# REQUEST FOR SERVICES –TRAINER FOR BRAILLE TEXTBOOK TRANSCRIBERS WORKING WITH NIMAS FILES

## 1.1 Invitation to Submit

This Request for Services (“RFS”) is an open invitation to all qualified vendors to put forward a submission for the provision of services on behalf of the National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC), located at the American Printing House for the Blind (APH). In responding to this RFS, you will be deemed to have taken into account all of the provisions of the RFS.

## 1.2 The Services

Information about APH and its requirements are set out in Supplement A (APH’s Information and Requirements).

## 1.3 Type of Contract

The selected Vendor will be expected to enter into a Statement of Work.

## 1.4 Definitions

Unless otherwise specified in this RFS, capitalized words and phrases have the meanings set out in the Master Agreement.

**"Business Day"** means any working day, Monday to Friday inclusive, excluding APH holidays, namely: New Year's Day; Memorial Day; Independence Day; Labor Day; Thanksgiving Day and Friday following; Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

 **“Vendor”** means the applicant submitting the response to this RFS.

**“Statement of Work”** means the formal contract established between APH and a Vendor to provide the services described in this RFS.

## 1.5 Interpretation

All references to days in this RFS and in your submission are to Business Days, unless expressly set out otherwise.

## 2.1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

### 2.1.1 Timetable

The RFS timetable is tentative only and may be changed by APH in its sole discretion. The following is the schedule for this RFS:

* **Issue Date of RFS: 10/25/2021**
* **Submission Deadline: 1/10/2022**
* **Date to Provide Trainings: Flexible – Spring 2022**

### 2.1.2 Parties Shall Bear Their Own Costs

The parties will bear their own costs associated with or incurred through this RFS process, including any costs arising out of or incurred in: (a) the preparation and issuance of this RFS; (b) the preparation and making of a submission; or (c) the conduct of interviews, negotiations or other activities related to this RFS process.

### 2.1.3 Inquiries

All inquiries regarding this RFS should be directed by email (no phone calls) to APH Representative and will be accepted through 12/15/2021. APH will provide responses to questions within one business week and post the questions and answers on the NIMAC website (<https://nimac.us>).

## 2.2 VENDOR SUBMISSIONS

### 2.2.1 Submissions Made Only in Prescribed Manner

To be eligible for consideration, you must be a Vendor that has completed and submitted the Submission Form set out in Supplement B (Submission Form), and thereby acknowledge your acceptance of terms and conditions of this RFS.

You must demonstrate in your submission that each proposed trainer has the knowledge, experience and all other qualifications for the proposed work, and will be able to provide the requested services. You must provide the APH with the opportunity to interview each proposed consultant and must not charge APH in connection with any interview.

You must also submit a Pricing Schedule as “Schedule A” along with your proposal Submission Form.

**Important note: Please supply the Pricing Schedule as a separate Word or PDF file from the rest of the submission.**

The Pricing Schedule must include:

* the full legal name of the Vendor
* the full legal name of each trainer proposed (if different from the Vendor)
* the number of days proposed for each trainer
* the proposed Per Diem Rate for each trainer
* a sub-total for each trainer, if applicable (number of days x Per Diem Rate)
* a Ceiling Price that is not more than the sum of those subtotals

You must identify all subcontractors that you propose to use, if any, and must also identify which consultant(s) are provided by which subcontractor.

You must specify the total number of days required to complete the services.

You should provide your submission by email to APH Representative. All submissions submitted by Vendors by email to APH Representative are deemed received once the email has entered into the email inbox of APH Representative. Submissions are to be directed only to APH Representative. APH shall not be responsible for any email delivery issues or technical problems with regard to the submissions.

**Note: The budget cap is $10,000 per course (or a maximum total budget of $20,000 for both courses). Please do not exceed this limit in your proposed Pricing Schedule.**

### 2.2.2 Amending or Withdrawing Submissions

You may withdraw or amend your submission at any time prior to the execution of a Statement of Work. However, such withdrawals or amendments may adversely impact your selection as a Vendor or eligibility to participate in future RFS processes.

### 2.2.3 Evaluation of Submissions

Submissions will be evaluated on the basis of the Vendor’s response to all information requested in this RFS, including but not limited to the proposed pricing, the qualifications of the consultant/trainer(s), and the quality of the proposed course outlined in the proposal. One (or more) successful Vendors may be selected to enter into a Statement of Work based on this RFS and the Vendors’ submissions.

## 2.3 EXECUTION OF AGREEMENT

### 2.3.1 Selection of Vendor

The Vendor selected by APH will be expected to enter into a Statement of Work. The agreement execution process is subject to the Terms of Reference set out in Section 2.6 and will not constitute a legally binding offer to enter into a contract on the part of the Vendor or APH before the execution of a Statement of Work.

### 2.3.2 Failure to Enter into a Statement of Work

The selected Vendor is expected to enter into a Statement of Work on or before the Anticipated Start Date set out in subsection 2.1.1. The failure to do so may result in the selection of another Vendor and may adversely impact the Vendor’s eligibility to participate in future RFS processes.

## 2.4 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

You must not engage in any Conflict of Interest. In this Request for Services, "Conflict of Interest" includes, but is not limited to, any situation or circumstance where:

(a) in relation to the Request for Services process, the Vendor has an unfair advantage or engages in conduct, directly or indirectly, that may give it an unfair advantage, including (i) having, or having access to, information in the preparation of its submission that is confidential to APH and not available to other Vendors; (ii) communicating with any person with a view to influencing preferred treatment in the Request for Services process; or (iii) engaging in conduct that compromises, or could be seen to compromise, the integrity or competitiveness of Request for Services process and render that process non-competitive and unfair; or

(b) in relation to the performance of its contractual obligations in a contract with APH, the Vendor’s other commitments, relationships or financial interests (i) could, or could be seen to, exercise an improper influence over the objective, unbiased and impartial exercise of its independent judgment; or (ii) could or could be seen to compromise, impair or be incompatible with the effective performance of its contractual obligations.

## 2.5 TERMS OF REFERENCE

These provisions apply to this RFS:

(a) this RFS process is not intended to create a formal, legally binding procurement process and shall not give rise to the legal rights or duties applied to a formal, legally binding procurement process; if you are the successful Vendor, you will be expected to enter into a Statement of Work with APH;

(b) neither party shall have the right to make claims against the other with respect to this RFS process, the selection of any Vendor, the failure to be selected to enter into a Statement of Work, or the failure to honor submissions prior to the execution of a Statement of Work;

(c) no legal relationship or obligation regarding the procurement of any services shall be created between any Vendor and APH prior to the execution of a Statement of Work;

(d) APH may make public the names of any or all Vendors;

you consent to APH’s collection of the information as contemplated under this RFS for the uses contemplated under this RFS;

(e) APH may elect not to consider a Vendor whose submission contains misrepresentations or any inaccurate, misleading or incomplete information; APH may cancel this RFS process at any time;

(f) you agree to all of the terms of the procurement process set out in this RFS.

# SUPPLEMENT A - APH’S INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS

## 1.1 CONTACT INFORMATION

APH: National Instructional Materials Access Center, American Printing House for the Blind

APH Representative: Nicole Gaines

Title: Director, Resource Services & NIMAC

Email address: ngaines@aph.org

## 1.2 PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name: National Instructional Materials Access Center

Service Category: Instruction/Training

**Project Start** **Date is** **Flexible**: Between March 1, 2022, and May 1, 2022

**Project End** **Date is** **Flexible**: Before June 30, 2022

## 1.3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA) created the National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC) to serve as the national source file repository for K-12 instructional materials. The NIMAC receives source files from publishers and makes the files available to states for use in the production of accessible formats such as braille, large print, DAISY and EPUB, for use by qualifying students in elementary and secondary schools.

To date, the NIMAC has received over 67,000 files in the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS) format from 160+ publishers.

AMPs, including braille transcribers, are essential to the success of state systems for providing accessible formats to the students who require them. To support these users of the NIMAC, the NIMAC seeks to contract with one or two skilled transcriber-trainers to provide modular instruction in how to use NIMAS files in the production of embossed braille textbooks.

In the spring of 2022, the NIMAC will sponsor free training to transcribers in the use of Duxbury and Braille 2000 to produce braille textbooks from NIMAS files. The selected trainer(s) will be paid to develop and provide the training, while the courses themselves will be made available free of charge to transcribers, and also archived for independent use going forward. (See Section 1.4 for the complete details and scope of work for this project.)

## 1.4 APH’S REQUIREMENTS

**Scope of Services and Deliverables**

**Basic Requirements**

1. APH seeks to provide two courses: one for users of **Duxbury**, and another for users of **Braille 2000**. In your proposal, please clarify which course you are interested in providing. Vendors are welcome to submit a proposal for one **or** both trainings.
2. The trainer(s) selected must be certified by the Library of Congress in Literary Braille Transcription and by the National Braille Association in Braille Formats. A letter of proficiency in UEB is also acceptable. Knowledge of Nemeth preferred but not required.
3. The proposed training must provide all of the core instruction that a newly certified transcriber would need to successfully handle their first textbook transcription project using a NIMAS file and the selected braille translation software.
4. The suggested structure is to begin the modules with literary braille “basics” and then progress to more advanced topics, such as how to handle math and science content.

**Training Details**

1. The content of the instruction should include all the basic steps of transcription “from NIMAS to .brf” for an embossed braille textbook, using the selected software.
2. If additional tools/utilities are an essential part of the workflow you are covering (e.g., NIMPRO, Word with BANA Template, BrailleBlaster or other software), instruction should include how these tools are used in the workflow.
3. Production of tactile graphics is **not** within scope for this training; however, if you utilize images in the NIMAS file set as a starting point for graphics, this may be briefly mentioned.
4. Training on how to provide good image descriptions is also **not** within scope.
5. While not required, one possible approach is for the trainer(s) to identify 1-2 textbooks that they have already fully transcribed and use these as the basis for the training.
6. Whatever NIMAS files are chosen for the training, the NIMAC will assist by reaching out to the publisher to request permission to use the material in the training webinars. (Note: If publisher permission is denied for a specific file, then another title may have to be used.)
	1. The NIMAC contains a range of student-facing materials. For the training, a textbook of adequate complexity to cover expected textbook structures will need to be chosen.
	2. More than one file/textbook example may be presented to cover different aspects of braille production, if desired.
	3. In addition to the overall structure of a textbook, the common structures below must be included in the training:
		1. Table of Contents
		2. Glossary
		3. Index
		4. Sidebars
		5. A table, chart or graphic that spans pages
		6. Line numbered text/poetry
		7. Math/MathML
		8. Footnotes
		9. A long chapter that has to be split between volumes
		10. Pronunciation keys
		11. Poetry
		12. Print page numbers

**Training Delivery**

1. For delivery, the training should be “modular,” meaning that the archived training sessions can easily be broken into smaller sections for posting and future reference.
	1. Live sessions can be planned for 45 minutes to one hour, but internally, each session should be broken into smaller segments that could be archived as self-contained, short videos.
	2. These topic segments can vary in length but ideally would not be longer than 10-15 minutes each.
2. We anticipate that the complete training will not exceed 3-5 hours for each course. (In other words, we will offer one 3-5 hour course for Duxbury, and another 3-5 hour course for Braille 2000.)
3. **Please ensure that you specify in your proposal if you are interested in providing the Duxbury course, the Braille 2000 course, or both.**
4. An outline/syllabus should be provided that clarifies what content will be covered in each session.
5. If accompanying materials will be developed for distribution to students, these need to be fully accessible. The NIMAC can assist in providing accessibility guidance to ensure materials are accessible. We can also provide an accessible PowerPoint template for use by the instructor.
6. The NIMAC will provide access to Zoom. The selected trainer will not need to provide their own Zoom account in order to deliver the trainings.

**Administrative Services and Supplies –** With the exception noted above under 16, all administrative services and supplies used by the Vendor to complete the Services will be provided to APH at no additional charge.

Preference is given to applications from small businesses, minority-owned firms, and women's business enterprises.SUPPLEMENT B - SUBMISSION FORM

Request for Services Number: NG2128801

To: American Printing House for the Blind, Inc.

(a) The full legal name of the Vendor is:

(b) Please identify any other relevant name under which the Vendor conducts business:

(c) The Vendor’s address, telephone number and email address are:

(d) Please identify the contact person for this RFS and provide their telephone number and email address:

(e) Describe the qualifications and experience of the Vendor to conduct the training described in Section 1.4. Include in this description:

* the education, training, and experience of the staff to work on this project (please submit staff resume or CV with the submission form);
* information regarding similar training conducted by the staff; and
* the contact information for two (2) references for transcription and/or training work performed within the last 5 years.

(f) Describe the approach the Vendor will use to provide the training described in Section 1.4. Ensure that all requirements are addressed and include information regarding:

* the number of anticipated training hours;
* a draft syllabus/outline of the course;
* any background resources or training materials proposed to be supplied to participants in the training

(g) Complete and submit the Pricing Schedule as “Schedule A” along with the Submission Form. (See section 2.2.1 for details on how to submit your proposed budget for the project.)

**Note: There is not a designated form for supplying the Pricing Schedule; however, it must be submitted as a separate Word or PDF file.**