

Language Access Services: Translation and Interpretation (LASTI)

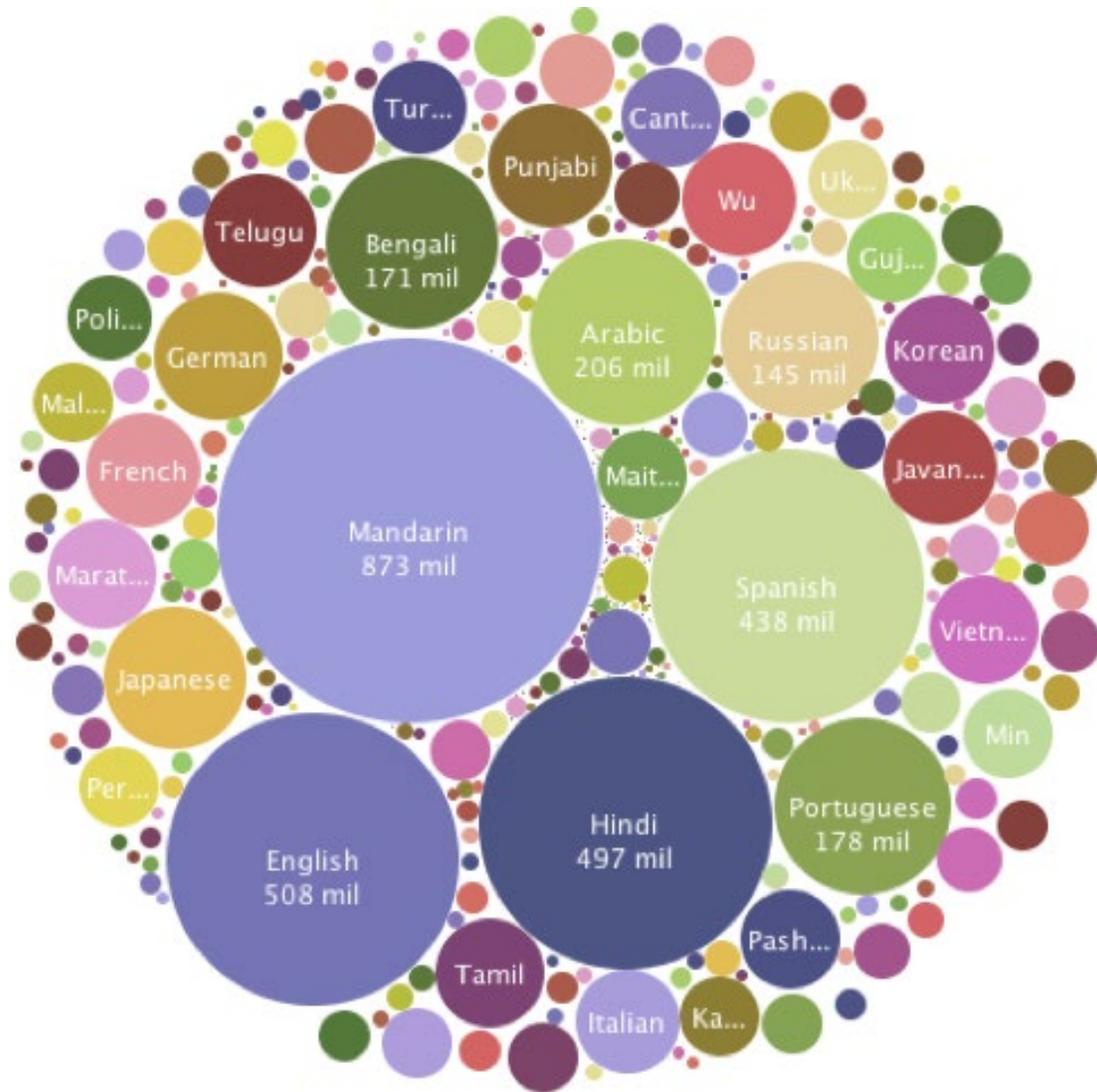


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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The National Institutes of Health (NIH), an Operating Division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), is the Nation's medical research agency, supporting scientific studies that turn discovery into health. NIH is comprised of 27 Institutes and Centers and its mission is to seek fundamental knowledge about the nature and behavior of living systems and the application of that knowledge to enhance health, lengthen life, and reduce illness and disability.

The overall NIH goals are:

- to foster fundamental creative discoveries, innovative research strategies, and their applications as a basis for ultimately protecting and improving health;
- to develop, maintain, and renew scientific human and physical resources that will ensure the Nation's capability to prevent disease;
- to expand the knowledge base in medical and associated sciences in order to enhance the Nation's economic well-being and ensure a continued high return on the public investment in research; and
- to exemplify and promote the highest level of scientific integrity, public accountability, and social responsibility in the conduct of science.

In realizing these goals, the NIH provides leadership and direction to programs designed to improve the health of the Nation by conducting and supporting research:

- in the causes, diagnosis, prevention, and cure of human diseases;
- in the processes of human growth and development;
- in the biological effects of environmental contaminants;
- in the understanding of mental, addictive and physical disorders; and
- in directing programs for the collection, dissemination, and exchange of information in medicine and health, including the development and support of medical libraries and the training of medical librarians and other health information specialists.

2.0 BACKGROUND

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act, and Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), 65 Fed. Reg. 50,121 (Aug. 16, 2000), Federal agencies must take reasonable steps to help ensure that Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals can have meaningful access to federal programs and activities. NIH and its Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), in line with this legal obligation to provide meaningful access to NIH programs and services for members of the public who may not read, write, or speak English as their primary language, have created the NIH Language Access Plan.

The NIH Language Access Plan establishes a strategy for ensuring meaningful access to NIH administered programs and activities for the LEP community. This initiative is aimed at public contacts and NIH Program beneficiaries, not the NIH workforce.

To ensure optimum service and remove language barriers, EDI has collaborated with the Office of Logistics and Acquisition Operations (OLA) to establish the Language Access Services: Translation and Interpretation (LASTI) contract vehicle which will enable NIH Institutes and Centers (ICs) to secure interpretation and translation services to meet the linguistic demands of their customers. OLA Office of Acquisitions (OA) will monitor the LASTI request for services mailbox and provide guidance to all IC representatives on how to acquire language access services through the LASTI contract; EDI will host the LASTI website portal and provide technical guidance on Language Access as required.

The [Office of Research Services](#) will continue to provide American Sign Language Interpreting Services to the NIH community and visitors, upon request.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

The Government expects that all work performed under this contract meet widely accepted standards for interpretation in each language required. Contracted interpreters selected will have a minimum of three (3) consecutive years of professional experience in the field of oral interpretation, and will meet all requisite certifications or licensures required by the covered entity (or requesting entity). Certification and licensures may include:

- Interpreter Certification from an Accredited University or Institution;
- Community Interpreter Certification from an Accredited Organization;
- Legal Interpreter Certification from an Accredited Organization;
- Medical Interpreter Certification from an Accredited Organization;
- The Translators and Interpreters Guild Certification;
- Federal, State, or the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) certification;
- Judiciary Interpreters and Translators Certification Examination (JITCE) certification will be accepted or;
- Passage of one or all of the following levels of State Department examination: (1) Escort; (2) Conference; and (3) Seminar.

The following services are available:

3.1 INTERPRETATION SERVICES

1. **Oral language assistance services** using certified and/or qualified interpreters or staff, to ensure that individuals have an equal opportunity to participate in the services, activities, and program administered by the NIH. Interpreter services can be provided either face-to-face or through telephone encounters.

2. **Support services** to NIH Institutes, Centers, and Office components by providing multilingual interpretation services for a wide range of meetings and events, including, but not limited to, intake sessions, interviews, meetings, conferences, workshops, seminars, litigation proceedings, briefings, training events, hearings, and other occasions requiring communication support from one source language into a second language.
3. **Consultation and planning assistance** to requesting ICs who need assistance with determining what conference interpretation services they might need as well as equipment requirements and other incidental items that would help make the conference accessible.

3.2 TRANSLATION SERVICES

While Interpretation Services will meet NIH's needs in oral communication, translation services are necessary to ensure access to resources and materials produced by NIH ICs. Translation will be available for a wide range of materials, including but not limited to print and electronic media. Translation of English language documents are available in the following file formats: electronic and CD ROM copies of final versions of translated documents into HTML, Microsoft Word, PDF, Microsoft Publisher, Quark or other file formats, as requested. Languages required for the purpose of translation include, but are not limited to, Spanish, Chinese (traditional), Vietnamese, Amharic, French, Korean, Brazilian Portuguese.

Translation services must be of high quality, technically accurate, and audience-appropriate. The goal is to provide requested materials in various file formats (that are 508 compliant), as specified in individual tasks orders, and that are culturally appropriate to the destination language(s). These translated materials must be easy to understand, using the same plain language elements and standards, as defined by the Plain Language Action and Information Network (PLAIN), required of the original English copy.

Examples of materials that can be translated include but are not limited to the following:

- Health, medical, technical and scientific information slated for broad public dissemination, including public outreach and educational materials, brochures, fact sheets, guidance and policies, and articles;
- Web content and web applications;
- Social media content;
- Audiovisual files, such as videos and web-based training modules;
- Press releases, backgrounders, and summaries of published medical and scientific research
- Materials related to publicly-funded research, including materials related to consent and participation in research studies and materials developed to address human protection from research risk; and
- Talking points and presentations.

Qualification Requirements of Translators:

The Government expects that all work performed under this contract meet widely accepted standards for translation in each language required. Vendor(s) are required to forward a copy of certification(s) and resumes with each bid, including technical area of expertise (e.g. legal, medical, educational, etc.).

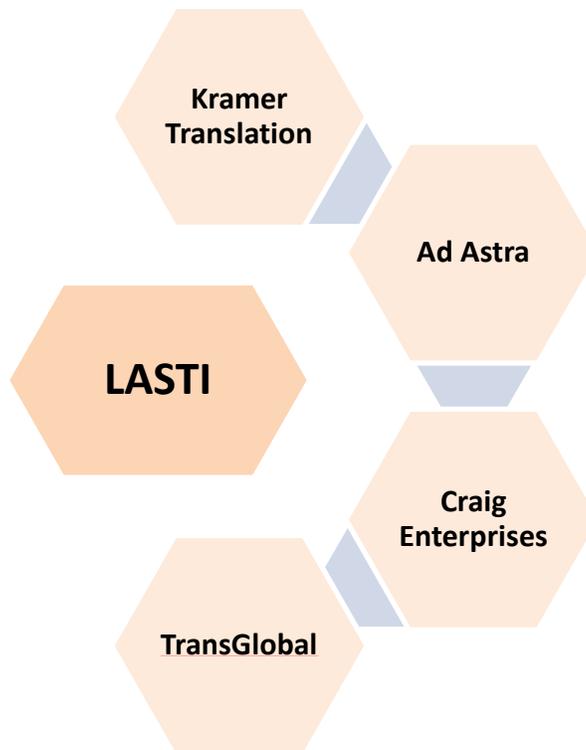
Recognized language or translation certifications/qualifications include:

- Translator Certification/Degree from an Accredited University or Institution;
- American Translators Association (ATA) Certification;
- American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) certification;
- The Translators and Interpreters Guild Certification;
- Defense Language Institute, State/Federal Courts;
- Expertise in a specific subject matter (i.e. legal, medical, etc.);
- Successful completion of the translation examination administered by the Office of Language Services, Translating Division of the U.S. Department of State; and
- Should no certification exist for a specific language requested by the entity issuing the task order, the translation vendor shall provide a translator who has a minimum of 3-5 working years of experience performing professional written translations to/from English and the requested language.

3.3 LIST OF CONTRACTORS

The following vendors have been incorporated into the LASTI contract in order to provide services to NIH ICs.

- Kramer Translation
- Ad Astra
- Craig Enterprises
- TransGlobal



4.0 DEFINITIONS

1. Consolidated Operations Acquisition Centers (COAC) – The NIH has eleven (11) COACs responsible for facilitating the process of acquiring goods and services for the institutes and centers of the NIH. NIH Acquisition Offices: <https://oamp.od.nih.gov/Acquisition-offices/nih-acquisition-offices>.
2. Contracting Officer (CO) – A person with the authority to enter into, administer, and/or terminate contracts and make related determinations and findings. The term includes certain authorized representatives of the contracting officer acting within the limits of their authority as delegated by the contracting officer.
3. Contracting Officer’s Representative (COR) – an individual, including a contracting officer’s technical representative (COTR), designated and authorized in writing by the contracting officer to perform specific technical or administrative functions.
4. Delegated Acquisition Community/Approvers - Delegated Procurement Authority (DPA) may be granted to certain non-acquisition individuals in the IC to approve simplified acquisitions through the NBS. These individuals are designated as Approvers. Each Approver is responsible for the acquisition activities for another individual(s) associated with a particular IC. Generally, Administrative Officers and Administrative Assistants are granted DPA as Approvers. However, Lead Purchasing Agents in IC Ordering Offices and warranted Contracting Officers may also be Approvers.
5. Institute or Center (IC) (Requester) – The IC (Requester) varies. Often, it is the Administrative Management Office representing a Scientist, Project Officer, Program Manager, or Contracting Officer’s Representative (COR).

5.0 LASTI TASK ORDER PROCESS

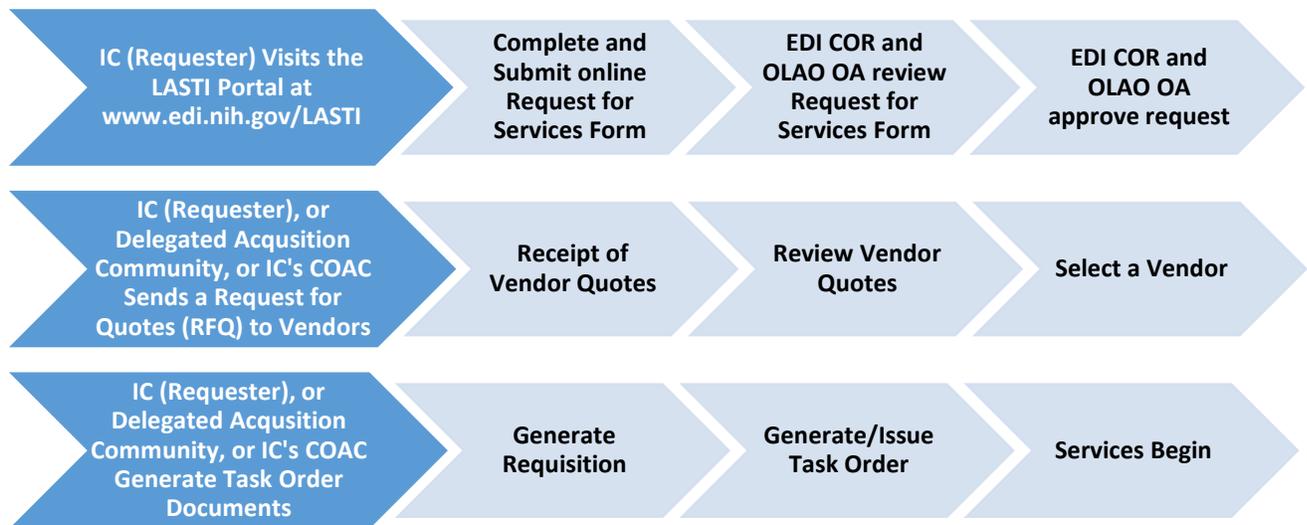


Figure 1: Visualization of Process Steps described in [5.1 LASTI TASK ORDER PROCESS STEPS](#).

The task orders will be issued by each ICs' delegated acquisition community or Consolidated Operations Acquisitions Centers (COAC). Task orders will be awarded under the Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act (FASA) which requires that the prime contractors be given a Fair-Opportunity-to-be-Considered (FOC) for task order awards.

5.1 LASTI TASK ORDER PROCESS STEPS

1. IC (Requester) will complete and submit the LASTI Request for Services Form via the LASTI portal located at www.edi.nih.gov/LASTI.
2. The OLAO OA and the EDI COR will review the LASTI Request for Services Form to determine if the request is within the scope of the LASTI contract.
3. When approved, OLAO OA will notify the IC (Requester) and provide the next steps.
 - i. The complexity of the services being requested will determine if additional information is required, such as, a Statement of Work, Independent Government Cost Estimate (IGCE), and Evaluation Criteria.
 - ii. ICs are expected to issue their own task orders via their delegated acquisition community or IC COACs.
4. ICs' (Requester) delegated acquisition community or COAC will send a request for quotes to the vendors.
5. Once quotes are received by the ICs' (Requester) delegated acquisition community or COAC, the quotes are reviewed and a selection is made. The complexity of the services will determine the evaluation process.
6. Once the review process is complete and a contractor is selected, the ICs' (Requester) delegated acquisition community or COAC will issue the task order.
7. Service may begin once the task order is awarded.

5.2 TASK ORDER TIMELINES

Task order award timelines are dependent on the complexity of the requirement. For example, emergency interpretation services can take up to 24 hours to arrange. Some request for services can take from 5 to 30 business days to secure. The processing time begins once a complete, request for services form is received via the LASTI portal. Incomplete or unacceptable request for services forms will delay the process and require additional time.

The delegated acquisition community or ICs' COAC is responsible for establishing a response time that will afford contractors a reasonable opportunity to submit a quote or proposal. When establishing the response time, the delegated acquisition community or the ICs' COAC should consider the circumstances of each acquisition and account for factors such as the complexity, availability, and value of each request's requirements.

6.0 PURCHASE CARD ORDERS

The vendors chosen for the LASTI contract are **not** a required source under FAR Part 8. If you are in need of services and the cost for those services falls under the \$3,500 micro-purchase threshold, and you are paying with a purchase card, you may contact the vendors directly to obtain quotes. Verify first, if the vendors can accept purchase card orders.

7.0 CONTACT INFORMATION

Please refer to the LASTI website and/or contact the LASTI Program Support Team (LASTI@od.nih.gov), if you have any questions, need additional information, and/or require official documentation and administration related to task order establishment.