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Workforce Solutions for North Central Pennsylvania/North Central Workforce Development Board Request for Quotes for the Implementation of Career Pathways

Workforce Solutions for North Central Pennsylvania (North Central Workforce Development Board) referred to as Workforce Solutions throughout the remainder of this document is currently seeking quotes for the implementation of career pathways for each of the following industry sectors, Manufacturing, Healthcare and Social Assistance and Building and Construction.

Responses to this RFQ are due by 3:00 pm on Friday, **February 10, 2023**.

Questions regarding this RFQ will be accepted until Tuesday, January 24, 2023 and should be directed to Donna Hottel via email – dhottel@ncwdb.org. Responses to all questions will be compiled and sent to all inquirers to this RFQ on Friday, January 27, 2023.

Electronic submissions of the detailed quotes are required and should be submitted to dhottel@ncwdb.org with "RFQ Submission for Career Pathways Implementation" in the subject line.

Bidders must follow exactly, and be responsive to ALL requirements of this RFQ. It is the bidders' responsibility to provide all specified materials in the required form and format.

Workforce Solutions, in soliciting requests for quotes/proposals, shall not discriminate against any person or organization submitting a response pursuant to this Request for Quote/Proposal because of race, color, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, ethnic group, national origin, or other basis prohibited by law.

Background – WIOA:

WIOA sets parameters from state, regional, and local workforce development systems throughout the country, mandating resource sharing and alignment of priorities across multiple systems, programs, partners, and providers to ensure a skilled workforce today and in the future. As described in the Commonwealth's WIOA Combined State Plan, workforce development systems in Pennsylvania will invest in innovation, employer engagement, accountability structures, and improved data to create a comprehensive workforce development system consistent with the governor's strategic vision.

Workforce Solutions is responsible for oversight of the workforce system in the North Central region of PA which includes the counties of Cameron, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson, McKean and Potter. Workforce Solutions is a workforce intermediary whose Vision Statement reads: Workforce Solutions 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. Workforce Solutions Mission Statement reads: 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 customer's needs.

WIOA requires states and local Workforce Development Boards to work with adult education, post-secondary education and other community-based organizations to develop career pathways that will make it easier for all Americans to attain the skills and credentials needed for jobs. Workforce Solutions completed the development

of career pathways toolkits in 2018 that can be found at the following link:
<https://www.workforcesolutionspa.com/categories/job-seekers/pages/career-pathways>

Workforce Solutions also oversees industry partnership for the high priority industries of Manufacturing, Healthcare and Social Assistance and Building and Construction. This RFQ will enable us to identify best practices in career pathway implementation projects that can be replicated by other stakeholders throughout the region. We plan to fund 2-3 projects as funding permits.

Summary:

With this RFQ, Workforce Solutions seeks to provide funding to support up to 3 career pathways implementation projects in the North Central PA region (Counties of Cameron, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson, McKean and Potter). The number of projects funded is dependent upon the cost of the projects as well as the number of counties project will serve. Priority will be given to projects that serve the entire region however county projects will be considered. All projects will be shared as best practices for possible replication throughout the region.

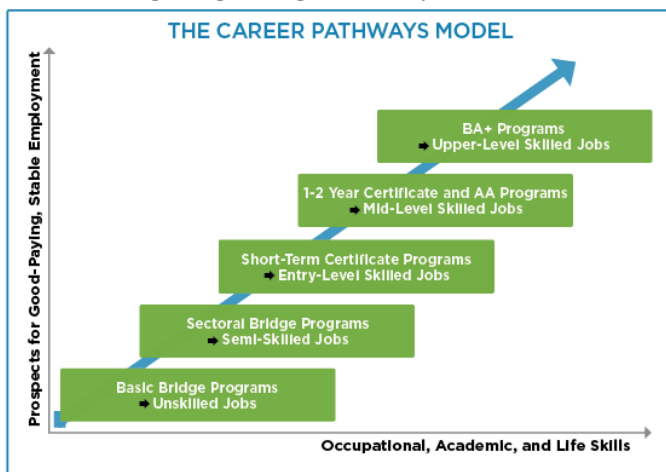
Collaboration with PA CareerLink centers is required if applicable. PA CareerLink® centers can provide work readiness skills, access to employers as well as other appropriate assistance.

What is a Career Pathway - The career pathways approach to workforce development helps less educated workers advance to better paying jobs by earning in demand post-secondary credentials. The approach involves articulated steps of education, training and employment within an industry sector combined with other services to support participant success. A Career Pathway (as per the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity (WIOA) Act legislation) means a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that:

- (A) aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
- (B) prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including registered apprenticeships;
- (C) includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual’s education and career goals;
- (D) includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- (E) organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;
- (F) enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least 1 recognized postsecondary credential; and
- (G) helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster

Workforce Solutions will consider all proposals that fit into the above definition.

The following image is a general depiction of a traditional career model:



Examples of Career Pathway Implementation Projects – The following serve as examples only.

Workforce Solutions is seeking innovative career pathway strategies and short-term programs that can be replicated and sustained throughout the region to meet the needs of local employers and to provide workers with skills for advancement in the priority industries of Manufacturing, Healthcare & Social Assistance, or Building and Construction.

Example 1: Development and implementation of a skills or knowledge based development program designed to prepare individual(s) for the world of work or advance in the industry through a customized curriculum, such as a “Fit for (Fit 4)” course designed for entry into the workplace or a specifically designed curriculum to advance an individual to a higher level or specific position within the targeted industry.

Example 2: Implementation of ready-made/existing curriculum geared toward increasing the skills of individuals seeking to enter or advance in the workplace (such as CNA) with employment and/or further advancement within the industry.

Resources: The following resources may be helpful to prepare the proposal:
https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEN/TEN_17-15_Attachment_Acc.pdf

Specific Request Requirements:

The career pathways proposal must contain the following components:

- Identification of priority industry and occupation. Priority will be given to occupations on the North Central Workforce Development Area High Priority Occupation (HPO) list. The HPO list can be viewed at the following link: <https://www.workforcesolutionspa.com/categories/labor-market-information/pages/high-priority-occupation-list>
- Education requirements to move along the pathway.
- Program Description including all support activities and services.
- Collaboration with PA CareerLink®, Workforce Solutions and local employers.

Response Requirements (minimum requirements)

For ease and efficiency of review, Workforce Solutions has specified the numbering protocol for bidders. Please follow this numbering protocol exactly, and do not re-number, insert numbers, or otherwise modify the sequence. Submissions should be a minimum of 2 pages in length. Attachments that support the submission are allowable and there is no page limit.

1. Agency Profile and Qualifications

- a. Name of agency, contact person, and contact information: Provide address, telephone, mobile telephone number, e-mail address, and web address, as applicable.
- b. Provide a brief description of your agency, including; number of employees, service/expertise areas and any awards or other forms of recognition received.
- c. Special consideration: Describe your experience with and knowledge of the North Central Workforce Development Area.
- d. Special consideration: Describe your professional experience with and knowledge of the workforce system.

2. Experience and ability to perform this work

- a. Provide examples of relevant work and / or case studies.

3. Career Pathways Project

- a. Describe in detail the project that you are proposing including: the plan to implement the career pathway program; curriculum outline; method of training, education and supports; credential/s to be obtained; etc.

- b. Describe target audience and the recruitment of candidates, including anticipated numbers to be served. Include in response how the project benefits those with barriers to employment.
- c. Provide the location of services, targeted area, and how the project could be implemented throughout the region.

3. Budget

a. Provide a budget including the major areas of expense. A maximum award amount has not been identified. We prefer to evaluate based on the cost you have determined. Upon award an introductory meeting will be held with all appropriate parties including Workforce Solutions and PA CareerLink staff.

4. Timeline

The performance timeline for this funding is from March 1, 2023 through June 30, 2023 with the possibility of an extension beginning in September 2023.

Evaluation Criteria

| CRITERIA | POINTS |
|---|---------------|
| Agency Profile and Qualification | 10 |
| Experience and ability to perform this work | 20 |
| Career Pathways Project | 50 |
| Budget | 10 |
| Timeline | 10 |

Award

Workforce Solutions reserves the right to determine the timing of the start of any work described above, to not proceed with some or all of the work, and to contract with more than one vendor for services described within this RFQ. Workforce Solutions reserves the right not to award a contract for the RFQ, and will not reimburse the cost incurred by bidders who responds to this notice. If awarded, a contractual agreement will be entered into between the qualified provider and Workforce Solutions.

Funding Information: <https://www.workforcesolutionspa.com/categories/resources/pages/stevens-amendment>

Auxiliary Aids and Services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program