



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Consultancy on Adult ESOL Instructor Recruitment and Retention

January 16, 2026

Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy (MCAEL) seeks a consultant to develop recommendations for an action plan for recruiting and retaining adult ESOL Instructors. The work can be completed remotely, in person, or through a hybrid approach. Interested individuals or firms are invited to submit a proposal; **the priority deadline for proposals is January 30, 2026.**

Please address any questions to Rudi Jeung, Director of Programs, at rjeung@mcael.org.

About MCAEL

MCAEL is the coordinating entity for adult English language learning in Montgomery County, Maryland. We support and strengthen a complex system of approximately 60 ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) programs, providing grant funding, professional development, data analysis, and system-wide advocacy to make English classes accessible and affordable for learners throughout the community.

The demand for English language learning in Montgomery County is high. About 143,000 adults in Montgomery County speak English less than “very well” (source: American Community Survey, 2023 5-year estimates). Our programming, resources, and advocacy support the broad network of programs and flexible class options that create safe and welcoming entry points for learners. English language learning broadens learners’ access to education, jobs, and essential resources, furthers their participation in the community, and fosters equity.

Project Context

The MCAEL coalition includes diverse organizations that range from large social service agencies and educational organizations that offer multi-level, multi-site classes to small

faith-based organizations that offer a single class that meets once a week. All classes offered by MCAEL coalition partners are no cost or low-cost. In recent years, programs have had some difficulty in recruiting the instructors they need.

Through its biennial surveys of adult ESOL instructors and program administrators, MCAEL has gathered data on recruitment and retention. The chart below shows responses to the question “This past year, how easy or difficult was it for your program to find instructors who meet your program’s teaching requirements?”

	2023	2025
Easy	0.00%	9.52%
Somewhat easy	33.33%	47.62%
Somewhat difficult	50.00%	42.86%
Difficult	16.67%	0.00%

While it has gotten somewhat easier for programs to find the instructors they need more recently, 42.86% of respondents still find it “somewhat difficult”.

The survey results also include information on:

- How programs currently recruit instructors
- What qualifications programs require
- Motivating factors for instructors
- Qualifications instructors hold
- Reasons why instructors discontinue teaching

As part of its role in strengthening the adult ESOL system, MCAEL seeks to support ESOL organizations in their efforts to recruit and retain ESOL instructors. This can include: attracting new ESOL instructors, especially from immigrant backgrounds; building pipelines for new ESOL instructors through partnerships with training programs; and creating resources that support new and current ESOL instructors which can lead to greater retention.

Scope of Work

The consultant will be responsible for analyzing existing survey data, collecting additional perspectives as needed, and developing recommendations for instructor recruitment and retention strategies. The main deliverable is a report that includes these recommendations, which MCAEL will use as the source for an action plan to be implemented in 2026-29. The report is to be completed by **May 15, 2026**.

Keeping in mind MCAEL's coalition model, the main questions to be addressed are:

1. How can MCAEL effectively support coalition partners in recruiting new instructors, particularly from diverse backgrounds?
2. What can MCAEL do to help programs retain instructors, and to help instructors stay in the field?

In addition to access to the results of the surveys mentioned above, MCAEL will convene a working group of program administrators and instructors who can provide additional perspectives. MCAEL also will organize additional interviews as needed for the collection of relevant and necessary information.

Notional timeline

Mid-February	Kick-off meeting with MCAEL staff Data review
Early March	Working group meeting #1 – participants provide input/ideas Additional data collection
By April 15	Draft report with findings and recommendations due
End of April	Working group meeting #2 – feedback on draft report
By May 15	Final report due

Consultant Qualifications

Required:

- Background in administering adult education and/or adult English language learning programs
- Experience with developing strategies to recruit and retain instructors
- Experience with data collection and analysis
- Strong written and spoken communication skills
- Experience working with community-based organizations

Preferred:

www.mcael.org
9210 Corporate Blvd, Suite 480
Rockville, MD 20850

- Experience with diversity, equity, and inclusion related work
- Familiarity with Montgomery County, Maryland

Proposals from people with diverse backgrounds and experiences are welcome.

Proposal Requirements

In responding to this request, please provide the following information:

1. A detailed description of your qualifications for the consultancy, referring to specific work experience
2. A current resume
3. A proposed fee schedule

Budget

MCAEL's budget for this project is in the range of \$2,500 - \$3,000.

Evaluation of Proposals

MCAEL will evaluate proposals based on their quality; although a salient factor, cost is not the only consideration.

MCAEL reserves the right to negotiate with any individual or firm, to reject any and all proposals, and to waive any minor irregularities or formalities in the proposals submitted. Respondents are responsible for any and all costs incurred in providing a proposal.

Please email your proposal to Rudi Jeung (rjeung@mcael.org). The priority deadline for proposals is **January 30, 2026**; applications received after this will be considered on a rolling basis. MCAEL plans to begin interviewing shortlisted candidates in the first week of February.