

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Consultant for Data Modernization Initiative (DMI) Guidance Development and Facilitation Services

I. Summary Information

Purpose:

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is to solicit a consultant to develop guidance documentation and provide facilitation services for state and local public health leadership for planning and implementing Data Modernization Initiative (DMI) activities for up to three projects.

Proposal Due Date and Time:

May 26, 2023 at 11:59PM EST

Selection Announcement Date:

June 16, 2023

Maximum Funding Amount:

Up to \$450,000*, delineated by projects as follows:

- **\$100,000** – Public Health Data Modernization Education for Public Health Agency Leaders
- **\$150,000** – Ensuring the Success of the Data Modernization Initiative
- ***Potential for Option Period: \$200,000** - Strengthening U.S. Public Health Infrastructure, Workforce and Data Systems

Estimated Period of Performance and Final Report Date:

June 19, 2023 – July 31, 2023*, for the following projects:

- Public Health Data Modernization Education for Public health Agency Leaders
- Ensuring the Success of the Data Modernization Initiative

*Contingent upon CDC approval of a no-cost extension, the period of performance end date may be extended through November 30, 2024.

Potential for option period: August 1, 2023 – November 30, 2024, for the following project:

- Strengthening U.S. Public Health Infrastructure, Workforce and Data Systems

Eligibility: All non-governmental public health, healthcare or health information technology organizations are welcome to apply, including but not limited to consulting agencies, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, or private consultants.

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II. Description of RFP

Purpose:

The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) seeks the support of a consultant(s) to develop guidance documentation and provide facilitation services for state and local public health leadership for planning and implementing Data Modernization Initiative (DMI) activities for up to three projects.

Background:

The Data Modernization Initiative (DMI) is a multi-year, multi-billion-dollar effort to modernize data across the federal and state public health landscape.¹ Since 2019, ASTHO has been partnering with CDC, ONC, and other public health and technology partners, including CSTE, APHL, NAPHSIS, BCHC, HIMSS, and others to establish the groundwork to transform public health data infrastructure in the United States. While significant investments and advances have been made to support core public health functions and improve information systems, DMI has posed and continues to pose a leadership and management challenge for state and local health departments. Health department leadership face significant organizational challenges, from building a skilled workforce, to updating data sharing policies, to navigating funding and sustainability considerations.

To address the DMI challenges faced by State/Territorial health Agency (S/THA) leadership, ASTHO, in collaboration with CDC, is leading several projects to provide guidance related to DMI. To maximize the impact and effectiveness of its project work, ASTHO is seeking a consultant to support activities and deliverables for up to three current projects.

For clarity, **ASTHO will refer to activities and deliverables covered by this RFP as the *Data Modernization Initiative (DMI) Guidance Development and Facilitation Services* combined project.** A brief description of the individual projects addressed by the scope of this RFP is provided below.

Ensuring the Success of the Data Modernization Initiative

- The goal of the Ensuring the Success of the Data Modernization Initiative project is to support decision-making of State and Territorial Health Officials (S/THOs) and their staff in their data modernization efforts, by providing tools to help leadership effectively plan and implement their DMI priorities.
- This project will develop a **DMI Leadership and Implementation Roadmap**, consisting of a *DMI guide for State Health Officials* and an accompanying *DMI management, strategy, and tactical guide for public health informatics leaders*. Additionally, to facilitate peer-to-peer sharing among State and Territorial Health Agency (S/THA) leadership, ASTHO will convene a **DMI learning community** consisting of key public health DMI leaders and stakeholders. In this learning community, ASTHO will share and solicit feedback on the DMI Roadmap, as well as facilitate broader discussion of DMI strategies for success and resource sharing.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/surveillance/data-modernization/index.html>

Public Health Data Modernization Education for Public Health Leaders

- The goal of the PH Data Modernization Education for PH leadership project is to **develop and implement a public health data modernization communication and education strategy** to increase S/THO awareness, engagement, and capacity to advance DMI in their jurisdiction. The communication and education strategy includes guidance on key audiences for DMI communications, strategic communication and education tools, and key channels for dissemination. The project will also develop and disseminate communication and education products on DMI, such as blog posts, presentations, briefs, and track their uptake among key audiences.

By coordinating activities across its portfolio of projects, ASTHO seeks to leverage project resources and maximize the impact of developed deliverables more effectively. Additionally, this allows ASTHO to ensure DMI messaging is consistent across projects and audiences and align work with broader DMI priorities more effectively.

Project activities and deliverables

Project Activities

ASTHO is seeking a consultant to support activities for its combined *Data Modernization Initiative (DMI) Guidance Development and Facilitation Services* combined project. ASTHO is looking for a consultant to develop the DMI Leadership and Implementation Roadmap and support dissemination of findings through ASTHO Learning Communities and other relevant venues. The consultant will also be responsible for the development and implementation of a DMI communication and education strategy.

In consultation with ASTHO, the consultant(s) will deliver the following services, delineated by project:

All Projects

1. Project Management

- Create and maintain project documentation, including project plan and meeting notes
- Participate in project meetings, including project kick-off, working/content development meetings, and regular project check-ins

Ensuring the Success of the Data Modernization Initiative

2. Development of DMI Leadership and Implementation Roadmap

- Develop draft DMI Guide for State Health Officials
 - i. See *Project Deliverables* for additional details
- Develop draft DMI Management, Strategy and Tactical Guide for State/Territorial (S/T) Public Health Leadership
 - i. See *Project Deliverables* for additional details
- Solicit feedback on DMI Roadmap from stakeholders
 - i. Plan and facilitate discussions with federal, S/T, and other public health stakeholders to solicit feedback on draft guidance documents on ASTHO or external partner meetings
 - ii. Update draft guidance documents based on feedback from stakeholders
- Finalize DMI Leadership and Implementation Roadmap guidance documents and disseminate to stakeholders

Public Health Data Modernization Education for Public Health Leaders

3. Development of DMI Communication and Education Strategy

- In conjunction with ASTHO, develop DMI Communication and Education Strategy to facilitate communication and education of DMI topics to S/THOs and relevant public health leaders
 - i. See *Project Deliverables* for additional details
 - ii. As appropriate, ASTHO will leverage inputs and topics from DMI Roadmap in the Communication and Education Strategy

4. Convening and Facilitation of virtual DMI Learning Community

- In conjunction with ASTHO, support convening of and facilitation of virtual DMI Learning Community to promote peer-to-peer sharing about DMI with a cohort of 3-5 jurisdictions
 - i. Consultant may propose partnership with existing learning community

5. Implementation of DMI Communication and Education Strategy

- Develop tracker for documenting dissemination methods and promoted DMI education/communication products, including metrics to capture quality/effectiveness of tools, and reach/uptake of tools
- Develop of at least five DMI communication and education materials
 - i. Example of DMI Communication and Education materials may include but are not limited to: ASTHO blog posts, ASTHO briefs, presentation on DMI topics
 - ii. See *Project Deliverables* for additional details
- Support implementation of DMI Communication and Education Strategy, including:
 - i. Development of DMI-related ASTHO blog posts, ASTHO briefs, or other communication/education materials
 - ii. Present on DMI roadmap and DMI topics from federal, S/T, and other public health stakeholders on virtual ASTHO learning community and peer network meetings, or external partner meetings (virtual)
 1. ASTHO learning community and peer network calls may include the ASTHO Informatics Director Peer Network (quarterly), ASTHO Informatics Champions call (monthly), or other DMI Learning Community
 - iii. Present on project findings at virtual ASTHO meetings, external partner meetings, or conferences as needed/as resources allow
- Develop final report summarizing DMI leadership and education and communication tools developed, dissemination approaches implementation, and data summarizing findings on quality/effectiveness of the tools and reach/uptake among target audiences

Project Deliverables

In consultation with ASTHO, the consultant(s) will produce the following deliverables, delineated by project:

Ensuring the Success of the Data Modernization Initiative

1. **DMI Leadership and Implementation Roadmap document** consisting of the following components:
 - **Deliverable 1A: DMI Guide for State Health Officials (SHOs)**
 - Description: Guidance document for SHOs and their staff with an overview of DMI and the components needed to make DMI a success, including but not limited to leadership and management challenges and solutions, change management, technical guidance, DMI initiatives such as TEFCA, USCDI+, North Star Architecture, among others.
 - Audience: State Health Officials (SHOs)
 - ASTHO will provide proposed topics and/or outline for document. See Appendix A for current proposed topics.
 - **Deliverable 1B: DMI Management, Strategy and Tactical Guide**
 - Description: Guidance document for STLT Public Health Leadership focused on strategy and tactics for implementing DMI, including change management considerations and implementation options
 - Audience: Public Health Informatics Leaders, Senior Deputies, Other agency leaders
 - ASTHO will provide proposed topics and/or outline for document. See Appendix A for current proposed topics.

Public Health Data Modernization Education for Public Health Leaders

2. **DMI Communications and Education Strategy**
 - Description: Report with strategy for engaging with S/THA including key audiences, strategic communications, education tools, and key dissemination channels
 - Audience: State Health Agency Leadership
3. **At least five DMI Communications and Educational Materials**
 - Description: Data modernization capacity-building tools/products for health agency leaders
 - Example of DMI Communication and Education materials may include but are not limited to: ASTHO blog posts, ASTHO briefs, presentation on webinars.
 - As appropriate, ASTHO will leverage inputs and topics from DMI Roadmap as the basis for communication and education materials
 - Audience: State Health Agency Leadership
4. **Dissemination Tracker for DMI Communications and Education Strategy**
 - Description: Dissemination tracker documenting methods used to promote DMI leadership education/communication products among key audience
 - Audience: State Health Agency Leadership
5. **DMI Learning Community for cohort of 3-5 jurisdictions**
 - In conjunction with ASTHO, support convening of and facilitation of virtual DMI Learning Community to promote peer-to-peer sharing about DMI activities for cohort of 3-5

jurisdictions

6. Final Report for Public Health Data Modernization Education for Public Health Leaders

- Description: Final report summarizing DMI leadership and education and communication tools developed, dissemination approaches implementation, and data summarizing findings on quality/effectiveness of the tools and reach/uptake among target audiences
- Audience: ASTHO and CDC funders

Potential Option Period

An option period for the selected consultant(s) may become available to expand upon activities and deliverables outlined above. The proposed option period would extend the period of performance from August 1, 2023 through November 30, 2024, and provide an additional **\$200,000** in funding. Exercise of the option period is contingent on ASTHO approval and availability of funds.

Strengthening U.S. Public Health Infrastructure, Workforce and Data Systems

Activities for a potential option period, may include but are not limited to

- **Expansion of DMI Learning Community to additional jurisdictions**
 - In conjunction with ASTHO, support convening of and facilitation of virtual DMI Learning Community to promote peer-to-peer sharing about DMI activities for additional jurisdictions or STLT audiences
- **Conduct site visits to S/T health departments to provide technical assistance related to use and adoption of project deliverables**
- **Development of additional DMI Communications and Education materials for S/THO audiences**
 - In consultation with ASTHO, develop and support dissemination of easily digestible communication and education materials surrounding DMI topics
- **Present on project deliverables at in-person ASTHO meetings, in-person external partner meetings, or in-person conferences**

III. Requirements for Financial Award

Allowable Expenses

Funds may not be used for equipment purchases. Per HHS requirements, funds awarded under this RFP are prohibited from being used to pay the direct salary of an individual at a rate in excess of the federal Executive Schedule Level II (**currently \$212,100**).

Period of Performance

The period of performance is June 19, 2023 to July 31, 2023, with a potential option period to extend through November 30, 2024.

Reporting Requirements

Biweekly check-in calls, email updates, and final report.

IV. Required Proposal Content and Selection Criteria

Proposals may not exceed 10 pages in length, excluding CVs and optional material, and should be single-spaced in 11-point font with 1-inch margins. Proposals will be evaluated by ASTHO and scored based on the following criteria:

- A. Cover Letter (5 points):** Include the names of the lead programmatic and fiscal/contractual contacts (name, address, e-mail, telephone number).
- B. Please indicate interest in potential option period (Y/N) (Not scored)**
- C. Proposed Approach (30 points):** Provide a brief outline of the approach and strategy to accomplishing the requested project activities. Detail a work plan which includes activities, timeline, goals, and milestones to achieve the deliverables and meet the expectations noted above.
Potential Option Period: Applicants interested in the potential option period should provide a single workplan outlining activities to be completed between June 19, 2023 – July 31, 2023 (*contingent upon CDC approval of a no-cost extension, the period of performance end date may be extended through July 31, 2024), as well as the activities to be completed between August 1, 2023 – November 30, 2024 for the Strengthening U.S. Public Health Infrastructure, Workforce and Data Systems project.*
- D. Prior Experience and Performance (30 points):** Describe experience and quality of performance on recent work completed with similar scope. Include information about familiarity with and understanding of the topic. Describe ability to represent ASTHO well in interactions with state and territorial health agency staff and other governmental, private sector, and/or non-profit stakeholders.
- E. Organization Capacity (20 points):** Include information about the company and address ability and capacity to perform the services required within the specified timeframe. Describe staff qualifications and provide a CV for key personnel/staff lead.
- F. Budget & Budget Narrative (10 points):** Provide detailed fixed price budgets (**Attachments A**) for the following projects: Public Health Data Modernization Education for Public Health Agency Leaders (\$100,000) & Ensuring the Success of the Data Modernization Initiative (\$150,000) and include detailed projected costs for the completion of each project. Maximum award is \$250,000. Budget narratives must accompany the budgets for each project and indicate the costs associated with each proposed activity. The fixed price budgets should include a cost break-down per task and a proposed payment schedule for each project.

Potential Option Period: Applicants interested in the potential option period should provide

an additional budget for \$200,000 for **the Strengthening U.S. Public Health Infrastructure, Workforce and Data Systems** project outlining costs for completion of activities planned for August 1, 2023 – November 30, 2024.

- G. Response to ASTHO Contract Terms and Conditions (5 points):** ASTHO and selected applicant(s) will enter into a fixed-price agreement. A copy of ASTHO’s general contract terms and conditions is available in **Attachment B. Applicants must review the terms and conditions with their legal team or contracts officer and confirm that if selected, you will enter into this agreement.** Any **proposed changes** to the terms and conditions **must be identified and submitted with your proposal application for negotiations.** Proposed changes submitted after the application period has ended and/or submitted during the contracting stage **may not be accepted.** ASTHO reserves the right to accept or decline any proposed changes to the terms and conditions. Significant proposed changes, which could affect the agreement’s timely execution, may impact your selection as a successful applicant.
- H. Optional - Status as Women-, Minority-, Disadvantaged-, Veteran-Owned, and/or Small Business:** Applicants who classify as, or partner with businesses under any of these statuses, or demonstrate successful work with historically underserved and underrepresented entities (minority-, women-, disadvantaged-, and veteran-owned businesses or “MWDVBES” and black, indigenous, people of color or “BIPOC”) in addressing health disparities may be strongly considered.
- I. Optional: Writing sample(s) of guidance documentation or educational materials related to a DMI topic**

V. Submission Information

Application Procedure

Application deadline and process. ASTHO must receive applications **by 11:59PM EST on Friday, May 26, 2023.** Please submit an electronic copy of the application to ASTHO Staff at jhui@astho.org and hwestermann@astho.org. Incomplete applications or applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

Timeline

- **Friday May 12, 2023:** RFP released
- **Friday May 26, 2023 at 11:59PM EST:** Deadline for submission of grant proposals
- **Friday, June 16, 2023:** Contract award announced
- **Monday, June 19, 2023:** Contract period commences
- **Monday, July 31, 2023:** Final report due

Applicant Questions and Guidance

ASTHO will support interested applicants to offer guidance and address specific questions about the RFP. Interested parties may contact the ASTHO staff leads on this RFP, Janet Hui and Heidi Westermann, via email at jhui@astho.org and hwestermann@astho.org. Q&A will be posted regularly on the RFP page.

Disclaimer Notice:

This RFP is not binding on ASTHO, nor does it constitute a contractual offer. Without limiting the foregoing, ASTHO reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject any or all proposals; to modify, supplement, or cancel the RFP; to waive any deviation from the RFP; to negotiate regarding any

proposal; and to negotiate final terms and conditions that may differ from those stated in the RFP. Under no circumstances shall ASTHO be liable for any costs incurred by any person in connection with the preparation and submission of a response to this RFP.

Appendix A: Proposed Topics/Outline for DMI Leadership and Implementation Roadmap

Appendix A describes proposed topics and outlines for the DMI Leadership and Implementation Roadmap documents.

Deliverable 1A: DMI Guide for State Health Officials (SHOs)

Description: Guidance document for SHOs and their staff with an overview of DMI and the components needed to make DMI a success

Audience: State Health Officials (SHOs)

Proposed Topics/Outline: Topics may include but are not limited to the following --

- Overview of DMI and the DMI Ecosystem
 - What is the Data Modernization Initiative
 - Overview of DMI Priorities (e.g., TEFCA, USCDI/USCDI+, North Star Architecture, HL7 FHIR/Helios)
 - Federal Agencies and National Organizations in the DMI Ecosystem (CDC, ONC, Sequoia Project, JPHIT, HIMSS, CSTE, APHL, NAPHSIS)
- Roadmap: Developing a DMI Implementation Strategy and Implementation Plan
 - DMI Goal Setting: What are our agency's DMI goals?
 - DMI Leadership and Governance: Who will lead our DMI efforts?
 - Assembling a Leadership Team
 - DMI Project Governance
 - Role of the SHO
 - Key Components: DMI Implementation Strategy and Implementation Plan
 - DMI Funding and Sustainability
 - Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity Grant
 - Public Health Infrastructure Grant Program
 - Medicaid and Healthcare Financing
 - DMI Workforce
 - DMI Change Management
 - Procurement and Acquisition Processes
 - Organizational Change / Culture Change
 - Evaluation
 - DMI Policy and Data Governance
 - Policy Development/Legal Services
 - Data Governance
 - Modernizing Core Information Systems
 - Environmental scan and needs assessment
 - Moving to cloud-based, enterprise architecture
 - Integration of core data streams (e.g., laboratory reporting, case reporting, syndromic, immunizations, and notification to CDC)
 - Privacy and Security
 - DMI Data Strategy
 - Use of data standards to increase interoperability
 - Increased data linkages
 - Improvements to Data Analytics and Forecasting
 - Data Dissemination
 - Partnership Development and Engagement
- SHO-specific Resources

Deliverable 1B: DMI Management, Strategy and Tactical Guide

Description: Guidance document for STLT Public Health Leadership focused on strategy and tactics for implementing DMI, including change management considerations and implementation options

Audience: Public Health Informatics Leaders, Senior Deputies, Other agency leaders

Proposed Topics / Outline: Topics may include but are not limited to the following –

- DMI Leadership and Governance
 - DMI Project Governance
 - Assembling a Leadership Team
- DMI Funding and Sustainability
 - Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity Grant
 - Public Health Infrastructure Grant Program
 - Medicaid and Healthcare Financing
- DMI Workforce
 - Recruitment and Hiring
 - Retention
- DMI Change Management
 - Procurement and Acquisition
 - Organizational Change / Culture Change
 - Evaluation
- DMI Policy and Data Governance
 - Data Governance
 - Data Sharing Agreements
 - Policy Development/Legal Services
- Modernizing Core Information Systems
 - Moving to cloud-based, enterprise architecture
 - Planning and assessing system needs and architecture
 - Procurement: Selecting IT Vendors
 - IT Project Management Strategies
 - Best Practices / Common Pitfalls
 - Integration of core data streams (e.g., laboratory reporting, case reporting, syndromic, immunizations, and notification to CDC)
 - Use of Shared Services
 - Planning and assessing needs and architecture
 - Examples of Shared Services
 - Use of Open Source Solutions
 - Data Infrastructure
 - Planning and assessing needs and architecture
 - Data Warehouses vs Data Lakes vs Databases
 - Privacy and Security
 - DMI Data Strategy
 - Use of data standards to increase interoperability
 - Increased data linkages
 - Improvements to Data Analytics and Forecasting
 - Data Dissemination

- DMI Partnership Development and Engagement
 - Collaboration with public health partners
 - ONC
 - CDC
 - Non-profit associations (APHL, ASTHO, CSTE, NACCHO)
 - Partnerships
 - Healthcare organizations
 - Community
 - Medicaid/Medicare programs
- DMI Communications Resources
- DMI Resources
 - E.g., Existing DMI Learning Communities, Technical Assistance avenues