**City of Seattle**

**Department of Education and Early Learning**

**REQUEST FOR INVESTMENT (RFI)**

**Project Title:**

**Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) and SPP Pathway**

**Schedule**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Schedule of Events** | **Date/Time** | **Where** |
| RFI Release | April 20, 2015 | 1. Daily Journal of Commerce 2. Department of Education and Early Learning Website page: <http://www.seattle.gov/education> |
| Information Session | April 28, 2015  9:00am-11:00am | 2100 Building (2100 24th Avenue South Seattle, WA 98144)  Call in instructions available by Friday April 24, 2015 |
| Questions Deadline | May 4, 2015 | Email all questions to [leilani.delacruz@seattle.gov](mailto:leilani.delacruz@seattle.gov) |
| Response Deadline\* | May 7, 2015 | Submission instructions included in Section 4 |
| Announcement of Successful Proposer(s) | May 22, 2015 |  |
| Anticipated Contract Negotiation Schedule | June 2015 |  |
| Contract Execution | September 1, 2015 |  |

\*Dates following the Response Deadline are based on best estimates. DEEL will publish updates to the timeline as needed.

*The City reserves the right to modify this schedule.*

*Changes will be posted on the* [*DEEL website*](http://www.seattle.gov/education)*.*

City Project Manager:

Leilani Dela Cruz, [leilani.delacruz@seattle.gov](mailto:leilani.delacruz@seattle.gov), (206) 684-3395

Unless authorized by the Project Manager, no other City official or employee may speak for the City regarding this solicitation until award is complete. Any Proposer contacting other City officials or employees does so at Proposer’s own risk. The City is not bound by such information.

**Table of Contents**

[1. Purpose and Background 3](#_Toc370392903)

[2. Minimum Qualifications: SPP vs. SPP Pathway 4](#_Toc370392906)

[3. Description of Preschool Requirements](#_Toc370392908) 5

[4. Response Materials and Submittal 6](#_Toc370392909)

[5. Selection Process 7](#_Toc370392910)

[6. Award and Contract Execution 11](#_Toc370392911)

[7. RFI Information](#_Toc370392912) 12

[8. References](#_Toc370392913) 16

# Purpose and Background

The Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL) is charged with helping to ensure children are prepared to enter school and helping to close the achievement and opportunity gaps by providing high quality early learning opportunities to Seattle’s 3- and 4-year-old children. To do so, DEEL is requesting applications from qualified Proposers to deliver high-quality preschool services. There are two options for responding to the RFI for the 2015-16 school year:

1. If your organization meets all of the eligibility requirements, you can apply to become a provider of the Seattle Preschool Program (SPP).
2. If your organization does not currently meet the eligibility requirements, but has the capacity to do so with additional support, you can apply to the Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) Pathway. Providers can be on the SPP Pathway for up to 2 years with the intention of applying to become a provider for SPP in 2016, 2017, or 2018.

**Seattle Preschool Program Overview**

On November 4, 2014, Seattle voters approved a four-year, $58 million property tax levy to provide “accessible high-quality preschool services for Seattle children designed to improve their readiness for school and to support their subsequent academic achievement” (Ord. 124509, preamble). SPP is being phased in during a four-year demonstration period at the following rate:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SPP Phase-In Schedule** | | | | |
| **School Year** | **2015–16** | **2016–17** | **2017–18** | **2018–19** |
| Classrooms | 14 | 39 | 70 | 100 |
| Children | 280 | 780 | 1400 | 2000 |

DEEL is seeking to open 14 Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) classrooms to accommodate 280 children beginning September 2015.

It is the intent of the City of Seattle to align its Seattle Preschool Program with existing early learning programs that operate in Seattle insofar as the existing infrastructure supports high-quality preschool and positive student outcomes.

**Commitment to Racial Equity and Social Justice**

The Seattle Preschool Program is dedicated to ensuring that every aspect of the program advances racial equity and social justice and aligns with the City’s Race and Social Justice Initiative. During the development of SPP, DEEL involved the community in the RSJI review process. Since racial equity and social justice are at the core of SPP, DEEL made every effort to maximize accessibility to the review process through various community meetings as well as the formation of a Community Advisory Committee. This review process has informed several programmatic elements found in the [SPP Implementation Plan](http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OFE/AboutTheLevy/EarlyLearning/SPPImplementationPlan_April1_PostCommittee.pdf) and the [SPP Program Plan](http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OFE/AboutTheLevy/EarlyLearning/DRAFTSPPProgramPlan.pdf). Additionally, the Community Advisory Committee’s policy recommendation regarding provider contracting specifically states that “the application should not be a barrier; it needs to be accessible and simplified.”

**Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) vs. SPP Pathway**

Applying to be part of the Seattle Preschool Program is appropriate if the Proposer meets all eligibility requirements for the program (defined below). If not, the Proposer should consider the SPP Pathway which will provide funding for children from families under 300% of the federal poverty level guidelines. This will allow the Proposer time to meet the SPP eligibility requirements to apply to be an SPP provider within the next two years. The funding and support structures for these two options are different. Please see the tables below for more information.

**Proposer Reimbursement:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Seattle Preschool Program** | **Seattle Preschool Program Pathway** |
| **Full-day**: The standard reimbursement per child is $10,295. Adjustments to this rate will be made if:   * Directors, lead teachers or instructional assistants do not meet SPP requirements (rates will be reduced) * Staff exceed SPP requirements, or have bilingual certification (rates will be increased) * The Proposer receives non-City funding for classrooms converting to SPP such as Head Start, or ECEAP funding given directly to the Proposer (the cost/child reimbursement will be adjusted) | **Full-day**: Proposer will be reimbursed per slot, based on five tier achievement levels. These levels are determined by the Early Achievers (EA) rating of the Proposer’s agency:  Tier 1 (EA Level 1): $7,779  Tier 2 (EA Level 2): $7,993  Tier 3 (EA Level 3): $8,208  Tier 4 (EA Level 4): $8,422  Tier 5 (EA Level 5): $8,635  Note: A proposer who does not have Early Achievers ratings will automatically be reimbursed at the Tier 1 level |
| **Part-day**: No part-day option for SPP | **Part-day**: Proposer will be reimbursed per slot based on five-tier achievement levels:  Tier 1 (EA Level 1): $6,197  Tier 2 (EA Level 2): $6,410  Tier 3 (EA Level 3): $6,625  Tier 4 (EA Level 4): $6,840  Tier 5 (EA Level 5): $7,050  Note: A proposer who does not have Early Achievers ratings will automatically be reimbursed at the Tier 1 level |

# Minimum Qualifications: SPP vs. SPP Pathway

The following minimum qualifications are required to be considered for SPP funding or SPP Pathway funding. Proposers that do not meet these qualifications shall be rejected by the City without further consideration.

To be eligible to contract with the City to provide preschool through one of these programs, qualified Proposers will need to meet the following criteria:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Seattle Preschool Program**  **Minimum Qualifications** | **SPP Pathway**  **Minimum Qualifications** |
| **Licensing** | * Licensed by the Washington Department of Early Learning (DEL).   **or**   * Exempt from licensing requirements by virtue of being a public school or institution of higher education. | * Licensed or able to become licensed by the Washington Department of Early Learning (DEL) by September 1, 2016.   **or**   * Exempt from licensing requirements by virtue of being a public school or institution of higher education. |
| **Category** | **Seattle Preschool Program**  **Minimum Qualifications** | **SPP Pathway**  **Minimum Qualifications** |
| **Early Achievers Rating** | Proposers must be enrolled in Early Achievers (EA) and hold a rating of Level 3 or above | Must be able to enroll and begin participating in Early Achievers (EA) within 3 months of contract execution or within 3 months of becoming licensed |
| **Teacher Qualifications** | **Newly hired teachers** will be required to meet the following standards:   * Lead Teachers: Bachelor’s Degree in Early Childhood Education or a BA and a State Teaching Credential with a P-3 Endorsement * Assistant Teachers: Associate’s Degree in Early Childhood Education or two years of coursework in Early Childhood Education meeting Washington State Core Competencies for Early Care and Educational Professionals   **Existing teachers will have 4 years to meet requirements** | * Lead teacher has at least an Associate’s Degree (A.A.) in Early Childhood Education (ECE) * Assistant teacher has at least a Child Development Associate (CDA) |
| **Required Documentation to meet Minimum** **Qualifications in this RFI** | * Copy of Proposer’s DEL License * Copy of Proposer’s Early Achievers Certificate | * Copy of Proposer’s DEL License (if available) * If unlicensed:   + Copy of Certificate of Occupancy or signed Lease Agreement |

# Description of Preschool Requirements

The following are preschool requirements to be considered for either SPP funding or SPP Pathway funding.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Seattle Preschool Program** | **Seattle Preschool Program Pathway** |
| **# of Classrooms** | 2 or more (may be in one location or multiple) | 1 or more |
| **Classroom size** | No more than 20 in each classroom | No more than 20 in each classroom |
| **Classroom Demographics** | * Mixed-income * Enrollment is managed by the City, with the exception of children enrolled before contract start date | * Minimum of 8 children from families with incomes between 110.1%-300% FPL. These children’s tuition will be subsidized by the City * Enrollment is managed by the Proposer |
| **Ratio** | Not to exceed 10 students per 1 teacher (1:10) | Not to exceed 10 students per 1 teacher (1:10) |
| **Category** | **Seattle Preschool Program** | **Seattle Preschool Program Pathway** |
| **Hours per day** | 6 hours | Part -day (3 hours) or full–day (6 hours)  Must be able to become a full-day program within two years of contract start date |
| **Days per year** | 180 days | 180 days |
| **Curriculum** | Creative Curriculum or High Scope | * Evidence-based curriculum * Must be able to adopt SPP curriculum within two years of contract start date |
| **Classroom Teacher Requirements** | 1 Lead Teacher; 1 Assistant Teacher | 1 Lead Teacher; 1 Assistant Teacher |
| **Family Engagement** | Must include a universal family engagement approach that integrates intentional parent/child activities and promotes academic, social, and emotional school readiness   * Families will be provided with evidence-based activities, which could include proven home-learning activities, tied to the chosen curriculum models * Provider will host events throughout the school year to connect families to resources and information on topics such as child development and nutrition | Must be aligned with Early Achievers Family Engagement requirement. |
| **Coaching** | Allow coaches provided by DEEL unlimited access to teachers in the classroom for professional development and coaching | Allow coaches, provided by DEEL, access to teachers in the classroom. |

# Response Materials and Submittal

**Prepare response as follows. Use the following format and provide all attachments. Failure to provide all information below on proper forms and in order requested, may cause the City to reject the Proposer’s response.**

**Response Requirement:**

* **2015-16 Seattle Preschool Program Preschool or SPP Pathway RFI Application (Exhibit A) and required application items listed on checklist at end of Application**
* **Exhibit B: Information to Calculate Expected Provider Reimbursement.**

###### Response Submission.

###### Responses are due and must be receivedbyMay 7, 2015, 4:30 p.m. PST. Please mail or hand-deliver eight (8) paper copies of the RFI response. Proposer must *also* send the files electronically (see below for email instructions). The proposer has full responsibility to ensure the response arrives at the City within the deadline. A response delivered after the deadline may be rejected unless waived as immaterial by the City given specific fact-based circumstances.

Narrative responses within the 2015-16 Seattle Preschool Program Preschool or SPP Pathway RFI Application must be limited to 300 words per question. Any responses exceeding this limit will be excised from the document for purposes of evaluation.

All narrative responses must be on 8½” X 11” paper, typed or word-processed, minimum size 11 font, with 1-inch margins, double-sided, page-numbered, and stapled with the other attachments.

Responses should not be sent with covers, binders, or computer disks.

**Send hard copies:**

By US mail: Department of Education and Early Learning

RFI – Seattle Preschool Program and SPP Pathway

PO Box 94665

Seattle, WA 98124-6965

Hand-deliver [Map It](https://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&source=s_q&hl=en&geocode=&q=Seattle+Municipal+Tower,+700+5th+Ave,+Seattle,+WA+98104&aq=&sll=47.613028,-122.342064&sspn=0.386977,0.891953&vpsrc=0&ie=UTF8&hq=Seattle+Municipal+Tower,+700+5th+Ave,+Seattle,+WA+98104&hnear=&radius=15000&t=m&z=13)

or FedEx/UPS: Department of Education and Early Learning

RFI – Seattle Preschool Program and SPP Pathway

Seattle Municipal Tower

700 5th Avenue, Suite 1700

Seattle, WA 98104

**Send Electronic copy to:** [leilani.delacruz@seattle.gov](mailto:leilani.delacruz@seattle.gov)

* Proposer will submit files only in MS Word or Adobe PDF
* Please use the following naming convention for the electronic files:

**[*ProposerName*]\_SPP\_RFI\_Item#\_Item**

For example: *StarProposer*\_SPP\_RFI\_1\_Application\_Form

* Use this format for Proposer’s email Subject Heading:

**[ProposerN*ame*]\_SPP\_RFI**

**Submittal Questions:** [kathryn.repp@seattle.gov](mailto:kathryn.repp@seattle.gov) or 206-684-8556

# Selection Process

**5.1 Initial Screening**: The City will review the Legal Status information in Section III of 2015-16 Seattle Preschool Program Preschool and SPP Pathway RFI Application (Exhibit A) and Application’s Required Items (see Checklist at end of Application) for completeness and eligibility. Those meeting these criteria based on an initial screening shall proceed to the evaluation criteria outlined in Section 5.2 below.

**5.2 Proposal Evaluation:** The City will evaluate applications using the criteria below. Responses will be evaluated, scored, and ranked.

**Evaluation Criteria – Seattle Preschool Program Application Section V :**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Application Section / Item #** | **Evaluation Criteria for Full Points** | **Scoring**  **(Points)** |
| 1. DEL license | Proposed sites must be licensed | not scored |
| 1. Early Achiever (EA) Rating Level | Proposed sites must be EA Level 3 or higher | not scored |
| **HIGH NEED LOCATIONS (55 points)** | | |
| 3. Sites physically located in areas where Seattle Public Schools (SPS) elementary schools have records of low academic achievement  **OR**  Sites not physically located within the priority attendance areas but have a 5+ year track record showing that at least 40% of their preschool enrollment consists of children who matriculate to Title I or Level 1 and Level 2 schools. | Proposed sites\* located within the attendance area of Seattle Public Schools (SPS) elementary schools that meet one or more of the following criteria:   * Has received funding through Title I, Part A of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act within the past five years * Has had an overall Segmentation Level of 1 or 2 within the past three years based on the Seattle Public Schools *School Segmentation District Reports* * Has had an overall Segmentation Level of 3 within the past three years with an Absolute Score below 60, based on the Seattle Public Schools Segmentation Reports * Is a new school with a population of students who receive free and reduced-price lunch that is above SPS district wide average, or a population of students who are English Language Learners that is above SPS district wide average   **\*Agencies can fill out one application for multiple sites. However, individual sites will be scored separately** | 55 |
| 4. Sites within another SPS elementary and/or middle school attendance area | For information purposes only | Not scored |
| **Subtotal:** | | **55** |
| **SERVING LOW INCOME CHILDREN (25 points)** | | |
| 5. Provides ECEAP, Head Start, Step Ahead Preschool | Provides one or more of the listed programs that target low-income children and families. | 13 |
| 6. Provides Extended Day Care | Provides child care from 7:00 am - 6:00 pm year-round including summer when preschool is not in session. | 12 |
| **Subtotal:** | | **25** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **HIGH QUALITY PRACTICE (10 points)** | | |
| 7. Rated as an EA Level 5 | Certificate of an EA Level 5\* with the following CLASS scores:   * 6.0 for Emotional Support * 6.0 for Classroom Management * 4.5 for Instructional Support   \*If proposer is unable to provide written documentation of CLASS Scores, the City will obtain them from DEL with proposer’s permission | 5 |
| 8. Provides Dual Language Classroom | Dual language classrooms will have staff that are fully bilingual and literate in both languages; and classroom activities, materials, instruction will be in both language and cultures. | 5 |
| **Subtotal:** | | **10** |
| **NARRATIVE SECTION (10 points)** | | |
| 9. Experience serving diverse groups | * Demonstrates understanding of cultural competence and describes how cultural competence is incorporated into the program and service delivery * Demonstrates the ability to provide culturally competent services within diverse communities and shows an understanding of the challenges diverse communities face * Proven track record providing culturally and linguistically relevant services to diverse target populations | 10 |
| 10. Experience engaging families | Provides evidence of and plan for authentic partnerships with families that integrates intentional parent/child activities and promotes academic, social, and emotional school readiness | 10 |
| **Subtotal:** | | **20** |
| **TOTAL POINTS** | | **110** |
| **TIEBREAKERS (2 points per question)** | | |
| 11. Agencies operating preschool classrooms within the attendance area of a public school where English Language Learner population has exceeded 30% of the total school population within the past three years | | |
| 12. Agencies that have the capacity to provide comparatively more classrooms for SPP in comparison to other applicants | | |
| 13. Agencies operating preschool classrooms within the attendance area of a public school where the percentage of incoming kindergarteners in the attendance area has increased by more than 10% over the past two years | | |

**Evaluation Criteria – SPP Pathway Application Section VI, A:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Application Section / Item #** | **Evaluation Criteria for Full Points** | **Scoring**  **(Points)** |
| **HIGH NEED LOCATIONS (55 points)** | | |
| 3. Sites physically located in areas where Seattle Public Schools (SPS) elementary schools have records of low academic achievement  **OR**  Sites not physically located within the priority attendance areas but have a 5+ year track record showing that at least 40% of their preschool enrollment consists of children who matriculate to Title I or Level 1 and Level 2 schools. | Proposed sites\* located within the attendance area of Seattle Public Schools (SPS) elementary schools that meet one or more of the following criteria:   * Has received funding through Title I, Part A of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act within the past five years * Has had an overall Segmentation Level of 1 or 2 within the past three years based on the Seattle Public Schools *School Segmentation District Reports* * Has had an overall Segmentation Level of 3 within the past three years with an Absolute Score below 60, based on the Seattle Public Schools Segmentation Reports * Is a new school with a population of students who receive free and reduced-price lunch that is above SPS district wide average, or a population of students who are English Language Learners that is above SPS district wide average   **\*Agencies can fill out one application for multiple sites. However, individual sites will be scored separately** | 55 |
| 4. Sites within another SPS elementary and/or middle school attendance area | For information purposes only | Not scored |
| **Subtotal:** | | **55** |
| **SERVING LOW INCOME CHILDREN (25 points)** | | |
| 5. Provides ECEAP, Head Start, Step Ahead Preschool | Provides one or more of the listed programs that target low-income children and families | 13 |
| 6. Provides Extended Day Care | Provides child care from 7:00 am - 6:00 pm year-round including summer when preschool is not in session | 12 |
| **Subtotal:** | | **25** |
| **HIGH QUALITY PRACTICE (10 points)** | | |
| 5. Participating in Early Achievers | Proposer is registered in Early Achievers and participating in Level 2 activities. Proposer does not have to be EA rated to receive full points | 5 |
| 6. Provides Dual Language Classroom | Dual language classrooms will have staff that are fully bilingual and literate in both languages, and classroom activities, materials, instruction will be in both language and cultures | 5 |
| **Subtotal:** | | **10** |
| **NARRATIVE SECTION (10 points)** | | |
| 7. Experience serving diverse groups | * Demonstrates understanding of cultural competence and describes how cultural competence is incorporated into the program and service delivery * Demonstrates the ability to provide culturally competent services within diverse communities and shows an understanding of the challenges diverse communities face * Proven track record providing culturally and linguistically relevant services to diverse target populations | 10 |
| 8. Experience engaging families | Provides evidence of and plan for authentic partnerships with families that integrates intentional parent/child activities and promotes academic, social, and emotional school readiness | 10 |
| **Subtotal:** | | **20** |
| **TOTAL POINTS** | | **110** |
| **TIEBREAKERS (2 points per question)** | | |
| 11. Agencies operating preschool classrooms within the attendance area of a public school where English Language Learner population has exceeded 30% of the total school population within the past three years | | |
| 12. Agencies that have the capacity to provide comparatively more classrooms for SPP in comparison to other applicants | | |
| 13. Agencies operating preschool classrooms within the attendance area of a public school where the percentage of incoming kindergarteners in the attendance area has increased by more than 10% over the past two years | | |

**5.3 Interviews:** The City may conduct interviews. Rankings of Proposers shall be determined by the City, using the combined results of interviews and proposal submittals. Proposers invited to interview are to bring the assigned Project Manager named by the Proposer in the Proposal, and may bring other key personnel named in the Proposal. The Proposer shall not bring individuals who do not work for the Proposer or are on the project team without advance authorization by the City Project Manager.

**5.4 References:** The City may request one or more references. The City may use references named or not named by the Proposer.

**5.5 Selection:** The City shall select the Proposer(s) for award based on the application and interview (if applicable). The City intends to ensure that the selected providers meet the geographic and programmatic needs of the community. This will be evaluated on the basis of the applications received through this RFI process.

**5.6 Contract Negotiations.** The City may negotiate elements of the proposal as required to best meet the needs of the City, with the apparent successful Proposer. The City may negotiate any aspect of the proposal or the solicitation. The City does not intend to negotiate the base contract.

**5.7 Repeat of Evaluation**: If no Proposer is selected at the conclusion of all the steps, the City may return to any step in the process to repeat the evaluation with those proposals active at that step. The City shall then sequentially step through all remaining steps as if conducting a new evaluation process. The City reserves the right to terminate the process if no proposals meet its requirements.

# Award and Contract Execution

The Project Manager will provide timely notice of an intent to award to all Proposers responding to the Solicitation.

**6.1 Protests/Appeals.**

Protests: Interested parties that wish to protest any aspect of this RFI selection process shall provide written notice to the City Project Manager for this solicitation.

Appeals: The Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL) will notify proposers in writing of the acceptance or rejection of the submittal, and, if appropriate, the level of funding to be allocated. Written notification will be via email to the address submitted in the application. Any proposer wishing to appeal the decision must do so in writing within four (4) business days of the DEEL email notification. An appeal must clearly state a rationale based on one or more of the following criteria: 1) violation of the policies or guidelines established in this RFI or 2) failure to adhere to published criteria and/or procedures in carrying out the RFI process. Appeals must be sent by mail or by email to Holly Miller, Interim Director, Department of Education and Early Learning, 700 5th Avenue, Suite 1700, P.O. Box 94665, Seattle, WA 98124-6965 or [holly.miller@seattle.gov](mailto:holly.miller@seattle.gov). The DEEL Interim Director (or her designee) will review the written appeal and may request additional oral or written information from the proposer. A written decision from the DEEL Interim Director (or her designee) will be sent within four (4) business days of the receipt of the appeal. This decision is final.

**6.2 Debriefs.**

For a debriefing, contact the City Project Manager.

**6.3 Instructions to the Apparently Successful Proposer(s).**

The Apparently Successful Proposer(s) will receive an Intent to Award Letter from the City after the City makes the award decisions. The Letter will include instructions for future contracting. The Proposer(s) should anticipate the Letter will require at least the following. Proposers are encouraged to prepare these documents when possible, to eliminate risks of late compliance.

* Seattle Business License is current and all taxes due have been paid.
* State of Washington Business License.
* Certificate of Insurance
* Special Licenses (if any)

The City will not pay for any of these costs. Once the City has finalized and issued the contract for signature, the Proposer must execute the contract and provide all requested documents within 10 business days. This includes attaining a Seattle Business License, payment of associated taxes due, and providing proof of insurance. If the Proposer fails to execute the contract with all documents within the 10-day time frame, the City may cancel the award and proceed to the next ranked Proposer, or cancel or reissue this solicitation. Cancellation of an award for failure to execute the Contract as attached may disqualify the Proposer from future solicitations for this same work.

**6.4 Taxpayer Identification Number and W-9.**

Unless the Proposer has already submitted a Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification Request Form (W-9) to the City, the Proposer must submit this form prior to the contract execution date.

****

# RFI Information

This section details City instructions and requirements for proposer’s submittal. The City reserves the right in its sole discretion to reject any Proposer response that fails to comply with the instructions.

## 7.1 Information Session.

The City offers an optional information session at the time and date on Page 1. Proposers are highly encouraged to attend but it is not required. The session answers questions about the solicitation and clarifies issues. This also allows Proposers to raise concerns. Failure to raise concerns over any issues during this opportunity will be a consideration if any protest is filed regarding such items known as of this information session. If you attend the session, please bring a copy of this RFI with you.

**7.2 Questions.**

Proposers may submit written questions to [leilani.delacruz@seattle.gov](mailto:leilani.delacruz@seattle.gov) until the deadline stated on Page 1. Failure to request clarification of any inadequacy, omission, or conflict will not relieve the Proposer of responsibilities under in any subsequent contract. It is the responsibility of the interested Proposer to assure they receive responses to questions if any are issued.

## 7.3 Changes to the RFI/Addenda.

A change to this RFI will be made by formal written addendum issued by the City’s Project Manager. Addenda shall become part of this RFI and will not compromise the City’s objectives in this acquisition.

**7.4 Receiving Addenda and/or Question and Answers.**

It is the obligation and responsibility of the Proposer to learn of addenda, responses, or notices issued by the City. Some third-party services independently post City of Seattle solicitations on their websites. The City does not guarantee that such services have accurately provided all the information published by the City.

All submittals sent to the City may be considered compliant to all addenda, with or without specific confirmation from the Proposer that the addendum was received and incorporated, at the sole discretion of the City Project Manager. The City Project Manager may reject the submittal if it does not fully incorporate an addendum.

**7.5 Proposer Responsibility to Provide Full Response.**

It is the Proposer’s responsibility to respond that does not require interpretation or clarification by the City. The Proposer is to provide all requested materials, forms and information. The Proposer is to ensure the materials submitted properly and accurately reflect the Proposer’s offering. During scoring and evaluation (prior to interviews if any), the City will rely upon the submitted materials and shall not accept materials from the Proposer after the RFI deadline; this does not limit the City right to consider additional information (such as references that are not provided by the Proposer but are known to the City, or past City experience with the Proposer), or to seek clarifications as needed.

**7.6 No Guaranteed Utilization.**

The solicitation may provide estimates of utilization; such information is for Proposer convenience and not a usage guarantee. The City reserves the right to multiple or partial awards, and/or to order work based on City needs. The City may turn to other appropriate contract sources or supplemental contracts, to obtain these same or similar services. The City may re-solicit for new additions to the Proposer pool. Use of such supplemental contracts does not limit Proposer.

**7.7 Right to Award to next ranked Proposer.**

If a contract is executed resulting from this solicitation and is terminated within 90-days, the City may return to the solicitation process to award to the next highest ranked responsive Proposer by mutual agreement with such Proposer. New awards thereafter are also extended this right.

**7.8 Negotiations.**

The City may open discussions with the apparent successful Proposer to negotiate costs and modifications to align the proposal or contract to meet City needs within the scope sought by the solicitation.

**7.9 Effective Dates of Offer.**

Solicitation responses are valid until the City completes award. Should any Proposer object to this condition, the Proposer must object prior to the Q&A deadline on page 1.

**7.10 Cost of Preparing Proposals.**

The City is not liable for costs incurred by the Proposer to prepare, submit and present proposals, interviews and/or demonstrations.

**7.11 Readability.**

The City’s ability to evaluate proposals is influenced by the organization, detail, comprehensive material and readable format of the response.

**7.12 Changes or Corrections to Proposal Submittal.**

Prior to the submittal due date, a Proposer may change its proposal, if initialed and dated by the Proposer. No changes are allowed after the closing date and time.

**7.13 Errors in Proposals.**

Proposers are responsible for errors and omissions in their proposals. No error or omission shall diminish the Proposer’s obligations to the City.

**7.14 Withdrawal of Proposal.**

A submittal may be withdrawn by written request of the Proposer.

**7.15 Rejection of Proposals.**

The City may reject any or all proposals with no penalty. The City may waive immaterial defects and minor irregularities in any submitted proposal.

**7.16 Incorporation of RFI and Proposal in Contract.**

This RFI and Proposer’s response, including promises, warranties, commitments, and representations made in the successful proposal once accepted by the City, are binding and incorporated by reference in the City’s contract with the Proposer.

**7.17 Equal Benefits.**

Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 20.45 (SMC 20.45) requires consideration of whether Proposers provide health and benefits that are the same or equivalent to the domestic partners of employees as to spouses of employees, and of their dependents and family members.

**7.18 Insurance Requirements.**

Proposer will need to provide proof of insurance to the City before Contract execution. The City will remind the apparent successful Proposer in the Intent to Award letter.

Proposers are encouraged to immediately contact their insurance agent to begin preparation of the required insurance documents if the Proposer is selected as a finalist.

**7.19 Proprietary and Confidential Material.**

Under Washington State Law (reference RCW Chapter 42.56, the *Public Records Act*) all materials received or created by the City of Seattle are ***public records***. These records include but are not limited to bid or proposal submittals, agreement documents, contract work product, or other bid material. Some records or portions of records are legally *exempt from disclosure* and can be redacted or withheld. The Public Records Act (RCW 42.56 and RCW 19.108) describes those exemptions. Proposers must familiarize themselves with the Washington State Public Records Act (PRA) and the City of Seattle’s process for managing records.

The City will try to redact anything that seems obvious in the City opinion for redaction. For example, the City will black out (redact) Social Security Numbers, federal tax identifiers, and financial account numbers before records are made viewable by the public. However, this does not replace Proposer’s own obligations to identify any materials Proposer wishes to have redacted or protected, and that Proposer thinks are so under the Public Records Act (PRA).

## Protecting Proposer’s Materials from Disclosure (Protected, Confidential, or Proprietary)

The Proposer must determine and declare any materials Proposer wants exempted (redacted), and that Proposer also believes are eligible for redaction. This includes but is not limited to Proposer’s application, contract materials and work products. Proposers must familiarize themselves with the Washington State Public Records Act (PRA) and the City of Seattle’s process for managing records.

**How to Identify Materials You Consider Exempt from Disclosure**

**Proposal Submittals**

If Proposer wishes to assert exemptions in the materials in Proposer’s proposal related to its proprietary nature per RCW 42.56.270, Proposer must clearly identify its exemption request via the document below.

**City’s Response to a Public Records Act Requests**

The City will prepare two versions of Proposer’s materials:

(Full Redaction) A public copy that redacts (blacks out) standard exemptions as required by the PRA and the materials or text that Proposer identified as exempt.

(Limited Redaction) A copy that redacts (blacks out) only the standard exemptions required by the PRA, but does not redact (black out) the exemptions Proposer identified.

The fully redacted version is made public upon contract execution and will be supplied without any notification to Proposer.

The Limited Redaction will be released only after Proposer has received “third party notice” that allows Proposer the legal right under RCW 42.56.540 to bring a legal action to enjoin the release of any records Proposer believes are not subject to disclosure.

If the original requestor wants to see the Limited Redacted or original versions, the City will provide Proposer with “third party notice.” Proposer will then have ten business days to obtain a temporary restraining order while Proposer pursues a court injunction. A judge will determine the status of Proposer’s exemptions and the Public Records Act.

## Requesting Disclosure of Public Records

The City asks Proposers and their companies to refrain from requesting public disclosure of proposal records until an intention to award is announced. This shelters the solicitation process, particularly during evaluation and selection or if a cancellation occurs with re-solicitation. With this preference stated, the City will continue to respond to all requests for disclosure of public records as required by State Law.

**7.20 Ethics Code.**

Please familiarize yourself with the City Ethics code: <http://www.seattle.gov/ethics/etpub/et_home.htm>. Attached is a pamphlet for Proposers, Customers, and Clients. Any questions should be addressed to Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission at 206-684-8500.



**No Gifts and Gratuities.**

Proposers shall not directly or indirectly offer anything (such as retainers, loans, entertainment, favors, gifts, tickets, trips, favors, bonuses, donations, special discounts, work, or meals) to any City employee, volunteer or official, if it is intended or may appear to a reasonable person to be intended to obtain or give special consideration to the Proposer. An example is giving a City employee sporting event tickets to a City employee on the evaluation team of a solicitation to which Proposer submitted. The definition of what a “benefit” would be is broad and could include not only awarding a contract but also the administration of the contract or evaluating contract performance. The rule works both ways, as it also prohibits City employees from soliciting items from Proposers. Promotional items worth less than $25 may be distributed by the Proposer to City employees if the Proposer uses the items as routine and standard promotions for the business.

**No Conflict of Interest.**

Proposer (including officer, director, trustee, partner or employee) must not have a business interest or a close family or domestic relationship with any City official, officer or employee who was, is, or will be involved in selection, negotiation, drafting, signing, administration or evaluating Proposer performance. The City shall make sole determination as to compliance.



**Involvement of Current and Former City Employees.**

The City requires Proposer to disclose any current or former City employee, official or volunteer that is working or assisting on solicitation of City business or on completion of an awarded contract.

**Contract Workers with over 1,000 Hours.**

The Ethics Code applies to Proposer workers that perform over 1,000 cumulative hours on any City contract during any 12-month period. Any such employee must abide by the City Ethics Code. The Proposer is to be aware and familiar with the Ethics Code accordingly.

**7.21 Background Checks and Immigrant Status.**

The City has strict policies regarding the use of Background checks, criminal checks and immigrant status for contract workers. The policies are incorporated into the contract and available for viewing on-line at <http://www.seattle.gov/business/WithSeattle.htm>

**Proposer**

# References

[Seattle Preschool Program Action Plan](http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OFE/AboutTheLevy/EarlyLearning/SPP_118114a.pdf)

[Seattle Preschool Program Implementation Plan](http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OFE/AboutTheLevy/EarlyLearning/SPPImplementationPlan_April1_PostCommittee.pdf)

[Seattle Preschool Program Plan DRAFT](http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OFE/AboutTheLevy/EarlyLearning/DRAFTSPPProgramPlan.pdf)