

## **Questions and Answers Relating to the Request for Proposals for an Assessment Consultant for the Library Support Staff Certification Project**

- 1. There is some confusion about the due date. The RFP says Monday the 26<sup>th</sup> , but the 26<sup>th</sup> is Tuesday.**

*The deadline will be Tuesday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, at 5pm Mountain Standard time.*

- 2. Questions were due yesterday. Is it too late to ask questions?**

*We were a little late releasing the RFP so we will accept questions until February 20<sup>th</sup>.*

- 3. May Proposers see the competencies that have already been developed?**

*The competencies are in draft form and are being sent to librarians for review. The current version of the competencies is on the LSSCP website: <http://ala-apa.org/certification/supportstaffdocs.html>.*

- 4. Since the assessment expert would be working very closely with a team that has been working on this for some time and has a considerable investment in time, emotional energy, and opinions about how to proceed, we are wondering about the culture of that group already. Are they as well-organized and clear as this RFP?**

*The project has two Project Co-directors who each work part time. We are able to address any issues that arise quickly.*

- 5. Would the assessment expert's role be that of guide, coach and "the glue" that comes from context and weaving everything together with the assessments threads? Or is it a different set of expectations?**

*That is a good summary of the expectations that we have of the consultant. We hope to explore assessment issues with the consultant we hire, develop assessment methods with the guidance of the assessment expert, and have the assessment consultant review our work.*

- 6. Perhaps the group has many experts in certification, workforce issues, authorized provider assessments and certification candidate assessments and wants us, the assessment consultants, to validate what is on track and what needs further development?**

*No, we do not have any of these experts on the Advisory Committee or on the Project staff. That's what we are seeking an Assessment Consultant to advise us. However the members of the Advisory Committee are very good representatives of the 'audience,' the groups which in the future will need to have confidence in the processes for competency assessment.*

- 7. Have the leaders in this project been in power for so long [they] can read each other's minds and hold hard to their own positions, no matter what the new facts or new methodologies are?**

*No, this is a brand new project and while the members of the Advisory Committee have their own opinions, they are not set in stone. We are struggling with the potential methods of assessing work toward the competencies and are open to both traditional and fresh ideas that we can use in implementing a national program effectively, efficiently, and with validity.*

- 8. Who will be working with the assessment expert, including a ( members of the Advisory Committee and others who will be given access to this project and assessment expert) and a little group background, such as how long this group has worked together or how well they know and trust each other already?**

*The project is sponsored by the American Library Association. The Advisory Committee has been in place for a year and a half. This is a new project. The FAQ on the project website will answer background questions.*

- 9. Please explain more about the evaluation consultant who will work with the assessment expert. Is the assessment expert coming in at the beginning, the middle or closer to the end of work this group has accomplished already?**

*The project officially began on July 1, 2007. The Advisory Committee, the Project Directors and ALA staff worked for a year prior to this date, mainly developing the competencies. The other consultant is the official evaluator of the project. She will be involved in the discussion of assessment issues but has no official role in making decisions about assessment.*

- 10. Is there someone charged to do the follow-through that an assessment expert might normally do when a project like this is budgeted and authorized for daily availability for things like conference calls and staff questions as they work through all of the questions in your RFP, plus other questions?**

*After the assessment method is developed, the Project Directors will follow-through with designing implementation.*

- 11. May the Proposers see the original narrative for the project?**

*Yes, it is on the LSSCP website under Project Documents.*

- 12. Please clarify what the RFP means by item 4.10 Final Report. It appears that it is the responsibility of the chosen vendor to write the final report. Is this correct?**

*We would like the assessment expert to write a report on their final recommendations to us on assessment options. This is not the final report for the project, only a summary of the assessment methodology options.*

- 13. Please clarify what you are asking for in section 5.3 Relevant Experience in relation to “assessment using providers as proxies”. It is not clear who the providers would be or how they would a proxy. Perhaps an example would help clarify what you are seeking.**

*The providers of course work or other learning experiences related to the competencies would probably be community or technical colleges, state library agencies, regional library cooperatives, units of the American Library Association, and individual consultants. In another certification program managed by ALA-APA, providers are approved to teach the competencies. To be approved, the provider must submit an application that indicates the specific curriculum to be taught, the credentials of the instructors, and the method by which students will be assessed to determine if they have met the competencies. (This program can be viewed at [www.ala-apa.org](http://www.ala-apa.org).) The certification program accepts the evaluation of the approved provider that the students did indeed meet the competencies. Thus, we consider that the providers are a “proxy” for the ALA-APA directly assessing the learning of each individual student.*

- 14. Will you be applying for national certification recognition for the LSSCP from one of the national certification organizations and do you want the assessment consultant to help with this?**

*We have not decided yet if we are going to apply for this recognition. The role of the assessment consultant is to help us with issues of assessment, not to assist with getting LSSCP any national acceptance or recognition.*

- 15. Who will coordinate the communications between the assessment consultant and the project directors/ committee members?**

*Nancy Bolt, Project Co-director, will coordinate all communications and will be the primary contact for the assessment consultant.*

- 16. It is our understanding that the assessment consultant will make recommendations on various assessment models for the LSSCP to the committees for review. Have any decisions been made regarding funding for the LSSC examination development?**

*We have not yet decided we want examinations. This is one of the options we would like the assessment consultant to advise us on and provide an estimate of what examinations would cost.*

- 17. Typically, in certification programs there is a separate entity/ board that oversees the actual assessment development and administration and another entity/ board that is over the program/ association. Have you identified members of the committee who will oversee the certification assessment**

**development? What will be the relationship between the assessment advisor and this committee?**

*The American Library Association's Allied Professional Association will be the entity that oversees the entire certification program. Typically they appoint a Certification Program Committee for each certification program. Assessment of participants in the certification program is handled by volunteer group within the CPC. These people have not been appointed and will not until the entire project is near completion in 2010. The decisions we need to make about assessment are independent of that committee. We do wish to discuss the role of such a committee, what work they will have to do depending on the assessment methods chosen, and how their work can best be implemented on a national level.*

**18. Have you identified a "public member" who will be part of the committee responsible for making decision about the assessment plan?**

*No. The Advisory Committee is composed of practitioners in the library field. We are unclear what the role of the "public member" might be.*

**19. There are various organizations represented in developing the LSSCP. Is there a plan for presenting or marketing this certification to the individual states? If so, who is or will be responsible for this task?**

*We realize we need such a plan and it is on the schedule to be developed. It will be done sometime in 2009. The co-project directors will be responsible for the development of the marketing plan.*

**20. Is it the plan to have only one level of certification or more than one?**

*The goal of LSSCP is to have one level of certification.*

**21. Your plan states that when the LSSCP is approved it will be administered by the ALA-APA. The ALA-APA provides access to management-related courses for public librarians who are or wish to be library administrators. Will the ALA-APA consider allowing candidates for the LSSCP to attend these courses? Will the ALA-APA provide courses specifically designed for the LSSCP?**

*The public library administrators program is aimed at public librarians who have a master's in library science, five years of management experience, and wish to gain additional knowledge. The LSSCP is aimed at those without a master's in library science and who may have no management experience. It is unlikely that the courses for the public library administrators would be appropriate for the LSSCP audience. ALA-APA will work with providers to plan courses specifically aimed at the LSSCP audience.*

- 22. Is there any thought of creating a special designation for LSSCP certification for those individuals who are able to provide services in another language – Spanish, for example?**

*Not at this time. The competencies we are considering are on the LSSCP website.*