



## LANGUAGE TRAINING CENTERS

### 2019 Language Training Center (LTC) Program Request for Proposals Questions and Answers (Q&A)

*Updated: March 7, 2019*

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#### Program Questions

**Question:** Is one model or type of LTC Program preferred?

**Answer:** There is no preferred type or model for the LTC Program. All options will be considered as long as there is a clearly defined need or operational requirement from a DoD unit, office, or agency. IIE and DLNSEO encourage institutions to select a program model that fits with their strengths and capabilities and supports their DoD partner's needs.

**Question:** Is there a preference for the language(s) of instruction? Is it okay to start with only one language?

**Answer:** All languages will be considered as long as there is a clearly defined need from a DoD partner. It is okay to start with one language and consider the addition of other languages in subsequent years of the program based on the DoD partner's needs.

**Question:** Do DLNSEO and IIE have any preference on the language program proposed or does this depend on the partnership between the DoD partner and the university?

**Answer:** It is important for institutions to demonstrate ability to meet specialized needs. There are many different needs, ranging from high-level training of FAOs or intelligence analysts (which may have specific reading/listening goals), general purpose forces training (goal of O+), and short- and long-term trainings. Trainings must meet a specialized need. The program metrics should reflect this need and be agreed upon by the DoD partner. DLNSEO will review programs in all languages defined as required by DoD components. For example, French may be needed for Africa or cooperation in NATO; French and Spanish are not ruled out due to being commonly-taught languages. There may be strong focus on Asian languages, specifically those which are difficult to support training in elsewhere or languages of the Middle East, Africa, and other regions as required by the mission of the DoD partner.

**Question:** Is there a maximum number of DoD partners an institution can partner with?

**Answer:** There is no maximum number of DoD partners allowed. The institution should address their capacity to manage the relationship with each partner in the proposal.

**Question:** Do the DoD partners need to be in geographical proximity if an institution is providing online instruction?

**Answer:** Institutions should consider the need for local support at the DoD partner location. In addition, if you are in close proximity, you may want to consider diversified interaction.

**Question:** What DoD components are appropriate target audiences?

**Answer:** The DoD is a large department with Active Duty, Reserve, National Guard and civilian personnel. The Army, Navy, Marines, and Air Force have Active, Reserve, and National Guard components. Other DoD components that require training include the National Security Agency, Defense Intelligence Agency, Special Operations Command, and Regional Combatant Commands.

**Question:** Are ROTC students eligible to participate in LTC programs? Can a university's ROTC be a DoD partner?

**Answer:** ROTC students are eligible; however, the main focus of the proposal should support another DoD component. As stated on page 6 of the proposal, providing support for ROTC should not be the sole or primary focus of a LTC proposal since this is the main purpose of Project GO.

**Question:** Are the DoD partners required to confirm a specific number of students who will attend the LTC course?

**Answer:** Successful proposals will include a clearly defined description of program outcomes including the expected number of participants. Applicants may also choose to express the "expected number" as a range including the minimum and maximum numbers of participants anticipated for each component of the proposed training. Competitive proposals will address how they plan to fully utilize and maximize training capacity provided at their institutions. The plan should also address unfilled seats especially during last minute cancellations.

**Question:** Do DoD units need to pay tuition and fees?

**Answer:** Each LTC course is designed by a university and addresses the needs identified by a specific DoD partner. However, all tuition and fees associated with the course should be completely covered by the grant awarded to the institution and DoD units are not responsible for paying tuition and fees for a course. The only costs that DoD units are responsible for covering are those associated with personnel travel (i.e. per diem meals, lodging, and transportation).

**Question:** Do LTCs have to provide academic credits, even if the DoD partners do not require credits?

**Answer:** It should be possible for any participant to receive academic credit. However, each partner is unique and offering credit should be coordinated with the DoD partner.

**Question:** What is the average tuition at institutions that are providing intensive immersion courses to DoD personnel who must pass the DLPT and OPI exams?

**Answer:** Tuition should be calculated following your institution's policy for establishing tuition rates.

**Question:** Does DNLSEO expect participants to reach a certain proficiency level (ILR 2, 3, etc.)?

**Answer:** The LTC should aim to meet the proficiency requirements of the specific DoD partner.

**Question:** To what extent should current LTCs highlight their previous performance and relationship with DoD partners?

**Answer:** Successful proposals demonstrate a track record of support for DoD personnel. Proposals should demonstrate capacity in language and regional studies training and relationships with DoD components or other government entities. Successful proposals clearly demonstrate the types of programs they have been able to offer in the past, the results demonstrated from trainings, and the type of relationships developed.

**Question:** If an institution does not have a Language Resource Center on campus, can an institution collaborate with other institutions on a proposed LTC program?

**Answer:** Cooperation with Title VI-funded programs from the Department of Education, whether Language Resource Centers or National Resource Centers, or other federal programs is allowable. However, the proposed budget should not include expenses already covered under other grants. If coordinating with another institution, you may submit one joint proposal outlining the partnership. If each institution in the partnership wants to submit their own proposal, then each proposal should outline how the institution would implement the proposed project if the other institution were not awarded funding.

**Question:** Can institutions integrate LTC students into existing programs on campus or should the DoD program be completely separate from current on-campus courses?

**Answer:** DoD components have mechanisms other than the LTC program to pay for regular university training. Successful proposals outline participation in summer or extension courses, or customized courses that meet the needs of the DoD component. The model proposed should be agreed upon in collaboration with the DoD partner.

**Question:** Can institutions enroll non-DoD personnel alongside LTC participants in online intensive and short-term courses?

**Answer:** If online courses are regularly offered as part of the partnership with the DoD component, course participants should be confirmed with the DoD component to ensure that personnel being mixed or identified by non-DoD students is permissible. LTC grants should not be used to subsidize a course for other university students.

In addition, the institution should determine, in consultation with the DoD partner, if the course meets the partner's needs. If your institution is co-located with the DoD partner, and schedules allow DoD students to enroll in your university courses, participation in regular university courses is allowable. However, there are other mechanisms for DoD components to pay for regular university training outside of an LTC grant.

**Question:** What kind of assessment tests are institutions required to administer besides the OPI and DLPT? Are e-portfolios, peer-to-peer evaluations, student-tutor evaluations, or OPIc exams appropriate? How about AAPPL?

**Answer:** Please discuss and coordinate with your DoD partner the appropriate assessment tool you plan to administer to the students and propose appropriate assessments for the instruction provided. In your proposal, describe in detail how these assessments provide measurable outcomes for both formative and summative assessment of student language proficiency. Exams such as the OPIc are acceptable.

**Question:** Do you expect the LTC to be able to officially administer the DLPT and the OPI as part of its program. Or can DoD personnel go to a testing center?

**Answer:** Each institution should work with their DoD partner to use assessments that are appropriate for the specific training provided. DoD personnel usually take the DLPT and OPI at a DoD testing site so coordinate with your DoD partner if they will be responsible for scheduling and proctoring these tests.

**Question:** Can you be more specific on the cost-effectiveness metrics?

**Answer:** Cost effectiveness refers to the relative cost to train a student. Costs proposed should be reasonable for the activities outlined to achieve the goal of the DoD partner.

**Question:** Is assigning a program manager to support the LTC and its teaching staff appropriate?

**Answer:** Yes, you may assign a program manager to support the LTC and the teaching staff.

**Question:** Is our institution at a disadvantage if there are other LTCs already established in our area?

**Answer:** Successful proposals provide evidence of a solid DoD partnership and a clear plan to meet a specific operational requirement for the partner. Proximity to a previous LTC does not necessarily put your proposal at a disadvantage as all institutions are required to re-compete.

**Question:** What entities can be DoD partners? Please provide examples. Is there a list?

**Answer:** A unit, organization or agency within the Department of Defense is a potential DoD partner. Applicants are responsible for identifying their partners—it is not the responsibility of IIE or DLNSEO to identify DoD partners for institutions. If you have a question regarding the suitability or qualification of a potential DoD partner, DLNSEO will provide guidance or clarification.

**Question:** Is there a special process/documentation requirement that identifies sub-partners of primary partners?

**Answer:** There is no special process, but you should work with your DoD partner(s) directly to identify their needs and how you will structure your program relationship.

**Question:** Where can I source operational requirements from a DoD unit?

**Answer:** Work with your DoD partner to identify their specific operational and readiness needs and how you as an institution will meet those needs.

**Question:** What are acceptable definitions of “measurable” for the RFP? Do qualitative measurements qualify?

**Answer:** In 2017-18, RAND conducted a program evaluation of the LTC Program. Based on that study, they recommended improvements in the program such as the development of program metrics and specific student outcomes. There should be specific metrics and desired outcomes for each program proposed (such as half-step increase in ILR level after XX weeks of language training using XX assessment tool). We are also asking for institutions to present clear evaluation plans for their programs as stated on page 8 of the RFP. Finally, proposals should address how they plan to fully utilize and maximize training capacity and should also address unfilled class seats especially during last minute cancellations as stated on page 6 of the RFP.

**Question:** Aside from DLPT and OPIc, does the grant offer access or funding for additional testing capabilities that can be taken post course? Are there Cultural Knowledge assessments?

**Answer:** Yes, there may be grant funding available for additional testing and cultural assessments. We recommend you work with your institutional partners on what needs you have and how best to build testing and assessment into the proposal.

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## Proposal Questions

**Question:** What is the deadline for proposals?

**Answer:** Wednesday, March 20, 2019 at 4:30 pm EST.

**Question:** Is this solicitation for a multi-year or a single year grant? How does funding get approved for the second and third years?

**Answer:** This solicitation allows for the possibility of a multi-year grant. As stated on page 9 in the funding section, additional funding may be available for subsequent program cycles. Future funding will be contingent upon program success and the availability of funding. Program performance is reviewed through the year via quarterly performance reports, site visits, and regular phone and email communications. Programs selected to continue for subsequent years will be asked to submit budgets at a later point in time. So, subsequent years will not require a new proposal, just a new budget.

**Question:** Will there be another RFP next year?

**Answer:** The LTC grant is a three-year grant cycle and will not be re-competed in 2020. There may be RFPs for special initiatives within the LTC program which will be advertised openly. Any new RFPs will be published on the RFP page of the LTC website: [www.DoDltc.org](http://www.DoDltc.org).

**Question:** Will the award year always start on June 1?

**Answer:** Yes. The award year is June 1, 2019 – May 31, 2020. If an award is renewed for a second year, the second year will follow the June – May grant cycle.

**Question:** What restrictions are there for applicants?

**Answer:** Applicants must be U.S. higher education institutions. Please see the eligibility section on page 3 of the RFP for further details.

**Question:** How many proposals will be awarded under the LTC grant? Is the RFP for one or multiple LTCs?

**Answer:** The number of grants awarded depends on the quality of the proposals submitted, program funding available, and the size of the top-rated proposals.

**Question:** Is there a specific level of command authority that should be writing letters of support for LTC institutional applicants?

**Answer:** The letter should be written from an individual with the authority to grant release time for personnel and provide travel and per diem in order to ensure participation of DoD personnel. At a minimum, the letter of support should be written by an individual at the commander level. For example, for DoD personnel applying from a specific battalion, a letter from the battalion commander would be appropriate.

**Question:** Are the Confucius Institute certification forms (Appendix C) only required for institutions applying for funding for Chinese language instruction?

**Answer:** Yes

**Question:** Can you elaborate on the transmittal letter that is required from our Sponsored Project/Research Office?

**Answer:** It is essential that you work closely with this office at your institution in the development of the grant and that you have their approval. Typically, it is a cover letter that is included on top of the proposal indicating that your institution is in support of the proposal.

**Question:** The Project Description Template does not include the topic of assessment as it has in the past. Should we include assessment in our proposal?

**Answer:** Yes, please include assessment information within the proposal narrative.

**Question:** I am putting together the sponsor letter for an institution. I have multiple DoD and DHS partners which hope to use the institution for LREC training. Does each unit/agency have to provide a sponsor letter, or can I just send one with all of our requirements?

**Answer:** The goal is to ensure there is a very clear statement of support and specific needs from each individual partner; therefore, each DoD partner should have an individual statement of support. Also, the LTC Program is for DoD personnel only; DHS components and personnel cannot participate in the program.

**Question:** Does a Letter of Support or Budget Narrative count against the 20-page proposal length limit?

**Answer:** No, all attachments and appendices (e.g. Letters of Support, Budget and Budget Narrative, list of key individuals, program timeline, etc.) do not count against the page limit. The 20-page limit is for the *Proposal Narrative* only; see page 16 of the RFP for the required elements of the Proposal Narrative (sections a, b, and c.).

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## Budget Questions

**Question:** What is the recommended funding amount?

**Answer:** Proposals within the approximate range of \$200,000-\$1,500,000 will be considered. Please make sure to work with your Office of Sponsored Program (OSP) to ensure that all funds requested are reasonable, allowable, and allocable. If your institution is establishing a new program, you may want to consider what is reasonable for the first year of a

program that allows for program set up.

**Question:** Can a proposal exceed \$1.5 million?

**Answer:** Any project exceeding \$1,500,000 will be considered only under exceptional circumstances when funding is deemed mission essential. Please be sure to discuss this matter with your DoD partner(s) so that they can address the training need in their letter of support.

**Question:** Is the grant funding from DLNSEO channeled through the DoD component to the provider or through IIE? Does the DoD partner pay institutions to have personnel take a class at the LTC? What is the line item for tuition in the budget? Can the LTCs request funding to provide “scholarships” to participants? If full scholarships are not possible, can institutions offer partial ones to help offset the costs for participants?

**Answer:** DLNSEO provides funding for the LTC Program. IIE administers the program on behalf of DLNSEO, including making the grants to institutions. Institutions should cover the cost of tuition with grant funding. The line item for tuition in the budget should reflect the cost to provide tuition credit to participants. The DoD partner does not pay the institution to provide classes. The DoD partner must cover travel and per diem expenses. Scholarships should not be necessary for program participants.

**Question:** Can DoD personnel travel to the training facility be covered under LTC grant?

**Answer:** DoD personnel travel expenses should be covered by the DoD component; it cannot be paid for with the LTC grant. Institutions should make sure that their DoD partners understand and plan for the costs they will incur if sending personnel to training.

**Question:** Would the funding requested for instructors who are not affiliated with the university go under contractual in the budget?

**Answer:** Please follow your institution’s policy and consult with your Office of Sponsored Program (OSP) when you are putting your budget together for questions on where to put certain costs in the budget template.

**Question:** If institutions are modifying existing credit bearing courses to accommodate DoD personnel, can funds be requested to cover or offset instructional costs?

**Answer:** The grant should not supplement instruction already offered by an institution unless there are already DoD personnel enrolled and the goal is to improve current instruction at the advanced or upper levels.

**Question:** Can institutions request travel and lodging for contract instructors in addition to salary?

**Answer:** Yes. Please provide details on the rationale for the cost in the proposal and budget notes.

**Question:** Are there any items that will not be funded and institutions should refrain from including on the budget?

**Answer:** Typical budgets include items such as personnel, instructors, and tuition (optional for trainees). Budgets may not include travel or per diem costs for DoD personnel. Institutions should consult with their OSP on specific line items and contact IIE if there are any specific questions regarding allowable expenses.

**Question:** What is the overhead cost or indirect cost rate?

**Answer:** The indirect cost rate is based on your institution's negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA). Please consult your OSP to determine the appropriate indirect cost rate to use in your budget.

**Question:** Is there any limitation on the percentage that can be budgeted for indirect costs?

**Answer:** There is no limitation. You should follow the negotiated rates established by your institution.