

Replicable Language Access Strategies

Start with reliable data! Conduct a needs assessment of your limited-English proficient (LEP) stakeholders.

- What are their numbers?
- What are their native languages?
- Create an internal list of these languages and rank them by demand (this will allow you to prioritize focus and allocate funds strategically)

Designate a staff member as point-person who will take ownership of this initiative.

- Depending on volume of demand and funding, this person can be a current staff member or a new part- or full-time position can be created
- Point-person can establish internal process for staff to request interpreting and translation services

Consider hiring bilingual/bicultural staff.

- Ideal for the position described above
- Ideal as in-house interpreter or translator, with adequate training and certification
- Candidate can be trained and certified as interpreters or translators after hiring
 - Internationally recognized Interpreter or translator trainings are offered by professional organizations for a set fee
 - Worthwhile investment by program
 - Cost-effective in long-term versus using interpreters or translators as external contractors
 - Trainee becomes knowledgeable, in-house member of team

Shop for and choose a vendor of interpreting/translation services.

- Start locally, as interpreters will be sourced locally
- Depending on volume, negotiating discounted rates might be possible
- As with any client/vendor relationship, greater volume might give your program leverage in negotiating affordable rates

Train your existing and new staff on the following topics:

- Internal process for requesting interpreting and translation services
- How to work with interpreters effectively, i.e. best practices
- Trouble-shooting and quality control of interpreting services in the field.

Set up telephonic interpreting.

- Might be a product already offered by your chosen vendor
- Can also be procured from separate vendor
- Train staff on effective use of telephonic interpreting, account code, etc.

Consider local universities and colleges as potential resources.

- Bilingual/bicultural students
 - As interns or part-time staff
 - Investing in their training and certification as interpreters can be compensation for their work and save costs in the long term
- Graphic design students
 - Excellent source of little/no cost design of translated marketing and outreach materials
 - Mutually beneficial: graphic design students and their professors are often in search of opportunities for practical experience with real-world “clients”.