utilization Plan;
- b) If a Grantee fails to submit a written remedy to a notice of deficiency;
- c) If a Grantee fails to submit a request for waiver (if applicable); or
- d) If DOH determines that the Grantee has failed to document good-faith efforts to meet the established DOH MWBE participation goals for the procurement.

In addition, successful awardees will be required to certify they have an acceptable Equal Employment Opportunity policy statement.

### **J. Limits on Administrative Expenses and Executive Compensation**

On July 1, 2013, limitations on administrative expenses and executive compensation contained within Governor Cuomo’s Executive Order #38 and related regulations published by the Department (Part 1002 to 10 NYCRR – Limits on Administrative Expenses and Executive Compensation) went into effect. Applicants agree that all state funds dispersed under this procurement will, if applicable to them, be bound by the terms, conditions, obligations and regulations promulgated by the Department. To provide assistance with compliance regarding Executive Order #38 and the related regulations, please refer to the Executive Order #38 website at: <http://executiveorder38.ny.gov>.

## K. Vendor Identification Number

Effective January 1, 2012, in order to do business with New York State, you must have a vendor identification number. As part of the Statewide Financial System (SFS), the Office of the State Comptroller's Bureau of State Expenditures has created a centralized vendor repository called the New York State Vendor File. In the event of an award and in order to initiate a contract with the New York State Department of Health, vendors must be registered in the New York State Vendor File and have a valid New York State Vendor ID.

If already enrolled in the Vendor File, please include the Vendor Identification number on the application cover sheet. If not enrolled, to request assignment of a Vendor Identification number, please submit a New York State Office of the State Comptroller Substitute Form W-9, which can be found on-line at: [http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendor\\_management/issues\\_guidance.htm](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendor_management/issues_guidance.htm).

Additional information concerning the New York State Vendor File can be obtained on-line at: [http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendor\\_management/index.htm](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendor_management/index.htm), by contacting the SFS Help Desk at 855-233-8363 or by emailing at [helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov](mailto:helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov).

## L. Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire

The New York State Department of Health recommends that vendors file the required Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire online via the New York State VendRep System. To enroll in and use the New York State VendRep System, see the VendRep System Instructions available at [http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep/vendor\\_index.htm](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep/vendor_index.htm) or go directly to the VendRep system online at <https://portal.osc.state.ny.us>.

Vendors must provide their New York State Vendor Identification Number when enrolling. To request assignment of a Vendor ID or for VendRep System assistance, contact the Office of the State Comptroller's Help Desk at 866-370-4672 or 518-408-4672 or by email at [ciohelpdesk@osc.state.ny.us](mailto:ciohelpdesk@osc.state.ny.us).

Applicants should complete and submit the Vendor Responsibility Attestation (see RFA Attachment 9).

## M. Vendor Prequalification for Not-for-Profits

All not-for-profit vendors subject to prequalification are required to prequalify prior to grant application and execution of contracts.

Pursuant to the New York State Division of Budget Bulletin H-1032, dated July 16, 2014, New York State has instituted key reform initiatives to the grant contract process which requires not-for-profits to register in the Grants Gateway and complete the Vendor Prequalification process in order for applications to be evaluated. Information on these initiatives can be found on the [Grants Reform Website](#).

**Applications received from not-for-profit applicants that have not Registered and are not Prequalified in the Grants Gateway on the application due date listed on the cover of this RFA cannot be evaluated. Such applications will be disqualified from further consideration.**

Below is a summary of the steps that must be completed to meet registration and prequalification requirements. The [Vendor Prequalification Manual](#) on the Grants Reform Website details the requirements and an [online tutorial](#) are available to walk users through the process.

### 1) Register for the Grants Gateway

- On the Grants Reform Website, download a copy of the [Registration Form for Administrator](#). A signed, notarized original form must be sent to the Division of Budget at the address provided in the instructions. You will be provided with a Username and Password allowing you to access the Grants Gateway.

If you have previously registered and do not know your Username, please email [grantsgateway@its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsgateway@its.ny.gov). If you do not know your Password, please click the [Forgot Password](#) link from the main log in page and follow the prompts.

### 2) Complete your Prequalification Application

- Log in to the [Grants Gateway](#). **If this is your first time logging in**, you will be prompted to change your password at the bottom of your Profile page. Enter a new password and click SAVE.
- Click the *Organization(s)* link at the top of the page and complete the required fields including selecting the State agency you have the most grants with. This page should be completed in its entirety before you SAVE. A *Document Vault* link will become available near the top of the page. Click this link to access the main Document Vault page.
- Answer the questions in the *Required Forms* and upload *Required Documents*. This constitutes your Prequalification Application. Optional Documents are not required unless specified in this Request for Application.
- Specific questions about the prequalification process should be referred to your agency representative or to the Grants Gateway Team at [atgrantsgateway@its.ny.gov](mailto:atgrantsgateway@its.ny.gov).

### 3) Submit Your Prequalification Application

- After completing your Prequalification Application, click the **Submit Document Vault Link** located below the Required Documents section to submit your Prequalification Application for State agency review. Once submitted the status of the Document Vault will change to *In Review*.
- If your Prequalification reviewer has questions or requests changes you will receive email notification from the Gateway system.
- Once your Prequalification Application has been approved, you will receive a Gateway notification that you are now prequalified to do business with New York State.

**Vendors are strongly encouraged to begin the process as soon as possible in order to participate in this opportunity.**

## N. General Specifications

1. By submitting the "Application Form" each applicant attests to its express authority to sign on behalf of the applicant.

2. Contractors will possess, at no cost to the State, all qualifications, licenses and permits to engage in the required business as may be required within the jurisdiction where the work specified is to be performed. Workers to be employed in the performance of this contract will possess the qualifications, training, licenses and permits as may be required within such jurisdiction.
3. Submission of an application indicates the applicant's acceptance of all conditions and terms contained in this RFA, including the terms and conditions of the contract. Any exceptions allowed by the Department during the Question and Answer Phase (Section IV.B.) must be clearly noted in a cover letter attached to the application.
4. An applicant may be disqualified from receiving awards if such applicant or any subsidiary, affiliate, partner, officer, agent or principal thereof, or anyone in its employ, has previously failed to perform satisfactorily in connection with public bidding or contracts.
5. Provisions Upon Default
  - a. The services to be performed by the Applicant shall be at all times subject to the direction and control of the Department as to all matters arising in connection with or relating to the contract resulting from this RFA.
  - b. In the event that the Applicant, through any cause, fails to perform any of the terms, covenants or promises of any contract resulting from this RFA, the Department acting for and on behalf of the State, shall thereupon have the right to terminate the contract by giving notice in writing of the fact and date of such termination to the Applicant.
  - c. If, in the judgment of the Department, the Applicant acts in such a way which is likely to or does impair or prejudice the interests of the State, the Department acting on behalf of the State, shall thereupon have the right to terminate any contract resulting from this RFA by giving notice in writing of the fact and date of such termination to the Contractor. In such case the Contractor shall receive equitable compensation for such services as shall, in the judgment of the State Comptroller, have been satisfactorily performed by the Contractor up to the date of the termination of this agreement, which such compensation shall not exceed the total cost incurred for the work which the Contractor was engaged in at the time of such termination, subject to audit by the State Comptroller.

## **V. Completing the Application, Review and Award Process**

### **A. How to Apply**

Please refer to the Quick Start Guide for assistance in applying for this procurement through the NYS Grants Gateway. This guide is available on the Grants Reform website at: <https://grantsreform.ny.gov/Grantees>.

ALL APPLICATIONS SHOULD CONFORM TO THE FORMAT/CONTENT PRESCRIBED IN RFA ATTACHMENT 2: APPLICATION CHECKLIST AND INSTRUCTIONS. POINTS WILL BE DEDUCTED FROM APPLICATIONS WHICH DEVIATE FROM THE PRESCRIBED FORMAT.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all materials to be included in the application have been properly prepared and submitted. Applications must be submitted via the Grants Gateway by the date and time posted on the cover of this RFA.

## B. Freedom of Information Law

All applications may be disclosed or used by DOH to the extent permitted by law. DOH may disclose an application to any person for the purpose of assisting in evaluating the application or for any other lawful purpose. All applications will become State agency records, which will be available to the public in accordance with the Freedom of Information Law. **Any portion of the application that an applicant believes constitutes proprietary information entitled to confidential handling, as an exception to the Freedom of Information Law, must be clearly and specifically designated in the application.** If DOH agrees with the proprietary claim, the designated portion of the application will be withheld from public disclosure. Blanket assertions of proprietary material will not be accepted, and failure to specifically designate proprietary material may be deemed a waiver of any right to confidential handling of such material.

## C. Review and Award Process

Applications will first be examined against mandatory Pass/Fail requirements by Program staff (see RFA Attachment 2). Applications that do not meet the mandatory requirements will not be considered for review, and the applicant organization and PI/PD will be notified.

Applications with minor issues (missing information that is not essential to timely review and would not impact review scores) MAY be processed, at the discretion of the State, but all issues need to be resolved prior to time of award. An application with unresolved issues at the time award recommendations are made will be determined to be non-responsive and will be disqualified.

The Department contracts with an independent peer review organization to develop and coordinate the review and scoring of applications. Each eligible application will be evaluated by an Independent Peer Review Panel (the Review Panel) assigned by the Peer Review Contractor. The Review Panel members will be selected from among non-New York State experts in the fields appropriate to the nature of the applications received. The HRSB has determined that a knowledgeable breast cancer survivor will serve as an assigned reviewer on each application. The Peer Review Contractor has established a standing Review Panel to which expertise is added to evaluate the merit of actual applications submitted in response to the RFA.

Applications will be reviewed based on the criteria specified in RFA Section V.E. Initially, a subcommittee of the Review Panel consisting of three peer reviewers will consider each application. The subcommittee of the Review Panel will use an established combination of processes to evaluate each application:

1. pre-meeting review with adjectival scoring (see table below)
2. online conferral among assigned reviewers
3. triage\* based on adjectival scores of assigned reviewers for one criterion (see Section V.E. below)
4. panel meeting discussion via teleconference, videoconference or in-person (review method chosen at the discretion of the Department) with numerical scoring (see table below).

\*Applications that are triaged (receive an adjectival score of Satisfactory or worse from each assigned reviewer for the criterion identified in Section V.E.) will not receive adjectival scores, no integers or weighting will be applied, and the application will not be further reviewed for compliance penalties.

Applications that are not triaged prior to panel meeting discussion will receive numerical scores from each participating panel member for each evaluation criterion using an integer scale that equates to adjectival scores, where 1 equates to highest merit and 9 equates to lowest merit. Review panel members' individual numeric scores given to each criterion will be totaled and divided by the number of panel members who scored the application for that criterion, then multiplied by that criterion's weight and rounded to one decimal place to give an overall panel score for the application.

	<b>Numerical Score</b>	<b>Adjectival Score</b>	<b>Guidance</b>
<b>HIGH</b>	1	Exceptional	Exceptionally strong with essentially no weaknesses
	2	Outstanding	Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses
	3	Excellent	Very strong with only some minor <sup>a</sup> weaknesses
<b>MEDIUM</b>	4	Very Good	Strong but with numerous minor weaknesses
	5	Good	Strong but with at least one moderate <sup>b</sup> weakness
	6	Satisfactory	Some strengths but also some moderate weaknesses
<b>LOW</b>	7	Fair	Some strengths but with at least one major <sup>c</sup> weakness
	8	Marginal	A few strengths and a few major weaknesses
	9	Poor	Very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses

<sup>a</sup>**Minor weakness:** An easily addressable weakness that does not substantially lessen merit and/or the expected successful completion of the overall project

<sup>b</sup>**Moderate weakness:** A weakness that lessens merit and/or the expected successful completion of the overall project

<sup>c</sup>**Major weakness:** A weakness that severely limits merit and/or the expected successful completion of the overall project

The Review Panel will comment on the responsiveness of the application to the funding mechanism as described in Section III above. The Review Panel will identify potential overlap with other resources/projects. Additionally, the Review Panel will comment on the application with regard to the Contract Policy Statements and Conditions (NYS Master Grant Contract Attachment A-1 Part B). The Review Panel may recommend administrative review and resolution prior to contract execution. Award recommendations made by the HRSB may be contingent upon the applicant's acceptance of reductions or required revisions.

The primary reviewer will prepare a written evaluation of each assigned application that is discussed by the Review Panel. Each assigned reviewer will provide a written critique of the application based on the established evaluation criteria.

#### **D. Application Format, Penalties and Summary Statements**

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all materials to be included in the application have been properly prepared and submitted. ALL APPLICATIONS SHOULD CONFORM TO THE FORMAT/CONTENT PRESCRIBED IN RFA ATTACHMENT 2. The Peer Review Contractor will assess a penalty of 0.1 point for any application that deviates from the instructions (see Application Checklist and Instructions, RFA Attachment 2).

The Peer Review Contractor will calculate final scores for the research project and compile a Summary Statement for each application for the HRSB. The Summary Statements will document

the merit evaluation and serve as the primary basis for the panel recommendation for the applications.

## **E. Review Criteria**

The Review Panel will score each application based on the following four criteria. The value assigned to each section is an indication of the respective weight that will be given when scoring an application.

Scoring ties will be resolved on the basis of the above and with consideration of the score for “Research Plan” and among those applications involved in the tie.

### ***Research Plan (40% - triage criterion)***

- To what extent are the overall strategy, proposed methods and analyses well-reasoned and the most appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project within the award period?
- Are the uses of human subjects, vertebrate animals and recombinant DNA appropriate to the overall goals of the project?
- Are potential problems discussed and alternative strategies provided?
- Are the knowledge, skills, research tools and experiences of the research team well-suited to the proposed work?
  - For early stage investigators, do they have appropriate training and experience?
  - For established investigators, have they demonstrated a track record of achievements advancing the field?
  - Are other team members appropriate for their roles in the project?
- Does the PI's/PD's (and if applicable the Co-PI's/Co-PD's) commitment and the overall research environment contribute to the likelihood of success?
- To what extent are the scientific resources, equipment and organizational support available to investigators adequate for the proposed work?

### ***Impact (20%)***

- To what extent is the project one or more of the following:
  - high risk/high reward, and/or
  - address an important under- or un-explored area of breast cancer research?
- To what extent will the project, if successfully completed, do one or more of the following:
  - open a new area of investigation,
  - satisfactorily test a novel or innovative hypothesis,
  - make an original and important contribution to prevention, treatment (including treatment of its effects), survivorship or cure for breast cancer, and/or
  - produce viable data for preparation of a full-scale research application to another organization.
- To what extent will the project lead to a useful outcome, even if the central hypothesis is disproved?

### ***Innovation (20%)***

- To what extent is the project innovative, based on one or more of the following:
  - basic concepts and hypotheses are speculative or exploratory,
  - applies or develops state-of-the-art technologies, methods, tools or resources to breast cancer research or clinical practice, and/or
  - develops new paradigms or challenges existing paradigms of current research or clinical practice.

### ***Budget (20%)***

- Are the items for each budget line explained?

- Are budget line items adequately justified as necessary for successful completion of the project?
- Are the budgeted amounts reasonable, cost-effective and appropriate to accomplish the research aims/goals, tasks and performance measures?
- Are there specific excessive or unnecessary budget items?

NOTE: the entire Review Panel will review and comment on, but not score the budget. Numeric scores for the Budget will be provided only by the assigned reviewers.

## **F. Health Research Scientific Board Review**

The HRSB will consider research applications that receive a final score (after penalties are assessed) of 1.0 through 5.9. The HRSB will not consider applications that receive a final score of 6.0 to 9.0.

The HRSB will discuss the application strengths and weaknesses, administrative and budget recommendations as outlined in the reports of the Review Panel. When making funding recommendations, the HRSB will consider Review Panel scores and recommendations, responsiveness to the mission of the HRSB, responsiveness to the RFA, programmatic balance and availability of funds. The HRSB may vote in favor or against any application submitted for funding. If an application for which there are available funds is not recommended for funding, the HRSB will fully justify in writing why the application was not approved. The HRSB will vote on each application that scores 5.9 or better until available funds are exhausted and in compliance with HRSB bylaws as well as applicable New York State laws and regulations.

The HRSB may elect, at its discretion, to continue making recommendations for possible funding of proposals beyond what is available for the funding mechanism and the RFA. These applications will be given the status “Approved, but not funded.” “Approved, but not funded” applications may be funded should additional funds become available.

The HRSB will make recommendations for funding to the Commissioner of Health.

## **G. Award Decisions and Pre-Funding Requirements**

Grant award contracts are entered into between New York State applicant organizations and the New York State Department of Health. Funding is contingent upon full execution of a contract between the applicant organization and the New York State Department of Health and approval by the Commissioner of Health, State Attorney General and State Comptroller.

Following the Commissioner’s approval of awards, PIs/PDs and their applicant organizations will receive formal notification in writing.

Prior to contract execution, program administrators will require resolution/submission/confirmation of the following items, as relevant to each application:

- Revisions to Workplan, project duration or budget
- Overlap
- Areas of possible concern with regard to Contract Policy Statements and Conditions (NYS Master Grant Contract Attachment A-1 Part B)
- Approved F&A Cost Rate

Once an award has been made, all applicants (whether their application was funded or not funded) may request a debriefing of their application. Please note the debriefing will be limited only to the strengths and weaknesses of the subject application and will not include any

discussion of other applications. Requests must be received no later than fifteen (15) business days from date of award or non-award announcement.

To request a debriefing, please send an email to [hrrsb@health.ny.gov](mailto:hrrsb@health.ny.gov). In the subject line, please write: *Debriefing Request (Peter T. Rowley Rd 4 RFA)*.

In the event unsuccessful applicants wish to protest the award resulting from this RFA, applicants should follow the protest procedures established by the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC). These procedures can be found on the OSC website at <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/agencies/guide/MyWebHelp>.

## **H. Award Announcements**

HRSB makes public in press releases and annual reports to the Governor and Legislature, the project title, the PI/PD, the name of the organization, total projects costs and duration. The project abstract and progress report abstracts may also be edited and made public.

## **VI. Attachments**

Please note that attachments can be accessed in the “Pre-Submission Uploads” section of an online application and are not included in the RFA document. In order to access the online application and other required documents such as the attachments, prospective applicants must be registered and logged into the NYS Grants Gateway in the user role of either a “Grantee” or a “Grantee Contract Signatory.”

Attachment 1: Letter of Intent

Attachment 2: Application Checklist and Instructions

Attachment 3: Application Forms 1-5

Attachment 4: Application Form 1-S

Attachment 5: Application Form 6

Attachment 6: Application Form 6-S

Attachment 7: Applications Forms 7-11

Attachment 8: Application Form 12

Attachment 9: Vendor Responsibility Attestation

Attachment 10: Minority & Women-Owned Business Enterprise Requirement Forms