Making It Work: Lessons in Collaboration on Language Access Contracting

National Language Access Webinar
September 19, 2012

About MPI

Migration Policy Institute – An independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit think tank in Washington, DC dedicated to analysis, development, and evaluation of migration and refugee policies at the local, national, and international levels. We focus on:

Immigrant Integration

   - Language Portal   ⬅
US Immigration
International Migration
Migration and Development
Refugee and Humanitarian Policy

www.migrationpolicy.org
www.migrationpolicy.org/integration
www.migrationpolicy.org/languageportal

http://www.migrationinformation.org/integration/language_portal/

Bing

Favorites

NATIONAL CENTER ON IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION POLICY

10th ANNIVERSARY
MPI
MIGRATION POLICY INSTITUTE

About | Press Room | Publications | Events | Training | Donate | Search

MPI Home

Integration Center Home

E Pluribus Unum Prizes

MPI Data Hub

US Integration Network on NING

Sign up to get updates from the Center, the latest data, and more

Research and Policy Areas

Children of Black Immigrants

Children & Family Policy

Citizenship & Civic Engagement

Education
- Adult
- Children

ELL Info Center

Employment & Workforce

Integration in Other Countries

Language Portal:
A Translation and Interpretation Digital Library

Search our database to find resources used to provide services to Limited English Proficient (LEP) Individuals

Click here to enter the database

Limited English Proficient Individuals in the United States: Number, Share, Growth, and Linguistic Diversity

By Chhandasi Pandya, Margie McHugh, and Jeanne Batalova
The number of US residents who are deemed to be Limited English Proficient (LEP) has increased substantially in recent decades, consistent with the growth of the US foreign-born population. Sustained high rates of immigration and the dispersion of LEP individuals to new immigrant destination states has meant that an increasing number of states and localities must grapple with issues of communication and English language learning. To assist the wide array of stakeholders working with LEP populations, MPI's National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy has compiled the most up-to-date analysis on the number, share, growth, and linguistic diversity of LEP individuals in the United States from 1990 to 2010 at the national, state and metropolitan levels.
Download Data Brief | State-level Data on LEP Number, Share, and Growth | State-level Data on Linguistic Diversity

LEP DATA BRIEF
LEP FACTS

Language Access Webinars

Listen to past webinars where speakers discuss developments and challenges in the field of language access.

Listen or Sign Up for Future Webinars

In the Spotlight

Communicating More for Less: Using Translation and Interpretation Technology to Serve Limited English Proficient Individuals
By Jessica Sperling
Advances in translation and interpretation technology have given language access professionals a multitude of

Practitioners' Corner: Advice and Insight from the Field

Practitioner's Corner: How to Assess the Effectiveness of Language Access Programs
By Robin Ghertner

The most successful programs are the ones that regularly assess their progress toward their goals. This assessment is important for the success of a language access program because it can inform decisions about resource allocation, program improvement, and growth. There are three broad steps to measuring the progress of your program: selecting measures; collecting data on your measures; and using your measures. **Click here to read full article.**

http://www.migrationinformation.org/integration/language_portal/

Biographies

Neel Saxena has over seven years of experience with the Language Access program in the Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs. He provides Agency's support in the areas of data collection, outreach, bilingual hiring, and cultural competency. Neel also oversee's the Agency's grant program. He holds a masters in Public Policy from American University and a Bachelors in Economics from the University of Maryland. Neel can be reached at: neel.saxena@dc.gov

Simone Richardson is a contracting officer for the DC Office of Contracting and Procurement. She previously worked with the DC Supply Schedule Division, which awards contracts to Certified Small Business' (CBE) and has work in Professional Services and Goods. She currently is work with the Department of Health Care Finance, the State Education Office (OSSE) and various other program offices processing large contracts. Simone can be reached at: simone.richardson@dc.gov

Language Access Act 2004

- This Act requires that District governmental programs, departments, and services assess the need for and offer oral language services, provide written translations, and ensure that DC programs with major contact with the public establish and implement a language access plan and designate a language access coordinator.

- Office of Human Rights (OHR) coordinates and supervises District government programs, departments, and services in complying with the provisions of the Act and establish a Language Access Director for this purpose.

- The Office on African Affairs (OAA), the Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OAPIA), and the Office on Latino Affairs (OLA) are consultative bodies to OHR.

History of Translation and Interpretation in DC

- OHR developed Statement of Works for Interpretation and Translation
  - Required Vendor to have a QC plan and submit translated documents for review by OAA, OAPIA, and OLA
- Quality Control mechanism was developed and implemented by OAA, OAPIA, and OLA
  - Mistranslation – if the documents/sentences are translated correctly or not;
  - Sentence Flow – were the sentences translated correctly – they flow and are not just literal translations;
  - Culturally Competent – is the document in a style that can easily be understood by the target population; and
  - Overall Flow – does the document read like a document written in the target language?

Why a Citywide Contract

- Previous quality of translation and interpretation was subpar

- Sets a basic standard for all Agencies to use versus each Agency identifying standards.

- Allows for vendors to have longer relationships with Agencies, resulting in improved understanding of Agency terminology

- Helps to address issues with African and Asian language fonts

Citywide Contract

- Set standard requirements for individual interpreters and translators and vendor requirements.
- Individual requirements:
  - Credentials, Testing, Assessments, and Reviews
- Vendor Requirements
  - Required a QC plan to include the following steps: translation, editing, desktop publishing, proofreading, and delivery to client

Partnership – Lessons Learned Program Perspective

- Build relationship with contracting officer and invest time in explaining quality control with examples.
- Understand contracting limitations and identify solutions that fit within the contracting rules and regulations.
- Participate in legal sufficiency reviews to clarify certain aspects of the contract.
- Participate in meeting with Vendors and Contracting office as subject specialist on include quality control measures.
- The need to balance (from the perspective of consultative agencies) accountability and technical assistance to ensure that vendors were supported in developing adequate QC plans (something new they had not been required to do before) but that they were also made to own the responsibility of providing quality products.
- Maintain an open conversation with the different stakeholders to make sure that the recommendations are maintained and to assure that any loopholes and gaps in the contracting are addressed

The Process

- 2009/2010 – OCP and OHR began discussions to develop a statement of work to lay the ground work for a solicitation.
  - Discussions led to the decision to make the contract an indefinite delivery indefinite quantity contract and OCP be the contract administrator for such a widely used contract.
- Early 2011 – OCP opened the solicitation in the form of an Invitation for Bid (IFB)
- May 2011 – OCP received kick back at a pre-bid conference to pull the contract because of the choice to bundle services (as was done in other jurisdictions).
- Spring 2011 - OCP and Constituent offices began meeting to identify ways to improve the existing contract – adding quality control measures.
- Summer 2011 – OCP met with the community to understand the needs.
- Summer 2011 – Rewrite the solicitation as a partnership between OCP, OHR, and constituent offices.
- Fall 2011 – Reissue solicitation with quality control included

Partnership – Lesson Learned Contracting Perspective

- Gain an appreciation that the contract should address the needs of the constituents

- Meet with the end users to understand the issues they encounter with translation and interpretation

- Maintain sense of commitment and spirit of collaboration

Chhandasi Pandya
Policy Analyst | Program Coordinator

Migration Policy Institute
National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy

cpandya@migrationpolicy.org
www.migrationpolicy.org/languageportal

Thank You

MPI's National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy facilitated this webinar.

To hear audio for this webinar, and to listen to past webinars, please visit:

www.migrationpolicy.org/languageportal

http://apia.dc.gov/DC/APIA/Language+Access/