



# **RFP/Delivering Sources of Strength Suicide Prevention Office**

## **Request for Proposals**

**Grant Procurements**

**(On-Line Submission Required)**

**August 2021**

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## **1. Introduction and Background**

### **1.1 Purpose of the Request for Proposal**

The New York State Office of Mental Health(OMH) thru its Suicide Prevention Center of New York (SPCNY) is pleased to announce the availability of funds dedicated to the implementation of Sources of Strength, a suicide prevention program, in New York State secondary schools and youth serving organizations. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide is the second leading cause of death for adolescent children, and the suicide rate for youth (ages 10-24) has increased 47% and 44% in the United States and New York State, respectively, over the last two decades. The mission of the SPCNY at OMH is to promote, coordinate, and strategically advance suicide prevention with the aim of reducing suicide attempts and deaths among New Yorkers. That mission is advanced in part through supporting increased use of evidence-based programs, such as Sources of Strength.

Sources of Strength is a nationally recognized upstream suicide prevention program that has been supported by OMH since 2010 and occupies an important place in the state's broader effort to support resiliency and prevent suicide among youth. Sources of Strength is a universal school-based suicide prevention program designed to build protective influences across a defined adolescent population and reduce the likelihood that vulnerable youth die by suicide. The program trains students as peer leaders and connects them with mentoring adult advisors at school and in the community. Advisors support the peer leaders in conducting well-defined messaging activities that aim to change peer group norms influencing coping practices and problem solving. The program is strength-based and promotes critical protective factors that are linked to overall psychological wellness and reduced suicide risk.

Sources of Strength trains diverse secondary school students (peer leaders) to conduct prevention activities through direct personal contacts and presentations/media designed to promote healthy coping norms and youth-adult connectedness, including help seeking for distress and suicide concerns (i.e. protective factors linked to reduce risk for suicide). Program components include (1) orienting school leadership with an overview of the Sources of Strength program, including keys to successful implementation (2) developing clear protocols to ensure safety of students identified as suicidal, which includes referrals for mental health evaluations, (3) increasing school staff members' preparation through training, which includes knowledge of their role in Sources of Strength as well as knowledge of their school protocol and procedures for responding to students in life threatening crisis. Training is provided to 2 or more school staff – identified as supported by school administration – to serve as adult advisors through the Sources of Strength adult advisors curriculum, to facilitate peer leader teams in conducting safe suicide prevention activities. (4) Schools engage teens in suicide prevention through careful selection and training of peer leaders from diverse student groups and cliques, using the Sources of Strength curriculum.

The number of peer leaders trained in each school will vary by school size. Training will be provided by a certified trainer and ongoing technical assistance will be provided by the organization awarded this RFP. The awardee must train peer leaders to initiate and

conduct a series of systematic peer-to-peer prevention activities under the supervision of trained adult mentors. Messaging activities are to directly target and modify the help-seeking attitudes and behaviors of youths throughout each school, so that students are better able to manage distress (including anxiety, depression, and stress) and draw on positive coping resources including capable adults in their community. Trained peer leaders also identify “trusted” adults in their community to whom they can call in for help when they are concerned about a peer in crisis. The purpose is to increase social connectedness of students overall and to connect potentially suicidal youths with responsive, competent adults, who can provide ongoing support as well as facilitate referrals and follow-through with formal helping services, as needed. A major emphasis is on increasing connection between adults and distressed youths in peripheral peer networks with minimal positive contact with adults. In addition to this comprehensive program for secondary schools, the agency awarded the RFP will report training and school accomplishments in implementing the Sources of Strength model.

## **1.2 Target Population/Eligibility Criteria**

This RFP is a request for an agency to deliver the Sources of Strength Program to youth in grades 8-12 in schools (or other youth serving settings) in New York State. Delivering the Sources of Strength Program is an important part of a broader suicide prevention effort by New York State targeting youth.

The recipient will be expected to not only support Sources of Strength implementation in new schools, but also maintain Sources of Strength in schools that have implemented the program in the past.

## **1.3 Bidder’s Conference**

A Bidder’s Conference will be held at the date and time listed in the Schedule. Prospective Proposers’ participation in this conference is highly encouraged but not mandatory.

The purpose of the Bidder’s Conference is to:

- Familiarize bidders with and explain the expectation of contracting with Sources of Strength (national organization);
- Provide additional description of the project;
- Explain the RFP process; and
- Answer any questions Proposers may have related to the project or the process.

The details for the Bidders’ Conference are as follows:

Date/Time – Monday, 8/30/21 at 1:00 PM EST

### **Join from the meeting link**

<https://meetny.webex.com/meetny/j.php?MTID=ma3813a1bf341311a24dacf4018124a4a>

### Join by phone

+1-518-549-0500 USA Toll

### Join by meeting number

Meeting number (access code): 161 980 8775

Meeting password: EuycXm43MU8

### Tap to join from a mobile device (attendees only)

+1-518-549-0500

1619808775##

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## 2. Proposal Submissions

### 2.1 Designated Contact/Issuing Officer

OMH has assigned an Issuing Officer for this project. The Issuing Officer or a designee shall be the sole point of contact regarding the RFP from the date of issuance of the RFP until the issuance of the Notice of Conditional Award. To avoid being deemed non-responsive, an applicant is restricted from making contact with any other personnel of OMH regarding the RFP. Certain findings of non-responsibility can result in rejection for a contract award. The Issuing Officer for this RFP is:

Carol Swiderski  
Contract Management Specialist 2  
New York State Office of Mental Health  
Contracts and Claims  
44 Holland Avenue, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Albany, NY 12229  
[carol.swiderski@omh.ny.gov](mailto:carol.swiderski@omh.ny.gov)

### 2.2 Letter of Intent

Agencies interested in responding to this Request for Proposal **must** submit a Letter of Intent to Bid to the OMH Issuing Officer by 10/13/21. The Letter of Intent to Bid shall be non-binding.

Please email the letter of intent to the Issuing Officer:

[carol.swiderski@omh.ny.gov](mailto:carol.swiderski@omh.ny.gov)

Subject Line: Sources of Strength LOI

### **2.3 Key Events/Timeline**

RFP Release Date	8/12/21
Bidder's Conference	8/30/21 at 1:00 PM EST
Questions Due	9/17/21
Questions and Answers Posted on Website	10/6/21
Letter of Intent to Bid Due	10/13/21
Proposals Due by 4:00 PM EST	10/27/21
Anticipated Award Notification	11/19/21
Anticipated Contract Start Date	1/1/2022

### **2.4 Disposition of Proposals**

All proposals received by the due date become the property of OMH and shall not be returned. Any proposals received after the due date will be returned to the applicant unopened.

### **2.5 Eligible Agencies**

Eligible applicants are not-for-profit agencies with 501(c) (3) incorporation that have experience implementing evidence-based prevention programming in youth serving organizational settings, such as schools.

Please be advised that all questions regarding Eligibility will be responded to through the official posting of the Questions and Answers. No questions about Eligibility will be responded to either individually or prior to the posting of the Q&As.

### **2.6 RFP Questions and Clarifications**

All questions or requests for clarification concerning the RFP shall be submitted in writing to the Issuing Officer by e-mail to [carol.swiderski@omh.ny.gov](mailto:carol.swiderski@omh.ny.gov) by 4:00 PM EST on the "Questions Due" date indicated in section 2.3 and will be limited to addressing only those questions submitted by the deadline. No questions can be submitted or will be answered after this date. No questions will be answered by telephone or in person.

The questions and official answers will be posted on the OMH website by 10/6/21.

### **2.7 Addenda to Request for Proposals**

In the event that it becomes necessary to revise any part of the RFP during the application submission period, an addendum will be posted on the OMH website, the Grants Gateway and the NYS Contract Reporter.

It is the applicant's responsibility to periodically review the OMH website, the NYS Contract Reporter and Grants Gateway to learn of revisions or addendums to this RFP. No other notification will be given.

## **2.8 Disqualification Factors**

Following the opening of bids, a preliminary review of all proposals will be conducted by the Issuing Officer or a designee to review each proposal's submission for completeness and verify that all eligibility criteria have been met. Additionally, during the proposal evaluation process, evaluators will also be reviewing eligibility criteria and confirming that they have been met. During the course of either of these review processes, proposals that do not meet basic participation standards will be disqualified, specifically:

- Proposals from applicants that do not meet the eligibility criteria as outlined in 2.5; or
- Proposals that do not comply with bid submission and/or required format instructions as specified in 2.11 or
- Proposals from eligible not-for-profit applicants who have not completed Vendor Prequalification, as described in 2.11, by the proposal due date of 4:00 PM EST on 10/27/21.

## **2.9 Grants Gateway Requirement**

Pursuant to the New York State Division of Budget Bulletin H-1032, dated June 7, 2013, New York State has instituted key reform initiatives to the grant contract process which require not-for-profits to register in the [Grants Gateway](#) and complete the Vendor Prequalification process in order for proposals to be evaluated and any resulting contracts executed.

Proposals received from eligible not-for-profit applicants who have not been Prequalified by the proposal due date of 4:00 PM EST on 10/27/21 cannot be evaluated; therefore, such proposals will be disqualified from further consideration.

**Please do not delay in beginning and completing the prequalification process. The State reserves five (5) days to review submitted prequalification applications. Prequalification applications submitted to the State for review less than 5 days prior to the RFP due date and time may not be considered. Applicants should not assume their prequalification information will be reviewed if they do not adhere to this timeframe.**

## **2.10 Proposals Executive Order #38**

[Pursuant to Executive Order #38](#), dated January 18, 2012, OMH promulgated regulations regarding limits on administrative costs of and executive compensation paid by covered providers. See 14 NYCRR

Part 513. Any contract awarded through this RFP will be subject to such restrictions and to related requirements. Please refer to Appendix C of this RFP for a link to OMH Master Contract Forms and Instructions, Attachment A-1, Section A.12 (Mental Health Regulations). See also [Executive Order #38 Homepage](#).

## **2.11 Instructions for Bid Submission and Required Format**

Each proposal submission through the Grants Gateway is required to contain:

- Operating Budget (Appendix B)
- Budget Narrative (Appendix B1)

**All applicants must be registered with the New York State Grants Gateway System (GGS) and all Not-for-Profit agencies must be prequalified prior to proposal submission.**

**If you are not already registered:**

Registration forms are available at the GGS website:

<https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/register-your-organization>

Include your SFS Vendor ID on the form; if you are a new vendor and do not have a SFS Vendor ID, include a Substitute for W-9 with your signed, notarized registration (also available from the website).

All registration must include an Organization Chart in order to be processed. When you receive your login information, log in and change your password.

If you are an applicant, and have problems complying with this provision, please contact the GGS help desk via email: [Grantsgateway@its.ny.gov](mailto:Grantsgateway@its.ny.gov) -- OR -- by telephone: 1-518-474-5595.

### **How to Submit a Proposal**

Proposals must be submitted online via the Grants Gateway by the date and time posted on the cover of this RFP. Tutorials (training videos) for use of the Grants Gateway (and upon user log in):

**You must use Internet Explorer (11 or higher) to access the Grants Gateway. Using Chrome or Firefox causes errors in the Work Plan section of the application.**

To apply, log into the Grants Gateway as a Grantee, Grantee Contract Signatory or Grantee System Administrator and click on the View Opportunities button under View Available Opportunities. To get started, in the Search Criteria, enter the Grant Opportunity name provided on the cover page of this RFP, select the Office of Mental

Health as the Funding Agency and hit the Search button. Click on the name of the Grant Opportunity from the search results grid and then click on the APPLY FOR GRANT OPPORTUNITY button located at the bottom left of the Main page of the Grant Opportunity.

In order to access the online proposal and other required documents such as the attachments, you MUST be registered and logged into the NYS Grants Gateway system in the user role of either a “Grantee” or a “Grantee Contract Signatory” or a “Grantee System Administrator”.

The ‘Grantee’ role may ONLY Initiate and Save changes to the application such as add/update information to forms, upload documents while the user logged in as a ‘Grantee Contract Signatory’ or a ‘Grantee System Administrator’ role can perform all the tasks of Grantee role and in addition, can SUBMIT the application to the State. When the application is ready for submission, click the ‘Status Changes’ tab, then click the ‘Apply Status’ button under “APPLICATION SUBMITTED” before the due date and time.

For further information on how to apply, and other information, please refer to the Vendor User Manual document.

Reference materials and videos are available for Grantees applying to funding opportunities on the NYS Grants Gateway. Please visit the Grantee Documents section on Grants Management website.

Late proposals will not be accepted. Proposals will not be accepted via fax, e-mail, hard copy or hand delivery.

### **Helpful Links**

Some helpful links for questions of a technical nature are below.

Grants Reform Videos (includes a document vault tutorial and an application tutorial) on

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYnWskVc7B3ajjOVfOHL6UA>

(Technical questions)

Grants Team Email (Proposal Completion, Policy and Registration questions): [grantsgateway@its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsgateway@its.ny.gov) or by phone at 518-474-5595.

## **2.12 Instructions for completing the Workplan and Objectives in NYS Grants Gateway**

The Workplan Overview Form will be used to create the Work Plan portion of the contract. Some of the information requested will be duplicative of information provided earlier in the application. Be sure to follow the guidance provided below.

The Work Plan Period should reflect the anticipated contract period. Contracts will be approved for a five-year term.

The Project Summary section should include a high-level overview of the project as instructed.

The Organizational Capacity section should include the information requested regarding staffing and relevant experience of staff and any applicable consultants to be involved in undertaking the proposed project.

The Objectives and Tasks section should identify grantee-defined objectives and tasks that are relevant to the completion of the proposed project. To get started, add your first Objective Name and Description and then click the [SAVE] button at the top of the page. After hitting Save, a field for the Task Name and Task Description will show under the Objective box. Complete both fields and hit the [SAVE] button at the top of the page. After entering the Task information and clicking Save, you will now see a box for the Performance Measure information and a box to enter a second Task. Enter a Performance Measure Name and select the Performance Measure Data Capture Type from the dropdown box. The type you choose from the dropdown will show on the screen for you to complete. Once you've entered the name, data capture type and the text/integer/or date as applicable, click the [SAVE] button at the top of the page.

For Performance Measure Name restate the Objective then enter the narrative requested in the box below. Performance Measures are also grantee-defined and should reflect some measurable benchmark(s) in order to demonstrate adequate progress within the 18 months of the award date, as required by the RFP. Once entered, click Save. You may continue to add Objectives, Tasks and Performance Measures up to and including the max amount allowed by the state.

The online Workplan is essentially an outline/summary of the work associated with the Project(s) described in the sections above. Please note that if an application is selected for award, the Workplan will be subject to change and can be updated during the contract development/negotiation process.

Applicants should refer to Section 5.2.4 Grantee Defined Workplan of the 'Grantee User Guide' ([Click here for Grants Gateway: Vendor User Guide](#) for detailed instructions on how to complete the Workplan.

### 3. Administrative Information

#### 3.1 Reserved Rights

OMH reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals received in response to the RFP that are deemed non-responsive or do not meet the minimum requirements or are determined to be otherwise unacceptable, in the agency's sole discretion;
- Withdraw the RFP at any time, at the agency's sole discretion
- Make an award under the RFP in whole or in part;
- Disqualify and applicant whose conduct and/or proposal fails to conform to the requirements of the RFP;
- Seek clarifications and revisions of proposals for the purposes of assuring a full understanding of the responsiveness to this solicitation requirements;
- Use proposal information obtained through 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 RFP;
- Prior to the bid opening, direct applicants to submit proposal modifications addressing subsequent RFP amendments;
- Prior to the bid opening, amend the RFP specifications to correct errors or oversight, supply additional information, or extend any of the scheduled dates or requirements and provide notification to potential bidders via the OMH website, Grants Gateway and the New York State (NYS) Contract Reporter;
- Eliminate any non-material specifications that cannot be complied with by all of the prospective applicants;
- Waive any requirements that are not material;
- Negotiate any aspect of the proposal with the successful applicant in order to ensure that the final agreement meets OMH objectives and is in the best interests of the State;
- Conduct contract negotiations with the next responsible applicant, should the agency be unsuccessful in negotiating with the selected applicant;
- 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 applicant's proposal and/or to determine a applicant's compliance with the requirements of the solicitation;
- Cancel or modify contracts due to insufficiency of appropriations, cause, convenience, mutual consent, non-responsibility, or a "force majeure".

### **3.2 Debriefing**

OMH will issue award and non-award notifications to all applicants. Non-awarded applicants may request a debriefing in writing requesting feedback on their own proposal, within 15 business days of the OMH dated letter. OMH will not offer debriefing to providers who are awarded a team. OMH will not offer ranking, statistical, or cost information of other proposals until after the NYS Office of the State Comptroller has approved all awards under this RFP. Written debriefing requests may be sent to the Designated Contact, as defined in Section 2.1.

### **3.3 Protests Related to the Solicitation Process**

Protests based on errors or omissions in the solicitation process, which are or should have been apparent prior to the deadline for receipt of all written questions for this RFP, must be filed prior to the deadline for questions. In the event an applicant files a timely protest based on error or omission in the solicitation process, the Commissioner of OMH or their designee will review such protest and may, as appropriate, issue a written response or addendum to the RFP to be posted on the OMH website in the RFP section. Protests of an award decision must be filed within fifteen (15) business days after the notice of conditional award or five (5) business days from the date of the debriefing. The Commissioner or their designee will review the matter and issue a written decision within twenty (20) business days of receipt of protest.

All protests must be in writing and must clearly and fully state the legal and factual grounds for the protest and include all relevant documentation. The written documentation should clearly state reference to the RFP title and due date. Such protests must be submitted to:

New York State Office of Mental Health  
Commissioner Ann Marie T. Sullivan, M.D.  
44 Holland Ave  
Albany, NY 12229

### **3.4 Term of Contracts**

The contracts awarded in response to this RFP will be for a five-year term. Selected applicants awarded a contract under this RFP will be required to adhere to all terms and conditions in OMH's Master Grant Contract.

### **3.5 Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises**

OMH recognizes its obligation to promote opportunities for maximum feasible participation of certified minority and women-owned business enterprises (MWBs) and the employment of minority group members and women in the performance of OMH contracts. In accordance with New York State Executive Law Article 15-A, OMH hereby establishes a

0% goal for Minority-owned Business Enterprise (MBE) participation, a 0% goal for Women-owned Business Enterprise (WBE) participation, based on the current availability of qualified MWBEs, on any award resulting from this solicitation in excess of \$25,000 for commodities and services or \$100,000 for construction.

With respect to MWBEs, each award recipient must document its good faith efforts to provide meaningful opportunities for participation by MWBEs as subcontractors and suppliers in the performance of the project to be described in each grant disbursement agreement, and must agree that OMH may withhold payment pending receipt of the required MWBE documentation. The directory of MWBEs can be viewed at <https://ny.newnycontracts.com>. For guidance on how OMH will determine a contractor's "good faith efforts", refer to 5 NYCRR §142.8.

In accordance with 5 NYCRR § 142.13, each award recipient acknowledges that if it is found to have willfully and intentionally failed to comply with the MWBE participation goals set forth herein and in its grant disbursement agreements, such finding constitutes a breach of contract and OMH may withhold payment from the award recipient as liquidated damages.

Such liquidated damages shall be calculated as an amount equaling the difference between: (1) all sums identified for payment to MWBEs had the award recipient achieved the contractual MWBE goals; and (2) all sums paid to MWBEs for work performed or material supplied under the grant disbursement agreement.

By applying, an Applicant agrees to demonstrate its good faith efforts to achieve its goals for the utilization of MWBEs by submitting evidence thereof in such form as OMH shall require. Additionally, an Applicant may be required to submit the following documents and information as evidence of compliance with the foregoing:

A. An MWBE Utilization Plan, which shall be submitted in conjunction with the execution of the grant disbursement agreement except as otherwise authorized by OMH. Any modifications or changes to the MWBE Utilization Plan after the execution of the grant disbursement agreement must be reported on a revised MWBE Utilization Plan and submitted to OMH.

OMH will review the submitted MWBE Utilization Plan and advise the award recipient of OMH acceptance or issue a notice of deficiency within 30 days of receipt.

B. If a notice of deficiency is issued, the award recipient will be required to respond to the notice of deficiency within seven (7) business days of receipt by submitting to OMH, a written remedy in response to the notice of deficiency. If the written remedy that is submitted is not timely or is found by OMH to be inadequate, OMH shall notify the award recipient and direct the award recipient to submit within five (5) business days, a request for a partial or total waiver of MWBE participation goals.

Failure to file the waiver form in a timely manner may be grounds for disqualification of the bid or proposal.

OMH may refuse to enter into a grant disbursement agreement, or terminate an existing grant disbursement agreement resulting from this solicitation, under the following circumstances:

- a. If an award recipient fails to submit a MWBE Utilization Plan;
- b. If an award recipient fails to submit a written remedy to a notice of deficiency;
- c. If an award recipient fails to submit a request for waiver; or,
- d. If OMH determines that the award recipient has failed to document good faith efforts

The award recipient will be required to attempt to utilize, in good faith, any MBE or WBE identified within its MWBE Utilization Plan, during the performance of the project. Requests for a partial or total waiver of established goal requirements may be made at any time during the term of the project, but must be made no later than prior to the submission of a request for final payment under the grant disbursement agreement.

Each award recipient will be required to submit a Quarterly MWBE Contractor Compliance & Payment Report to OMH over the term of the project, in such form and at such time as OMH shall require, documenting the progress made toward achievement of the MWBE goals established for the project.

### **3.6 Participation Opportunities for New York State Certified Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Business**

Article 17-B of the New York State Executive Law provides for more meaningful participation in public procurement by certified Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business (SDVOB), thereby further integrating such businesses into New York State's economy. OMH recognizes the need to promote the employment of service-disabled veterans and to ensure that certified service-disabled veteran-owned businesses have opportunities for maximum feasible participation in the performance of OMH contracts.

In recognition of the service and sacrifices made by service-disabled veterans and in recognition of their economic activity in doing business in New York State, applicants are expected to consider SDVOBs in the fulfillment of the requirements of the Contract. Such participation may be as subcontractors or suppliers, as proteges, or in other partnering or supporting roles.

OMH hereby establishes an overall goal of 0% for SDVOB participation, based on the current availability of qualified SDVOBs. For purposes of providing meaningful participation by SDVOBs, the Applicant/Contractor would reference the directory of New York State Certified SDVOBs found at <https://ogs.ny.gov/Veterans>. Additionally, following any resulting Contract execution, Contractor would be encouraged to contact the

Office of General Services' Division of Service-Disabled Veterans' Business Development to discuss additional methods of maximizing participation by SDVOBs on the Contract.

It would be required that "good faith efforts" to provide meaningful participation by SDVOBs as subcontractors or suppliers in the performance of a resulting awarded Contract as documented.

### **3.7 Equal Opportunity Employment**

By submission of a bid or proposal in response to this solicitation, the Applicant/Contractor agrees with all terms and conditions of Master Contract for Grants, Section IV(J) – Standard Clauses for All New York State Contracts including Clause 12 – Equal Employment Opportunities for Minorities and Women. The Contractor is required to ensure that it and any subcontractors awarded a subcontract over \$25,000 for the construction, demolition, replacement, major repair, renovation, planning or design of real property and improvements thereon (the "Work"), except where the Work is for the beneficial use of the Contractor, undertake or continue programs to ensure that minority group members and women are afforded equal employment opportunities without discrimination because of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, disability or marital status. For these purposes, equal opportunity shall apply in the areas of recruitment, employment, job assignment, promotion, upgrading, demotion, transfer, layoff, termination, and rates of pay or other forms of compensation. This requirement does not apply to (i) work, goods, or services unrelated to the Contract; or (ii) employment outside New York State.

The Applicant will be required to submit a Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises and Equal Opportunity Policy Statement, to the State Contracting Agency with their bid or proposal. To ensure compliance with this Section, the Applicant will be required to submit with the bid or proposal an Equal Opportunity Staffing Plan (Form # to be supplied during contracting process) identifying the anticipated work force to be utilized on the Contract. If awarded a Contract, Contractor shall submit a Workforce Utilization Report, in such format as shall be required by the Contracting State Agency on a monthly or quarterly basis during the term of the contract. Further, pursuant to Article 15 of the Executive Law (the "Human Rights Law"), all other State and Federal statutory and constitutional and non-discrimination provisions, the Contractor and sub-contractors will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment status because of race, creed (religion), color, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, age, disability, predisposing genetic characteristic, marital status, or domestic violence victim status, and shall also follow the requirements of the Human Rights Law with regard to non-discrimination on the basis of prior criminal conviction and prior arrest. Please Note: Failure to comply with the foregoing requirements may result in a finding of non-responsiveness, non-responsibility and/or a breach of the Contract, leading to the withholding of funds, suspension or termination of the Contract or such other actions or enforcement proceedings as allowed by the Contract.

### **3.8 Sexual Harassment Prevention Certification**

State Finance Law §139-I requires applicants on state procurements to certify that they have a written policy addressing sexual harassment prevention in the workplace and provide annual sexual harassment training (that meets the Department of Labor's model policy and training standards) to all its employees. Bids that do not contain the certification may not be considered for award; provided however, that if the applicant cannot make the certification, the applicant may provide a statement with their bid detailing the reasons why the certification cannot be made. A template certification document is being provided as part of this RFP. Applicants must complete and return the certification with their bid, or provide a statement detailing why the certification cannot be made.

### **3.9 Bid Response**

Neither the State of New York or OMH shall be responsible for the costs or expenses incurred by the applicant in preparation or presentation of the bid proposal.

### **3.10 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions**

A bid, in order to be responsive to this solicitation, must satisfy the specifications set forth in this RFP. A detailed description of this format and content requirements is presented in Section 2.11 of this RFP.

### **3.11 Freedom of Information Requirements**

All proposals submitted for OMH's consideration will be held in confidence. However, the resulting contract is subject to New York State Freedom of Information Law (FOIL). Therefore, if an applicant believes that any information in its bid constitutes a trade secret or should otherwise be treated as confidential and wishes such information not be disclosed if requested, pursuant to FOIL (Article 6 of Public Officer's Law), the applicant must submit with its bid, a separate letter specifically identifying the page number(s), line(s), or other appropriate designation(s) containing such information explaining in detail why such information is a trade secret and formally requesting that such information be kept confidential. Failure by an applicant to submit such a letter with its bid identifying trade secrets will constitute a waiver by the applicant of any rights it may have under Section 89(5) of the Public Officers Law relating to the protection of trade secrets. The proprietary nature of the information designated confidential by the applicant may be subject to disclosure if ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction. A request that an entire bid be kept confidential is not advisable since a bid cannot reasonably consist of all data subject to a FOIL proprietary status.

### 3.12 NYS and OMH Policies

The applicant/contractor must agree to comply with all applicable New York State and OMH policies, procedures, regulations and directives throughout the Term of the contract.

## 4. Evaluation Factors and Awards

### 4.1 Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be rated and ranked in order of highest score based on an evaluation of each applicant's written submission as well as OMH internal reviews.

The Evaluation will apply points in the following categories as defined in Section 6:

<b>Technical Evaluation</b>	<b>Points</b>
Experience with Target Population (6.1)	25
Description of Program – Program and service strategy (6.2)	30
Implementation – Staff Management and Relative Experience (6.3)	30
Program Evaluation (6.4)	20
Financial Assessment (6.5)	26
<b>Total Proposal Points</b>	<b>131 Points</b>

For a detailed description of evaluation criteria for the Technical Evaluation, and the Financial Assessment components, see Section 6 (Proposal Narrative).

### 4.2 Method for Evaluating Proposals

Designated staff will review each proposal for completeness and verify that all eligibility criteria are met. A complete proposal shall include all required components as described in Section 2.11. If a proposal is not complete or does not meet the basic eligibility and participation standards as outlined in Section 2.5, the proposal will be eliminated from further review. The agency will be notified of the rejection of its proposal within 10 working days of the proposal due date.

Proposals will be conducted in two parts: Technical Evaluation and Financial Assessment. The technical evaluation committee, consisting of at least three evaluators, will review the technical portion of each proposal and compute a technical score. A financial score will be computed separately based on the operating budget and budget narrative submitted.

Evaluators of the Technical Evaluation component may then meet to discuss the basis of those ratings. Following the discussion, evaluators may independently revise their original score in any section. Once completed, final Technical Evaluation scores will then be recalculated, averaged, and applied to the final Financial Assessment score to arrive at final scores.

Any proposal not receiving a minimum average score of 65 will be eliminated from consideration.

In case of a tie in the scoring process, the proposal with the highest score on the Description of Program (Section 6.2) of the Proposal Narrative will be ranked higher.

#### **4.3 Process for Awarding Contracts**

##### **4.3.1 Initial Awards and Allocations**

Proposals will be ranked, and one award made to the applicant with the highest score.

##### **4.3.2 Contract Termination and Reassignment**

There are a number of factors that may result in the contract being reassigned, e.g. poor performance, failure to achieve any established milestones, etc. A contractor will be provided notification if there is need for reassignment.

To reassign the contract, OMH will go to the next highest ranked proposal.

#### **4.4 Award Notification**

At the conclusion of the procurement, notification will be sent to successful and non-successful applicants. The award will be conditional upon OMH's review and acceptance of the identification of participating schools as referenced in Section 5.2. All awards are subject to approval by the NYS Attorney General and the Office of the State Comptroller before an operating contract can be finalized.

OMH reserves the right to conduct a readiness review of the selected applicant prior to the execution of the contract. The purpose of this review

is to verify that the applicant is able to comply with all participation standards and meets the conditions detailed in its proposal.

## 5. Scope of Work

### 5.1 Introduction

This RFP is issued to continue and build on the implementation of Sources of Strength, an upstream evidence-based suicide prevention program targeting students in secondary schools.

**Sources of Strength is a copyrighted, trademarked, and evidence-based prevention program that must be implemented with fidelity. As such, the contractor awarded the RFP must contract with Sources of Strength for training, licensing, materials, and support in the delivery of the objectives and responsibilities within.** Clarifying information regarding the contract recipient's relationship with the national Sources of Strength organization will be provided at the Bidder's Conference

The Sources of Strength Program is a universal suicide prevention program for middle and high school populations designed to decrease the number of students who become suicidal (primary prevention) and increase appropriate responses and adult help for youth who are already at high risk (secondary prevention). During the duration of the contract awarded in connection with this RFP, the Sources of Strength program will be implemented in NYS secondary schools (or other youth serving settings) following approval by SPCNY at OMH. The contract will be awarded to the agency with the highest application score based on the specific criteria laid out in this RFP demonstrating the strongest plan and readiness for supporting high quality implementation of the Sources of Strength Program in NYS secondary schools. The schools shall be selected in consultation with the SPCNY based on assessed need and willingness to implement the full model and other factors as determined by OMH. For example, schools who experience one or more student suicide deaths may become high priority schools for Sources of Strength implementation.

The Sources of Strength Model includes:

- Orientation for school administration
- School Staff Training
- Adult adviser training
- Peer Leader Training
- Ongoing Technical Support (aimed at high quality implementation of the evidenced program)

The contractor awarded the RFP shall assist schools in developing a plan to sustain the Sources of Strength program upon completion of initial OMH funding.

## 5.2 Objectives and Responsibilities

Through this initiative made possible by the New York State Office of Mental Health, the contractor will target schools in New York State according to criteria identified by SPCNY for the Sources of Strength program. The objective is to educate peer leaders and adults so that schools will have an evidence-based program for building social connection and reducing suicide and suicide attempts. The primary goal of the program is:

- 1) High quality, sustainable implementation of Sources of Strength in NYS secondary schools

The Contractor will be required to:

- Contract with Sources of Strength national organization for training, programming, and support (additional information provided at the Bidder's Conference).
- Initiate services specified in the strategies and objectives below on 01/01/2022. Identify participating schools by April 1, 2022 seeking approval from OMH.
- Develop a written communication plan to ensure coordination and regular flow of information between the contractor and OMH
- Meet with SPCNY staff at least biannually to review program processes
- Report biannually as specified in this RFP
- Have in-depth knowledge of Sources of Strength and begin peer and adult trainings in schools at or before May 1, 2022
- Develop, disseminate and report on an annual evaluation tool for participating schools to complete. The results of this annual evaluation should not only be used for feedback and monitoring of school performance, but also should be included in each EOY biannual report.

The expectation through submission of proposals to this RFP is that an applicant address how their organization will successfully meet the objectives below:

### Strategy 1: Participating Schools

Objective 1:1- Identify and obtain written agreements from participating schools

Objective 1:2 – Prioritize the training needs of each school and develop a plan to systematically roll out Sources of Strength

Strategy 2: Program Implementation

Objective 2:1 – During the first year, begin training peer leaders and adult advisors in the Sources of Strength program. Document training numbers in required reporting

Objective 2:2 – Continuously monitor school performance and provide feedback to schools; document the challenges and lessons learned in Sources of Strength implementation

**5.3 Agency Performance**

This will be measured by the metrics contained in the biannual reports as specified below.

Biannual Reports:

Biannual reports must include training and productivity reports submitted to the Suicide Prevention Center of New York at OMH. After biannual reports are submitted, reviewed, and approved, payment will be authorized for work completed.

**Biannual reports must include the following in an Excel table:**

- # of schools
- Names of schools
- Date(s) of school participation/years of implementation
- Estimated number of students exposed for the reporting period
- Date of last adult advisor Training
- Number of adult advisors trained
- Date of last peer leader training
- Number of peer leader trained.

**A biannual narrative** must also accompany the data above and include the following sections: a progress summary, challenges, lessons, and the future: lessons learned during the past six months.

**5.4 Operating Funding**

One award will be made in the amount of \$ 710,800 for the five (5) years.

Annual funding for each of the five (5) years is \$ 142,160.00.

Contract payments will be made based upon satisfaction of the Reporting Requirements as detailed in Section 5.3 and as referenced in the Master Grant Contract Boilerplate upon award.

## **6. Proposal Narrative:**

When submitting proposals for funding under this RFP, the narrative must address all components listed below, in the following order:

### **6.1 Applicant Experience with Target Population**

- a. Describe your agency's experience in supporting youth suicide prevention in general.
- b. Describe your organization's experience specifically in supporting secondary schools in high quality implementation of Sources of Strength. If you have any affiliations or partners that will support the expertise required for this project, please describe.

### **6.2 Description of Program – Program and Service Strategy**

Please address the following areas:

- a. Describe how the organization would collaborate and communicate with schools, including how recipient schools are involved in the preparation, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the project ; what obstacles you would envision; and how your organization would address these obstacles in the implementation of this initiative.
- b. Describe how you will orient school leadership to Sources of Strength (virtually and/or in-person).
- c. Describe how you will assist schools in the selection of peer leaders to ensure diverse representation that maximizes dissemination of healthy norms messaging across the student body.
- d. Describe how you will train students/peer leaders and school staff/adult advisers in Sources of Strength (virtually and/or in-person).
- e. Describe how you will provide ongoing technical assistance to peer leaders and school staff in safe messaging and positively influencing norms, including help seeking from trusted adults (virtually and/or in-person).
- f. Describe how you will ensure schools have clear protocols in place for students identified as suicidal, including referral for mental health services.
- g. Describe how you will contract with Sources of Strength for training, licensing, materials, and support in the delivery of the objectives and responsibilities within.

### **6.3 Implementation – Staff Management and Relative Experience**

- a. Provide a realistic timeline for the project (chart or graph) showing key activities, milestones, and responsible staff.
- b. Provide a list of staff who will participate in the project, showing the role of each and their level of effort and qualifications. Include the Project Director and other key personnel.
- c. Define the duties of the personnel who will coordinate and monitor the implementation of the Sources of Strength program.
- d. Describe the resources available for the proposed project (personnel, facilities, equipment). Provide evidence that services will be provided at a location that is adequate, accessible, and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- e. Estimate the number of secondary schools to implement the Sources of Strength program of the 5-year contract term and describe how that estimate was formulated.

### **6.4 Program Evaluation**

Evaluation is an important component of delivering Sources of Strength. In the context of providing participating schools an end-of-year report,

- a. Describe how you would approach evaluating school fidelity to the Sources of Strength program.
- b. Describe how you would approach evaluating the **impact** of the program at each school.

### **6.5 Financial Assessment**

- a. The proposal must include a 5-year Budget (Appendix B). \$142,160 is available annually. Note that administrative costs cannot be more than 15 %. Any travel costs included in the Budget must conform to New York State rates for travel reimbursement. Applicants should list staff by position, full-time equivalent (FTE), and salary.
- b. Describe how your agency manages its operating budget. Also, applicants must complete a Budget Narrative (Appendix B1) which should include the following:
  1. detailed expense components that make up the total operating expenses;
  2. the calculation or logic that supports the budgeted value of each category; and,

3. description of how salaries are adequate to attract and retain qualified employees.