

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS FOR NORTH CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA, INC PA CAREERLINK® SYSTEM OPERATOR REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

TIMELINE

DATE ISSUED:

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28,
2021**

SUBMIT QUESTIONS IN ADVANCE OF BIDDER'S CONFERENCE TO:

**pstreich@ncwdb.org BY
12:00 PM, WEDNESDAY,
OCTOBER 6, 2021**

BIDDER'S CONFERENCE:

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2021 VIA
ZOOM (POTENTIAL BIDDER
MUST REQUEST ZOOM LINK)**

PROPOSALS DUE:

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 24,
2021 BY 12:00 PM**

**BIDDERS MUST SUBMIT ONE
ELECTRONIC COPY TO:
pstreich@ncwdb.org WITH
OPERATOR PROPOSAL IN THE
SUBJECT LINE**

I. Purpose

Workforce Solutions for North Central Pennsylvania (referred to as Workforce Solutions through the remainder of this document) is currently soliciting proposals from eligible entities to become the PA CareerLink® Operator for our Region. Workforce Solutions for North Central Pennsylvania is the workforce development board serving the six counties of Cameron, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson, McKean and Potter.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, its final rules, and federal guidance, as well as the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (a.k.a., "OMB," "Uniform Guidance," or "Super Circular") provide clarity and changes to local system operator procurement process requirements. Such clarification established that, consistent with their statutory roles and responsibilities, and in order to receive funds made available under WIOA Title I, local workforce development boards must conduct an open and competitive procurement process to select an appropriate system operator. Through this RFP, Workforce Solutions competitively seeks a qualified one-stop operator with collaborative innovative approaches to coordinate services among PA CareerLink® partners, to promote efficiency and effectiveness, meet and exceed performance including Common Measures, and assure continuous improvement by evaluation of performance to ultimately ensure high quality effective services tailored to the needs of job seekers and businesses.

II. Background Information:

Workforce Solutions serves as a strategic entity to leverage resources and capacity; drive local workforce investment activity; and effectively use and manage funds in order to oversee the local workforce development system.

The Vision, Mission and Goals of Workforce Solutions follow:

Vision: Workforce Solutions for North Central Pennsylvania will be a strategic workforce development leader focused on promoting economic prosperity and self-sufficiency of individuals by creating a workforce that is competitive in the global marketplace.

Mission: Workforce Solutions serves as the premier facilitator of an innovative workforce development system that meets the changing human capital needs of our employers and provides resources for our job seekers that maximizes their career potential and focuses on the customers' needs.

Goals:

- Enhance public-private partnerships through better connectivity and communication in order to increase investment in our workforce system leading to greater economic vitality for our region.
- Engage in Sector Strategies of our growth industries identifying current skill gaps of both the incumbent and entry-level worker that will result in skill upgrades through customized training and partnerships.
- Design innovative workforce development strategies to reach young adults and keep them engaged through the identification of best practices and development of new programs utilizing the Customer Centered Design Method.
- Identify Career Pathways in major industry sectors to enhance career counselling that will result in training opportunities for our customers through skill, credential and degree attainment.
- Ensure that our customers, both employers and job seekers, remain in the center of our design of all services and encourage our partners to do the same.

Workforce Solutions is governed by a private-sector led Workforce Development Board representing diverse sectors in business, labor, community development and education. In addition, one commissioner from each of the six counties in the North Central region serves on the Chief Elected Official (CEO) board with specific governance and oversight. All are dedicated to increasing the quality and accessibility of services for businesses, job seekers, and young people.

III. Introduction to the Region:

Workforce Solutions for North Central Pennsylvania serves as the North Central Workforce Development Board and is a six-county workforce development area (WDA) that includes the counties of Cameron, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson, McKean and Potter. Overall, it is home to approximately 216,912 citizens. The region is primarily rural with only one combined statistical area, Dubois, PA (Clearfield County) with a population of 79,908. The region has a civilian labor force of 101,570 with a participation rate of 56.6%. Of individuals 25 to 64 in the North Central Workforce Development Area, 17.6% have a bachelor's degree or higher which compares with 33.5% in the nation. The average worker in the North Central Workforce Development Area earned annual wages of \$43,088 as of the first quarter of 2021. Average annual wages per worker increased 5.6% in the region over the preceding four quarters. For comparison purposes, annual average wages were \$63,393 in the nation as of the first quarter of 2021.

The largest sector in the North Central Workforce Development Area is Manufacturing, employing 15,538 workers. The next-largest sectors in the region are Health Care and Social Assistance (14,273 workers) and Retail Trade (10,021). High location quotients (LQs) indicate sectors in which a region has high concentrations of employment compared to the national average. The sectors with the largest LQs in the region are Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction (LQ = 3.78), Manufacturing (2.31), and Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (1.41).

The unemployment rate for the North Central Workforce Development Area was 6.1% as of May 2021. The regional unemployment rate was higher than the national rate of 5.5%. One year earlier, in May 2020, the unemployment rate in the North Central Workforce Development Area was 14.5%. The economy of North Central PA continues to transform from recession to recovery following the pandemic of 2020.

The communities, businesses, industries, and workforce of this region work together, to streamline state, federal and regional services, including workforce investment, economic and community development and transportation planning.

PA CareerLink® Locations

All services procured as a result of this RFP will be centered in the North Central Workforce Development Area including the PA CareerLink® facilities, as well as virtual and mobile services as deemed necessary and appropriate. The region's PA CareerLink® facilities are part of the one-stop American Job Center network. The selected Operator will build strong collaborations with all partners, including to leverage the strengths of those partners and work together toward common goals.

To meet the needs of job seekers and employers, Workforce Solutions currently supports 6 comprehensive PA CareerLink® sites in the counties of Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson, McKean and Potter and one affiliate site in Cameron County. Workforce service delivery in the North Central Region is provided through our PA CareerLink® centers.

The names and locations of each follow:

Pennsylvania CareerLink® center Cameron County (Affiliate) at Emporium
135 West 4th Street
Emporium, PA 15834

Pennsylvania CareerLink® center Clearfield County at Clearfield
1125 Linden Street
Clearfield, PA 16830

Pennsylvania CareerLink® center Clearfield County at DuBois
602 West DuBois Avenue Unit #1
DuBois, PA 15801

Pennsylvania CareerLink® center Elk County at St. Marys
245 Depot Street
St. Marys, PA 15857

Pennsylvania CareerLink® center Jefferson County at Punxsutawney
103 East Union Street, Suite 2
Punxsutawney, PA 15767

Pennsylvania CareerLink® center McKean County at Bradford
40 Davis Street
Bradford, PA 16701

Pennsylvania CareerLink® center Potter County at Coudersport
279 Route 6 West
Coudersport, PA 16915

Partners of the One-Stop Center in North Central PA

The required partners are the entities responsible for administering the following programs and activities in the local area.

In North Central PA the following partners are co-located in the PA CareerLink® centers:

1. Programs authorized under Title I of WIOA, including:

- A. Adults
- B. Dislocated workers
- C. Youth

2. The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49et seq.), as amended by WIOA title III;
3. The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program authorized under title II of WIOA;
4. The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720et seq.), as amended by WIOA title IV
5. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) authorized under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601et seq.), unless exempted by the Governor under § 678.405(b).

Additional Partners not co-located in PA CareerLink® centers but available for referrals from all centers include:

1. Job Corps
2. YouthBuild
3. Indian and Native American programs; and
4. Migrant and seasonal farmworker programs;
5. *The Senior Community Service Employment Program authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056et seq.);*
6. *Career and technical education programs at the postsecondary level authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301et seq.);*
7. Trade Adjustment Assistance activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271et seq.);
8. Jobs for Veterans State Grants programs authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, U.S.C.;
9. Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (42 U.S.C. 9901et seq.);
10. Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development;
11. Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws (in accordance with applicable Federal law);
12. Programs authorized under sec. 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532).

Partner Services

At a minimum, partners make the below services available in each PA CareerLink® center, as applicable to their program, and coordinated with the partners. Additional services may be provided on a case-by-case basis and with the approval of the Local WDB and the Chief Elected Official Board (CEO).

BUSINESS SERVICES

- Serve as a single point of contact for businesses, responding to all requests in a timely manner
- Provide information and services related to Unemployment Insurance taxes and claims
- Assist with disability and communication accommodations, including job coaches

- Conduct outreach regarding local workforce system's services and product
- Conduct on-site Rapid Response activities regarding closures and downsizings
- Develop On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Transitional Employment (TE) contracts
- Provide access to labor market information
- Provide customized recruitment and job applicant screening, assessment and referral services
- Provide employer and industry cluster-driven Occupational Skills Training through Individual Training Accounts with eligible training providers
- Assist with the interpretation of labor market information
- Conduct job fairs
- Develop customized training opportunities to meet specific employer and/or industry sector needs
- Use of one-stop center facilities for recruiting and interviewing job applicants
- Coordinate with employers to develop and implement layoff aversion strategies
- Post job vacancies to the PA CareerLink® and take and fill job postings
- Provide information regarding disability awareness issues
- Provide information regarding workforce development initiatives and programs
- Provide information regarding assistive technology and communication accommodations

JOB SEEKER SERVICES

Basic Career Services

- Outreach, intake and orientation to the information, services, programs, tools and resources available through the local workforce system
- Initial assessments of skill level(s), aptitudes, abilities and supportive service needs
- In and out-of-area job search and placement assistance (including provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations and non-traditional employment)
- Access to employment opportunities and labor market information
- Performance information and program costs for eligible providers of training, education, and workforce services
- Information on performance of the local workforce system
- Information on the availability of supportive services and referral to such, as appropriate
- Information and meaningful assistance on Unemployment Insurance claim filing
- Determination of potential eligibility for workforce Partner services, programs, and referral(s)
- Information and assistance in applying for financial aid for training and education programs in addition to that which is provided under WIOA

Individualized Career Services

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of skills levels and service needs
- Development of an individual employability development plan to identify employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the customer to achieve the employment goals
- Referral to training services
- Adult education and literacy activities related to work readiness, including English language acquisition (ELA).
- Individual employment counseling and career planning

- Case management for customers seeking training services; individual in- and out- of- area job search, referral and placement assistance
- Potential placement in work experience, transitional jobs, registered apprenticeships, and internships
- Workforce preparation services (e.g., development of learning skills, punctuality, communication skills, interviewing skills, personal maintenance, literacy skills, financial literacy skills, and professional conduct) to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training
- Post-employment follow-up services and support (*This is not an individualized career service, but listed here for completeness.*)

Training

- Occupational skills training through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)
- On-the-Job Training (OJT)
- Incumbent Worker Training
- Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction which may include cooperative education
 - Referral to training programs operated by the private sector
 - Skill upgrading and retraining
 - Entrepreneurial training
 - Customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training
 - Other training services as determined by the workforce partner’s governing rules

Estimated Funds Available:

First Year – January 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022: The first year will be a 6-month contract in the amount of \$12,500.

Second Year – July 1, 2022- June 30, 2023: The second year will be a 12-month contract in the amount of \$25,000

There is a possibility of up to three additional years of funding without procurement.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) is to provide prospective vendors/contractors with the information they need to prepare proposals that are complete and responsive.

Workforce Solutions reserves the right to limit or increase total program funding and/or the number of programs approved for WIOA funding based on available resources.

Workforce Solutions strongly encourages the development of proposals that leverage existing resources.

IV. Operator and Board Roles, Responsibilities and Limitations

The Operator must fulfill the roles and responsibilities as outlined during the procurement and contracting processes. The role(s) and responsibilities of the Operator will be clearly articulated in the local area’s Memorandum of Understanding, or MOU, so that each of the partners in the PA CareerLink® service delivery system is fully aware of the established role(s) and responsibilities. The role(s) and responsibilities of the Operator must fully comply with established internal controls and conflict of interest policies and procedures.

Required Role Under the leadership of Workforce Solutions for North Central PA, and with guidance from the PA CareerLink® site’s Core Partners, the selected Operator will be tasked with the coordination of the delivery of partner program services in the local service delivery system, ensuring a seamless distribution of career services, training services, and other employment-related services provided by required and additional partner programs offered in the local area.

This includes coordinating services across multiple PA CareerLink® service locations including virtual and mobile services to ensure uniformity throughout the LWDA.

Duties of the one stop operator will include but are not limited to support for the following:

Programmatic Responsibilities

- Is fully cognizant of WIOA and its regulations, state and LWDB imposed policies or directives, and other applicable laws, regulations, rules or contracts to guide administrative requirements and efforts
- Is fully cognizant of and implements the negotiated MOU
- Develops and modifies procedures for one stop service operations to ensure regional consistency throughout all PA CareerLink® locations in the north central workforce development area.
- Strategizes with partners and service providers regarding their one-stop service location roles, responsibilities, services and activities, staff complement and other operational particulars
- In concert with the LWDB and/or assigned local area staff, negotiates with partners and service providers regarding expenses related to space, occupancy, shared costs and other costs associated with the operator and one-stop delivery system
- Recommends one-stop service locations' technologic tools and services
- Provides Workforce Solutions with programmatic and fiscal reports and other relevant operational information as requested and at a minimum the quarterly board report.
- Evaluates customer needs and satisfaction (customers include employers and job seekers, including career changers).

Coordination Responsibilities

- Establishes and maintains relationships with program partners and service providers to effect high degrees of partner collaboration; staff training and cross training, and program integration
- Organizes and leads periodic one-stop partner and service provider meetings
- Knows and understands the programmatic parameters of each of the partners and service providers
- Knows and understands each partner's and provider's performance measurement goals
- Ensures that an effective customer referral mechanism is in place
- Communicates strategic objectives of Workforce Solutions Staff and the North Central Workforce Development Board

Managerial Responsibilities – In coordination with the Site Administrators assist with the following:

- Provides operational management across the PA CareerLink® service delivery system
- Ensures compliance with federal and state issued policy and guidance, LWDB policies and local area operational manual(s) as may exist
- Reviews and helps ensure compliance with PA CareerLink® Certification policy and guidance.

Cross-Training and Professional Development Responsibilities

The selected applicant must ensure staff of all participating PA CareerLink® partner agencies have access to training and guidance imparting the knowledge, skills and abilities to support an integrated service delivery system and contribute to shared performance goals, promoting effective participation in common functions and responsibilities of PA CareerLink® partners.

Limitations

The operator may not perform the following functions:

- Manage or significantly participate in the competitive selection process for the operator
- Select or terminate an operator, career services and youth providers
- Develop and submit an Operating Budget for local activities but may provide financial records to the LWDB
- Be responsible for oversight of itself or other operators
- Negotiate local and/or regional performance accountability measures
- Convene system stakeholders to assist in the development of WIOA plans
- Prepare and submit WIOA plans

V. Responsibilities of Workforce Solutions for North Central Pennsylvania:

Workforce Solutions will maintain a contractual relationship with the selected PA CareerLink® Operator and:

- Will provide ongoing policy guidance and technical support to the Operator to ensure that performance expectations are continually communicated and policy issues are addressed.
- Will provide expectation for service delivery throughout the contract period.
- Will perform periodic quantitative and on-site reviews of Operator performance to ensure that customer service and financial standards are being met.
- Is responsible for determining partners, beyond the ones required by WIOA, who will provide staff and other resources for the PA CareerLink® sites in the North Central region.
- Will prepare the Operating Budgets for all PA CareerLink® centers in collaboration with partners and site administrators

VI. Who May Apply:

A. The Operator may be a single entity (public, private, or non-profit) or a consortium of entities. If the consortium of entities is composed of PA CareerLink® partners, it must include a minimum of three (3) of the required partners in the local PA CareerLink® system. All entities that are party to the composition of the entity that will be designated as the Operator must be signatories to the contract with the local board.

B. The Operator will operate all PA CareerLink® locations in the North Central Workforce Development Area.

C. The types of entities that may be an Operator include:

- A community-based organization
- Employment Service State agencies under Wagner-Peyser Act
- A for-profit entity (e.g., a corporation, incorporated consultancy or agencies)
- A government agency (e.g., state agency, local or county government, school district)
- Indian Tribes or Tribal organizations
- An institution of higher education
- An interested organization capable of carrying out the duties of the operator (e.g., a chamber of commerce, an economic development corporation or a labor market organization)
- A non-profit organization
- A nontraditional public secondary school (e.g., a night school, adult school or an area career and technical education school)
- A workforce intermediary (e.g., quasi-governmental bodies such as a county commission)

Restricted Entities:

- Elementary schools and secondary schools are not eligible to be an operator

Existing providers:

Existing providers are eligible to respond to this RFP. Potential conflicts of interest arising from the relationships of an entity proposing to be the operator with particular training service providers or other service providers must be disclosed and the entity must have internal controls in place and provide assurance to carry out its responsibilities while demonstrating compliance with WIOA and corresponding regulations, relevant Office of Management and Budget circulars, and the State's conflict of interest policy.

If the person(s) assigned to perform Operator duties has additional responsibilities in the PA CareerLink® system, the person(s) must clearly delineate and document their roles.

When performing the duties of the Operator, the person(s) must be of sufficient level of authority or independence so as to report only to Workforce Solutions. Successful applicants will demonstrate separation of duties and responsibilities and effective firewalls which will be in place at all times.

If a consortium model is proposed, applicants should indicate the staff who will provide the work to complete the roles of the operator.

The operator must not establish practices that create disincentives to providing services to individuals with barriers to employment who may require longer-term career and training services and must comply with Federal Regulations and procurement policies relating to the calculation and use of profits include those at 20 CFR 683.295, the uniform guidance at 2 CFR part 200, et. al., and other applicable regulations and policies.

VII. Technical Assistance:

A Bidders Conference regarding this RFP will be conducted. This conference will be held via zoom on **Friday, October 8th at 9:00 am**. The zoom link will be sent to all potential bidders requesting the link. Technical Assistance regarding this RFP will be provided by and coordinated through Workforce Solutions only until the bidder’s conference.

Questions can be submitted in advance of the bidders’ conference to enable staff to secure answers to these questions for discussion at the bidder’s conference. Questions related to this RFP should be submitted by 12:00 pm on Wednesday, October 6, 2021 to Pam Streich via email (please see below for contact information).

A question-and-answer response will be generated and e-mailed on **Wednesday, October 12th, 2021** to those who submit questions and / or attend bidder’s conference. In addition, a copy of the minutes of the Bidders Conference will also be sent.

Questions should be sent to: Pam Streich via email at pstreich@ncwdb.org

Agencies submitting a proposal may be asked to participate in an interview with the workforce development board and staff prior to an award being made.

VIII. Expected Timeline for Award Decision

The following is the timeline guide for the procurement of services for the first 6-month contract: January 1, 2022 - June 30, 2022 followed by a 12-month contract: July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023.

<p>Requests for Proposals issue date - Tuesday, September 28, 2021</p> <p>Questions regarding RFP due by: 12:00 pm Wednesday, October 6, 2021</p> <p>Bidders Conference: Friday, October 8, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. via zoom</p> <p>Q & A Available: Tuesday, October 12, 2021 (document will be sent to all attending bidder’s conference)</p> <p>Proposal Submission Date: Wednesday, November 24, 2021 at 12:00 pm</p> <p>Staff, Committee and Board Review, Approval & Negotiations: November 29 - December 22, 2021</p> <p>Agreement Executed - January 1, 2022</p>
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IX. Submittal Information:

Proposals that are in response to this RFP are due no later than **4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 24, 2021**. Late submissions will not be considered regardless of reason. One electronic copy must be submitted appropriately as follows:

Submit to Pam Streich at pstreich@ncwdb.org
Subject Line must read: **OPERATOR PROPOSAL**

BIDDERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONTACT WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS AFTER SUBMITTING THEIR PROPOSAL TO ENSURE THAT IT WAS DELIVERED AND RECEIVED.

X. Availability of Funds:

This RFP is being solicited based on anticipated funds. Any awards may be provided only upon the actual availability of identified Funds. Applications that may be approved are not guaranteed funding since the funding for programs is dependent upon Workforce Solutions receipt of funds under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

XI. Rejection of Proposals:

Workforce Solutions reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part, received as a result of this request or to negotiate separately with competing Offerors.

XII. Incurring Costs:

Workforce Solutions is not responsible for any costs incurred by Offerors prior to the selection of service providers by Workforce Solutions. The cost to develop and submit a proposal in response to this RFP is not reimbursable.

XIII. Disclosure of Proposal Contents:

Proposals will be held in confidence and, except for the selected proposal, will not be revealed or discussed with competitors. All materials submitted by bidders with the Proposal and the Proposal itself, become the property of the Workforce Solutions and will not be returned. Workforce Solutions reserves the right to use any or all ideas presented in any proposal. Selection or rejection of the proposal does not affect this right.

XIV. News Releases:

All subcontractors must receive prior written approval from Workforce Solutions for the publication of any news releases.

XV. Disclaimer:

The submission of a proposal to Workforce Solutions does not assure or imply an award of a contract to the organization(s) submitting the proposal. Workforce Solutions reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part, to negotiate any offer made, and/or to cancel or amend any part of this application package for whatever reason. In addition, based on current or proposed legislative activity, Workforce Solutions reserves the right to adjust any conflicting administrative and/or programmatic requirements that may occur prior to or after the contracting process.

XVI. Response on Action Taken Regarding Proposal:

All proposals received will receive a response as to the action taken by Workforce Solutions. Bidders may request a briefing on the action taken on the proposal.

XVII. Contracting Dates:

Workforce Solutions is soliciting proposals for an 18-month period of January 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023. The awarded entity will include a 6-month contract for the period of January 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022 followed by a 12-month contract for the period of July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023.

XVIII. Selection of Service Providers:

Priority for selection will be based on the effectiveness of the agency or organization to deliver comparable or related services based on demonstrated performance in terms of the likelihood of meeting performance goals, cost, quality of training, and characteristics of participants.

XIX. Non-Duplication of Facilities or Services:

Programs presented may not duplicate facilities or services available in the area (with or without reimbursement) from Federal, State or local sources, unless it is demonstrated that alternative services or facilities would be more effective or more likely to achieve Workforce Solutions performance goals.

XX. Proposal Submission - Required Information and Proposal Outline

Proposers must submit their proposal to this RFP which meets the minimum requirements of this RFP. All Proposers are required to respond to this RFP as outlined in order for Workforce Solutions to evaluate all proposals on an equal and timely basis.

1. Minimum Standards

These minimum standards must be met if the proposal is to be further evaluated:

- The proposal was submitted before the closing time and date.
- The proposing organization is not on a Federal or State Debarment List.
- The proposing organization is fiscally solvent.
- The proposing organization has additional funding sources and will not be dependent on WIOA funds alone for ongoing operations.
- The person signing the proposal as the submitting officer has the authority to do so.
- The proposing organization agrees to meet all Federal, State, and local EEO and WIOA program and fiscal compliance requirements.
- The proposal addresses all program requirements of WIOA.

2. Proposal Format and Outline:

- Proposal Narratives are limited to twelve (12) double spaced pages of print with a font size of no less than 12, and margins no smaller than one inch.
- Charts and other attachments are not included in the twelve (12) page limit. However, must be limited to no more than five (5) additional pages.
- Respondents are cautioned to keep attachments to a minimum and to avoid including redundant documents. Completeness, legibility and clarity are essential. Inclusion of multiple or wordy attachments increases the risk that reviewers could miss critical information.
- When preparing your proposal, you are encouraged to repeat the question (in the order presented in this document) and provide your response directly below the question. This will allow Workforce Solutions to quickly determine whether or not you have responded to the question without looking for responses that may be embedded into paragraphs of text.
- To be considered, respondents must submit a complete proposal and respond fully to all requirements, using the format provided. Failure to submit a complete proposal and/or respond fully to all requirements may cause the entire proposal to be rejected.

- Respondents are encouraged to refer to the proposal scoring section found in section XXI of this document when completing the proposal.

A. Proposal Summary Sheet

The Proposal Summary Sheet should be the cover page for the entire proposal and can be found as Attachment A and does not count in the page limits mentioned above.

A. Organization Overview

Describe each of the following for your organization: (maximum 2 pages)

- a. Basic organizational description, including year established, legal status, governance structure, mission, principal programs and services, executive leadership, annual budget and number of staff.
- b. Past experience in managing programs similar in size and scope to that required by this RFP, including but not limited to individuals served, services and activities delivered, contract values and related performance outcomes.
- c. Administrative and fiscal capacity, including but not limited to your organization's proven ability to provide fiscal support and oversight, utilize information systems, manage resources and personnel, and produce timely and accurate program reports.

B. Program Narrative

Describe each of the following for your proposed program (maximum of 8 pages):

Applicants should directly respond to each of the sections below; however, strong program descriptions will clearly demonstrate how the applicant will effectively meet all the standards, expectations and desired outcomes found in this RFP. Responses will also be strengthened by connecting proposed program components with evidence-based practices or well-established success in other projects. Applicants must think creatively and strategically in developing program design, exceeding basic requirements and incorporating innovative ideas and technologies. Please utilize this RFP and links referenced at the end to develop a deeper understanding of the below factors and complete your program narrative accordingly.

Programmatic Responsibilities – Please see the listing of Programmatic Responsibilities under Section IV of this RFP. Please describe how you will comply with the list of responsibilities identified. How will you ensure knowledge of and completion of the tasks as identified? How will you ensure a high-quality customer service to program participants, employers, stakeholders and the public in general?

Coordination Responsibilities - Please see the listing of Coordination Responsibilities under Section IV of this RFP. Please outline the plans and methodology you will use to ensure effective operations at each PA CareerLink® center. Include how you will ensure services are accessible, available, customer-focused and well-coordinated amongst partner agencies. Describe your approach to staffing and effective performance of staff for the services defined in this RFP. Describe how you would on-board staff to your program model and ensure staff have the knowledge, skills and abilities to effectively meet the requirements of this RFP. How will you administer the day-to-day operations of the PA CareerLink® centers in coordination with the Site Administrators? How will you develop a plan for integrating and streamlining the various services

of PA CareerLink®? How will you identify and implement policy changes, process enhancements, customer service standards and plans for continuous improvement at PA CareerLink® in coordination with the Site Administrators? How will you maintain a customer focus and ensure that services are evolving to meet the needs?

Managerial Responsibilities - Please see the listing of Coordination Responsibilities under Section IV of this RFP. Describe how you will work with the three Site Administrators currently in place to oversee the successful delivery of services across our region. How will you gather customer satisfaction measures? How will you use the results of the measures to continuously improve services? How will you coordinate with the partners to avoid duplication of services? How will you integrate services?

Cross-Training and Professional Development Responsibilities - Please see the listing of Coordination Responsibilities under Section IV of this RFP. Please describe your plans in coordination with the Site Administrators to ensure staff of PA CareerLink® receive the training and professional development opportunities needed to be effective members of the PA CareerLink® system. What kind of cross-training and professional development activities would be helpful? At what frequency?

Data Analytics and Reporting - Please describe how you will collect, analyze and utilize data to inform decision-making for effective PA CareerLink® operations, including but not limited to data regarding customer activity, partner services, and community trends and opportunities. Workforce Solutions will provide labor market data as requested and necessary to assist the Operator.

Coordination with Workforce Solutions – Please describe how you will stay connected to the team at Workforce Solutions and ensure we are mutually supportive in our efforts to provide an innovative PA CareerLink® System for our region.

Sustainability and Leveraging of Resources

Describe how the applicant will leverage other resources to meet the goals and role of the operator and how this will assist in the sustainability of the model. Leveraging of resources may include but is not limited to: leveraging of existing staff, facilities, equipment and other in-kind resources to reach project goals and the leveraging of federal, commonwealth and local resources to reach project goals.

Budget Information / Budget Narrative

Budget Forms – Please see Attachment B. (does not count in the page limit mentioned previously)

All programs presented must include a line-item budget using the format presented. Do not substitute the budget forms in this solicitation unless otherwise approved by Workforce Solutions. This budget includes a summary of total project costs and the costs proposed to be covered with Workforce Solutions funds. There is no funding for administrative costs and the resulting contract will not include any administrative functions. Note: The regulations define administrative costs at 20 CFR 683.215(b) as the allocable portion of the costs associated with specific functions and not related to the “direct provision of workforce investment services, including services to participants and employers.”

Budget Narrative (Maximum of 2 pages)

All providers must adhere to GAAP and where applicable, comply with OMB Uniform Guidance regarding allowable costs. A budget narrative is required to provide details about the budget. This narrative provides justification for items in the budget.

No purchase of equipment is permitted without specific authorization. Therefore, any requests where equipment is purchased or leased must be clearly represented in the budget and be consistent with the proposed program as outlined in your proposal.

This narrative should also detail the amount and kind of support provided with other resources. This includes in-kind support, leveraged resources, etc. Include a detailed budget justification reflecting requested and leveraged funds and resources which clearly explains how each budget line item supports that stated deliverables of the projects, including a detailed breakout of quantity, cost, and narrative. State the annual salary of each person, the percentage of each person's time devoted to the Operator role, the amount of each person's salary funded (if applicable) and the total personnel cost.

Program Income - includes the following: Income from fees for services performed and from conferences; income from the use or rental of real or personal property acquired with grant or sub-grant funds; income from the sale of commodities or items fabricated under a grant or sub-grant; revenues earned by a governmental or private non-profit service provider under either a fixed-price or reimbursable award that are in excess of the actual costs incurred in providing the services; and interest income earned on advances of sub-grant funds. If any program income is expected to be earned, the budget narrative must address this.

Timeline (Include as an attachment if desired - does not count in the page limits mentioned previously)

Provide a time-line chart so that all activities to be performed can be seen in relation to one another and as a whole. While discussion in the methodology should reference sequence of events, here the object is to "draw a picture" of the activities to be conducted.

Financial Information (Include as an attachment if desired - does not count in the page limits mentioned previously)

This section must describe in detail the program operators' financial management system. Successful bidder must operate a system that satisfactorily accounts for and documents the receipt and disbursement of all workforce development funds. While a separate accounting system is not required, each operator must maintain financial records that adequately identify the source and application of all workforce development funds.

- Effective Control and Accountability over workforce development assets (Funds, Property, other workforce development assets) - Assure that the financial system will maintain effective control and accountability over all funds, property and other workforce development assets including the adequate safeguard of such assets.
- System's Capability of Generating Financial Information - Assure that the system is capable of generating all financial information needed for required reports, including data needed to monitor, evaluate and if necessary, modify program performance.
- Source Documentation - Assure that accounting records are supported by source documentation for each transaction. Assure that records are traceable to documentation and maintained in such a manner as to provide a complete and accurate audit trail during any internal or external examination.
- Bonding for Protection Against Loss - Assure that all persons authorized to receive or deposit workforce development funds, or to issue financial documents, checks or other instruments of payment for job training program costs will be bonded for protection against loss.

Identify all positions that are authorized to receive or deposit workforce development funds, issue financial documents, checks or other instruments of payment for workforce development program costs.

Identify the insuring agency, policy number, term of the bond, and the total dollar amount of the bonding coverage. Attach a copy of the Bonding certificate.

- Record Retention - Assure that all financial and program records, including any supporting documents, will be retained for at least three years from the date of Workforce Solutions submission of close-out reports. Assure that if any litigations, claims, or audits are begun prior to expiration of the three-year period, that all records shall be retained until such litigations, claims, or audits relating to the records have been resolved.

Assure that records relating to non-expendable personal property that may be authorized to be purchased with workforce development funds will be retained for at least three (3) years after final disposition of the property.

- Cost Allocation Plan - Describe in detail any cost allocation plan utilized when costs are chargeable to more than one cost category, or to more than one program and/or funding source. Identify common costs.
- Invoices & Reconciliation - Assure that the actual and accrued expenditures will be reported on invoices and that reconciliation between actual and accrued expenditures will be conducted on a payment-by-payment basis.
- Generally Accepted Accounting Principles - Assure that the agency will utilize generally accepted accounting principles in order to account for and control all workforce development funds.
- Program Income and Stand-In Costs

Any program income received as a result of this contract must be reported to Workforce Solutions. Program Income must be used prior to payment of any workforce development funds. Assure that any program income earned as a result of the contract for services will be used for job training purposes only. The use of the program income against workforce development services must be documentable and traceable through the financial system. It must be reported as part of the invoice.

- Procurement

No portion of this subcontract may be contracted to any other agency for the provision of services within the scope of the guidelines. The agency must assure that it will comply with the Commonwealth and Workforce Solutions procurement requirements.

- Audit Report - Attach a copy of the most recently completed independent Audit. Only one Audit Report is required (copies are not necessary to be attached).
- Assurances and Certifications - All agencies submitting proposals state that the attached assurances and certifications will be signed upon award. Since these are material representations of fact upon which a favorable proposal may result in an award, the forms must be signed by an individual authorized to bind the organization to a contract. For the applicants reference, the required assurances and certifications can be found in Attachment C.

- Tagline Requirements

All recipients of WIOA / Title I funds must ensure that all information disseminated to the public through pamphlets, booklets, manuals, posters, internet, etc. include a statement that the program is an:

“Equal Opportunity Employment Program” and;

“Auxiliary Aids and Services are available to individuals with disabilities.”

- Additionally, when publishing or broadcasting program information in the news media the above-mentioned Tagline must also be in place. Further the Tagline should be on agency letterhead, internal communication email, etc. “TDD / TTY Relay Number Requirements”

The recipient must also ensure their “TDD / TTY Relay Number” is included on materials routinely made available to the public through pamphlets, booklets, posters, internet, internal communications, news releases, etc.

- WIOA Section 188 Disability Checklist and the Americans with Disabilities Act Checklist for Readily Achievable Barrier Removal (i.e. checklist for existing facilities version 2.1)

- 1) Recipients of WIOA / Title I funds are required under applicable mandates to be EO / ADA Compliant. To ensure applicable compliance in this regard, the recipient is encouraged to utilize the above-mentioned checklists to self-evaluate their facilities.
- 2) The recipient may obtain both “checklists” by contacting the Equal Opportunity Liaison at their local PA CareerLink® facility or they may contact the Equal Opportunity Officer at Workforce Solutions / NC-125, 425 Old Kersey Road, Kersey, PA 15846.

Section XX: Additional Resources:

The following links are provided as helpful supplementary information:

- Workforce Solutions Policies and Guidance Notices: <https://workforcesolutionspa.com/policies/>
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the North Central region: <https://workforcesolutionspa.com/providers-of-service/>
- [Pennsylvania Workforce System Policies](#) – this link includes the Commonwealth’s PA CareerLink System Operator Guidance – WSP 121-04
- [Public Law \(Pub. L.\) 113-128, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\)](#)
- [20 Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\), WIOA Final Rules and Regulations](#)
- [29 CFR Part 97, Monitoring and Reporting Program Performance](#)
- [2 CFR Part 200 et al, and Part 2900, Office of Management and Budget \(OMB\) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards](#)

- [USDOL Employment and Training Administration’s \(ETA\) Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) No. 19-14, Vision for the Workforce System and Initial Implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#)
- [TEGL No. 4-15, Vision for the One-Stop Delivery System under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\)](#)

Section XXI – Proposal Scoring: Prospective Providers are advised that an offer for a contract may be initiated after review of the proposal by Workforce Solutions. Proposals will be reviewed for acceptability with emphasis on various factors according to the type of services to be provided. Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

POINTS	APPLICANT RESPONSE	SCORE	COMMENTS
Max = 10	Proposal Summary Sheet is included, organization overview is complete and minimum standards are met		
Max = 30	Program Narrative		
Max = 20	Leveraging of resources		
Max = 30	Budget & Budget Narrative		
Max = 10	Timeline		
Max 100	TOTAL POINTS		