

Fiscal Year 2006 MiRSA RFP Q&As

- Q. On the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's Web site the following statement appears: Michigan's life sciences industry focuses on the following areas: pharmaceuticals, medical devices, instrumentation, diagnostics, and biotechnology research and ancillary services. Therefore, my question is would pharmaceuticals and pharmacy technicians be categorized in the life sciences or health care industry?
- A. Pharmaceuticals and pharmacy technicians are categorized in the health care industry.
- Q. Should the resumes or biosketch of personnel be included in the proposal as part of the 15 page limit or as an attachment?
- A. Resumes and biosketches of personnel are not included as part of the 15 page limit.
- Q. Since MiRSA funds are only available for the first year of the MiRSA, there will need to be other sources of funding sought for years 2 and 3. Is it fair to list those as grant funds even though they are not secured at this time? How are you hoping the year 2 and year 3 budgets to be identified?
- A. Funds are being made available for the initial year. MiRSAs are expected to demonstrate that there is a plan for building institutional sustainability for a minimum of at least three years. You will need to seek other funding sources for years 2 and 3. These other sources would not be considered grant funds.
- Q. Can the Convener and Applicant be the same entity?
- A. Yes, the applicant and convener can be the same entity.
- Q. Can the Convener, Applicant and Fiscal Agent be the same entity?
- A. Yes, the Convener, Applicant and Fiscal Agent can be the same entity.
- Q. What if the applicant doesn't exist today but hope to gain an entity as a result of the RSA? (This question is in reference to proposals being funded as an RSA in its developmental stages.)
- A. The application must clearly articulate a problem or set of problems affecting the regional industry that will be addressed by the RSA. The proposal must demonstrate strong employer support and that the new entity will be formed. The industry sector must be identified and all of the Request for Proposal (RFP) application criteria must be met. At least one entity still must serve as the applicant and assume the legal responsibilities of the grant. The same or another entity must assume the convener and/or the fiscal responsibilities associated with the grant.

Q. What if there is lack of alliance and you see a natural alliance that almost exists? (This question is in reference to whether or not there is a requirement for a "formal" industry alliance and also in reference to the role of the convener.)

A. Employers are the most important partners in the RSA because the alliance is built around their workforce needs. The proposal must show evidence that the development of the skills alliance is employer-driven. Additionally, someone has to take the lead and take responsibility as the convener. A timeframe depicting the information and the demand for the alliance needs to be provided.

Q. Under Standard One (State and Regional Priority Industry Areas) what other industries would you consider?

A. Applicants must show that plans for their RSA align with state and regional priority industries. By definition, a RSA focuses on solving workforce problems affecting employers in a defined industry and region. In order to be considered, the industry must account for a significant share of the local economic activity and employment.

Q. Would Information Technology be considered for funding?

A. Information Technology would be considered. Hospitality, and tourism are examples of other industries that would also be considered.

Q. Any suggestions or advice concerning writing the proposal?

A. Be clear and concise on what you will do and how you will achieve it. Follow the format as designated in the application and address each standard.

Q. Do you need to have all the employers involved to submit the proposal? (This question is in reference to the universe of employers within the industry sector.)

A. No, not all employers within the industry sector are required to be involved at the time of application. Employers should be the driving force behind the RSA and each employer should indicate how they would contribute to the RSA by submitting the Skills Alliance Endorsement and Commitment form (Exhibit A). We would hope the RSA would grow and add more employers. Both short and long term goals for adding additional employers should be stated in the application.

Q. Will the Webinar dates and times be posted on the Web site? Will the Webinar have different information?

A. Yes, the Webinar information is already posted to the Web. No, the Webinar will not have different information from what was presented at the Pre-bid information meeting.

Q. Standard 8, first bullet (Regularly assessing the impact of RSA on targeted businesses"), do you want that written in the proposal?

A. No, while the directions for each of the standards do not have to be repeated verbatim in the application, the standard number and/or titles for the requirements ("Business Impact Assessment") should be referenced.

Q. Participate in External Evaluation, what does that mean? Do you want to know the effectiveness of the RSA? Should this be included in the proposal?

A. Participation in the External Evaluation may involve arranging interviews with RSA state staff and other relevant stakeholders. Correct, we do want assess the effectiveness of the RSA. We want to know if it's working, how is it working, etc., and to share best practices with other RSAs. The application should indicate a willingness to participate and share best practices as part of the external evaluation.

Q. What is an RSA Profile? (This question is in reference to the MiRSA profile section included with the Monthly Narrative Report requirements – Exhibit B).

A. The RSA profile provides a snapshot of the RSA and its ongoing status i.e., region, partners, membership, is it growing, etc. This information is being utilized by the State in providing updates about RSA activities.

Q. Whose budget year?

A. Fiscal Year 2006 refers to the state's fiscal year, commencing October 1, 2005 and ending September 30, 2006.

Q. If you have a program that you piloted do you want us to show that on the budget?

A. Yes, if it is part of the RSA activity that will be taking place during the three-year period, show that as either cash or in-kind match, whichever is applicable.

Q. Are the monthly reports shared?

A. Yes, information obtained from the monthly narrative reports is shared between RSA staff, RSA advisory board members, and the Department's Executive Office. Information about RSA best practices will be shared statewide. So far we have only shared information about best practices at our statewide meetings. We are hoping to start posting this information on the RSA Web site.

Q. Define employer – is this nonprofit, profit?

A. Any industry that hires would be considered an employer.

- Q. Will the questions be posted daily to Web site?
- A. Questions will be posted and updated on the Web site on an on-going basis.
- Q. Would you please make available in .rft or Word format, the MiRSA application package?
- A. The application form, along with Exhibit A (Endorsement), Exhibit B (Monthly Report) Exhibit C (Budget Form) are now available in Word and Excel formats on the RSA website. In addition to the application package, the fiscal year 2006 MiRSA Guide and MiRSA vision document are also available.
- Q. In the FY 2006 application package, issued 9/03/05, different state and regional priority areas are identified than during the September 6, presentation at Lansing Community College (Pre-bid information meeting) (slide on Standard 1). Which list is accurate?
- A. Both are accurate. The identified industries contained within the RFP are: advanced manufacturing and materials development, healthcare, life sciences, homeland security, and other industries of state and/or regional importance. The identified industries in the Pre-bid information meeting were: life Sciences, advanced manufacturing and materials, alternative energy, homeland security, and other industry of regional importance. Note: The application package was issued on 8/30/05.
- Q. Does the fifteen-page limit include the cover sheet and attached letters of support?
- A. No. Attachments do not count toward the fifteen-page limit.
- Q. Is the \$75,000 - \$80,000 range per MiRSA for a one year period, so it is \$70-\$80K each of the three years?
- A. No. The funds are being made available to stimulate and support MiRSAs during the initial year. MiRSAs are expected to demonstrate that there is a plan for building institutional sustainability for a minimum of at least three years.
- Q. How do I request a customized profile or employment and wage data on a specific industry in a specific region?
- A. Assistance in obtaining regional labor market information for industries may be requested by e-mailing rsalmi_lmi@michigan.gov. Requests will be answered on a first-come, first served basis, and normally will take two to three days. Requests should be received by no later than September 30, 2005 in order to ensure a timely response.