

RFQ – Interpretation Services

Addendum 1 – Questions and Answers

Questions/Comments and Answers

Q1: Section 5.3 / Attachment B, Section D.2 – Interpreter Qualifications

The RFQ states that interpreters "must be qualified for certification through the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf or the National Association of the Deaf."

Please define Tennessee Tech's minimum qualification requirements for interpreters under Section 5.3. Specifically, are interpreters required to hold certification, be eligible for certification, or may experienced professional interpreters who do not hold certification also be assigned under this contract?

A1: Each interpreter must be "qualified for certification." They do not necessarily have to be certified as of the time they are assigned. It would be good to have that but we ran into issues forcing the certification in the past. Thus, we only require them to be qualified for certification. The purpose in this requirement is to ensure the interpreters know American Sign Language (ASL) and not another form of sign language.

Q2: Section 5.4 – Staffing Requirements

Section 5.4 requires a minimum of eight (8) interpreters on staff at the time the contract is awarded. Please clarify whether "on staff" refers exclusively to employees or whether qualified independent contractors and subcontracted interpreters available to provide services under the contract may be included in the minimum count of eight interpreters.

A2: For the eight interpreters on staff requirement, that was included in the language to ensure the company will be able to meet the needs of the university. I am fine with a company that has eight subcontracted interpreters so long as they can ensure us that they can meet the needs of Tennessee Tech campus.

Q3: Section 5.5 – Experience Requirements

The RFQ requires the Contractor to have at least five (5) years of prior experience providing services for at least three (3) four-year university campuses.

Will Tennessee Tech consider experience providing interpreting services to community colleges, technical colleges, K–12 school systems, and other educational institutions as relevant experience if the bidder does not currently have service contracts with three four-year universities? Additionally, may experience providing interpreting services to four-year universities through subcontracting arrangements or agency partnerships be counted toward the university experience requirement?

A3: In terms of experience with four-year universities, I think we can accept experience for a company that has experience as a subcontractor for a four-year university. I am fine with a company that has experience in an educational setting, which could include community colleges, technical colleges, and K-12 if we can make that work with the language.

Q4: Section 5.7 / Attachment B, Section D.5 – Response Time and Fulfillment Requirements

The RFQ states that the Contractor must respond within two (2) hours of a request for service and that Tennessee Tech expects all requests to be fulfilled regardless of how short the notice may be. Please clarify whether this requirement is intended as a best-efforts standard or as a mandatory guarantee of coverage. In situations involving last-minute requests, interpreter illness, emergencies, or limited interpreter availability, how will Tennessee Tech evaluate a contractor's compliance with this requirement?

A4: In terms of fulfillment, the current contractor has never let us down—EVER. We typically filter through requests we know are unworkable and do not submit that as an official request. However, when we submit a request we expect it to be fulfilled.

Q5: Attachment B, Section C.8 – Assignment Cancellation

The contract states that assignments cancelled with less than one business day's notice render the assignment fees due in full.

Please clarify how "one business day" is calculated for assignments scheduled on Mondays, weekends, holidays, or outside normal business hours. For example, if a Monday assignment is cancelled on Friday afternoon, would the assignment fee still be payable in full?

A5: For cancellations, we have always honored the one-business-day cancellation without regard to weekends/holidays. We do that because we understand if the company has our student's request on their calendar they would be unable to take another client for that day.