



Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

Independent Negotiator for MOU Contract for Professional Services

Purpose of the Request for Qualifications:

The Land of Lincoln Workforce Alliance is issuing a Request for Qualifications for a consultant to negotiate the 2026 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with One-Stop Partners in Local Workforce Area 20 (LWIA 20). LWIA 20 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 LWIA 20 and One-Stop partners is to create a responsive, integrated workforce development system that provides exceptional services to both businesses and job seekers. Job seekers may access employment, education, training and support services to succeed in the labor market. Businesses need skilled workers to compete in the global economy. Together with our partners, WIOA programs provide a needed continuum of services to help support a high-quality workforce system. As part of WIOA, the Governor issues updated guidance to State and local partners defining services to be delivered at the One-Stop, and determines how costs are to be shared by the required partners. The MOU covers: negotiating cost sharing, service access, service delivery, service integration, and other matters essential to the establishment of effective local workforce services under WIOA. The WIOA policy, Governor's Guidelines to State and Local Program Partners Negotiating Costs and Services Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA), was updated to reflect changes that were needed due to the release of WIOA final rules and updated Governor's guidelines. This policy will guide the MOU process for the upcoming 2026 planning process. The independent negotiator hired for this project will utilize up-to-date policy guidance issued by the State for negotiating costs with One-Stop Partners and developing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) document to be submitted for approval. MOU implementation guidelines, documents, and materials will be made available at <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Pages/Public-Documents.aspx>

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 integrated service delivery that WIOA envisions. Partner programs identified under WIOA must work collaboratively to

optimize the quality of services provided to job seekers and businesses. Successful integration is directly related to coordinated and joint use of resources. WIOA requires each partner to contribute its proportionate share of costs for the operation of local one-stop delivery system. The scope of work for this project includes: negotiating with One-Stop Partners either individually or in a group setting; working with partners to define the career services that will be provided at the One-Stop Center; developing referral methods for customers; calculating infrastructure costs and shared system costs and determine payment methods; complete the MOU documents that show goals have been achieved to integrate workforce services. The MOU will meet WIOA guidelines, and be submitted to the State of Illinois in a timely manner for approval. The consultant selected for this project will work closely with the One-Stop Partners, CEOs and WIB to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that meets WIOA federal and State requirements. The timeline for MOU submission is defined in the Governor's Policy letter on MOUs with reporting due dates and MOU submission dates prior to May 30th, 2026.

Key deliverables:

- Lead and facilitate negotiations with One-Stop partners on all aspects required in the WIOA legislation pertaining to the Memorandum of Understanding including career services, referral methods, infrastructure costs and shared system costs January 2026 – March 2026.
- A complete Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) document, budget, and required attachments are the primary deliverable that will be submitted to the State by the due date of May 29th, 2026. A standard template will be utilized that includes:
 - a) a description of services that will be accessible through the local one-stop delivery system;
 - b) the location(s) at which services will be accessible;
 - c) the method of delivery for each required partner providing services and
 - e) completion of a local service matrix which identifies specific services each required partner will provide and describe the method of service delivery.
- As part of the MOU, a description of the specific methods that will be used to refer participants between the one-stop operator and required partners to obtain needed services.
- As part of the MOU, a description of how services will be coordinated for continual improvement and customer satisfaction.
- As part of the MOU, a description of how the service integration action plan will be implemented between the partners.
- Cost sharing decisions will be documented in an approved annual budget using a standard budget template. A portion of each required partner's shared infrastructure and local workforce development systems costs will be determined according to these guidelines.
- The LLWB, CEOs and required One-Stop Partners will be required to approve and sign the MOU.

Key skill sets include:

- Strong facilitator with a demonstrated ability to lead and get results through others by establishing joint ownership and accountability;
- Technical skills in project management, strategic planning, consensus building, conflict resolution and group decision-making;
- Effective collaborator with strong relationship-building skills;
- Skilled writer with experience in grant/program development;

- Understanding of workforce development programs.

Time Frame: January 2026 to May 2026, including any technical adjustments, revisions, or corrections requested by DCEO following submission through October 2026.

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 listed above;
 - Sample work related to MOU development;
 - Describe how you build consensus among partners and/or team building around a common goal;
 - Describe how you handle difficult situations and negotiations in a group setting.
 - Proposed timeline between January 2026 and May 2026.
 - Proposed cost- Include a budget for costs associated with the project.
 - The Land of Lincoln Workforce Board has approved up to \$8,600 for an independent contractor.
2. Submit information listed above by close of business on Friday, December 19th, 2025 to:
Michelle Griebler
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