

## Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

### One-Stop Operator Procurement Contract for Professional Services

#### **Purpose of the Request for Qualifications:**

The Land of Lincoln Workforce Alliance Workforce Board (Board) is issuing a Request for Qualifications for consulting services to complete the procurement process related to the hiring of a One-Stop Operator. The Land of Lincoln Workforce Alliance in Local Workforce Area #20 (LWA) is a five county region that encompasses the counties of: Cass, Christian, Logan, Menard, and Sangamon.

#### **Background:**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is federal legislation that guides employment and training programs and was passed into law on July 22, 2014. WIOA provides the framework through which workforce areas and regions can leverage Federal, State, local and philanthropic resources to support businesses and job-seekers. The workforce vision for LWA 20 and the One-Stop partners is to create a responsive, integrated workforce development system that provides exceptional service to both job seekers and employers.

As part of WIOA, the local workforce board must procure the One-Stop Operator through a competitive process, as required by sec. 121(d) (2) (A) of WIOA. The legislation further states that the One-Stop Operator(s) is competitively procured at least once every four years and/or the State or local Board may choose to implement a competitive process more often. The Board is soliciting consulting services to ensure that competition, oversight, and evaluation of the process is free from conflict. The Board will use local procurement policies and procedures currently in place and will assure that the principles of competitive procurement in the Uniform Guidance set out at 2 CRF 200.318 (f) are met.

**Scope of Work:** Under WIOA, Local Workforce Areas are charged with achieving ambitious goals that integrate workforce service delivery. Carefully planned and coordinated services among all federally-funded workforce development programs are necessary to achieve the level of integration that WIOA envisions. The One-Stop Operator is responsible for coordinating service delivery among the One-Stop Partners and service providers. This RFQ is being issued to assure that the One-Stop Operator procurement process is followed according to federal guidelines. The scope of work for this project includes:

**RFP Preparation & Bidders Meeting** – The development of an RFP for the One-Stop Operator will be prepared by the consultant. The consultant will be provided information about the role of the One-Stop Operator based on decisions made by the Board. A Bidder’s meeting will be held as part of the RFP process.

**RFP Distribution/Circulation** – The One-Stop Operator RFP will be advertised in the legal section of the local newspaper, distributed to the community via the WIOA distribution network, and other methods of communication determined by the consultant.

Bid Evaluation and Board Approval – A bid evaluation process will be developed by the consultant and the consultant will recruit members to serve on the evaluation team. The RFP will include the proposal evaluation form, description of evaluation areas, and scoring system.

Negotiating of Winning Bid/Contractor – The consultant may need to negotiate the One-Stop Operator contract – to be determined. The consultant will present information to the Land of Lincoln Workforce Board for approval at their May 2024 meeting.

**Firewalls Applied to Procurement** – The Board will apply appropriate policies to ensure potential contractors in a competitive bid are not directly involved with the procurement process itself, including but not limited to, drafting procurement requirements, establishing review criteria, and conducting the review of responses and the final selection.

**Third Party in the Procurement Process** – The entity conducting the procurement must have no financial interest in the outcome of the procurement. The third party may be a consultant, a professional or any other independent entity retained specifically to arrange, notice and process the procurement. Such entities may be retained locally or statewide and retained by one or more Local Boards. A Local Board must use discretion in retaining entities with whom it previously has done business to avoid conflicts of interest or any appearance of favoritism in its final decision.

**Effective Date** – Decisions on the One-Stop Center Operator must be in place so that services can begin on July 1, 2024.

**Key deliverables:**

- Procurement implementation plan with timelines.
- Develop RFP and facilitate the RFP process including securing members for the evaluation team and review of proposals.
- Complete advertising for the RFP and assure distribution locally and statewide.
- Negotiate with One-Stop Operator regarding aspects of the contract that need clarification or modification.
- Present information about the RFP process, evaluation and outcome to members of the Land of Lincoln Workforce Board at a regularly scheduled meeting in May 2024.

**Key skill sets include:**

- Knowledge and understanding of procurement process and the principles of competitive procurement in the Uniform Guidance at 2 CRF 200.318 (f).
- Experience in issuing RFPs, distribution and evaluation of proposals.
- Knowledge and understanding of conflict of interest regulations and firewall policies.
- Technical skills in project management, strategic planning, consensus building, conflict resolution and group decision-making.
- Effective collaboration with strong relationship-building skills.
- Skilled writing ability with experience in grant/program development.

- Understanding of workforce development programs.

**Time Frame:** January – May 2024

**Individuals interested in this project should:**

1. Provide a letter of interest with the following information:
  - Description of experience/background specific to the Scope of Work and deliverables identified above.
  - Sample work related to RFP development, evaluation instrument and criteria.
  - Describe distribution/marketing of the RFP to assure the information is provided to the public.
  - Describe how you would negotiate with a potential contractor, handle difficult situations or conflict.
  - Proposed timeline between January and May.
  - Proposed cost – Include a budget for costs associated with the project.
  - The Land of Lincoln Workforce Board has approved up to \$8,000 for an independent contractor, however this is negotiable.

2. Submit information listed above by close of business on Friday, January 12, 2024 to:

Vic Martinek c/o Guenevere Black Ford  
Board Chair for Land of Lincoln Workforce Alliance  
217-558-4289  
[gford@worknet20.org](mailto:gford@worknet20.org)

3. Additional links:

<https://www.illinoisworknet.com/DownloadPrint/Attachment%20U%20-%20Policy%20Documents.pdf>

<https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Information%20About%20the%20Requirements%20of%20One-Stop%20Operator%20AgreementsWIOA%20Webinar-min.pdf>

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