



Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Development Area 14 Bidder's Conference

February 7, 2024
Columbus Consolidated Government Annex
420 Tenth Street
Columbus, Georgia

These minutes encompasses an overview of the discussion and questions and answers generated during the Bidder's Conference for the solicitation of Adult and Dislocated Worker Services held by the Columbus Consolidated Government Job Training Division on behalf of the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Development Area Fourteen (WDA-14). This conference was held at 10:00 a.m., February 7, 2024, at the Columbus Consolidated Government Annex Building, 420 Tenth Steet, Columbus, Georgia.

Please be reminded that this was the only opportunity questions could be addressed during the solicitation process. Good luck.

Organizations Represented:

Ms. Loraine Cobb, Georgia Job T.I.P.S.
Ms. Lewando McGruder-Patterson, The Office

WIOA Staff

Ms. Feleshia Marshall, WIOA Asst. Director
Ms. Lisa Lane, WIOA Administrative Staff

Overview

The facilitator welcomed all attendees to the Bidders Conference and requested introductions.

Attendees were informed that this is the only opportunity available to ask questions concerning the proposal for adult and dislocated worker services that had been released.

The facilitator noted the purpose of the solicitation was to seek an innovative program design for the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Development Area (WDA-14) which encompasses the 8-county area of Chattahoochee, Clay, Harris, Muscogee, Quitman, Randolph, Stewart, and Talbot. The services being sought were to provide work-based training and services identified in the solicitation packet. The target population for these services was twenty (20) Adults (22 years of age or older) and twenty (20) Dislocated Workers eligible for WIOA Services.

Total funding set aside by the Board totaled \$167,500.00 - \$83,750 in ADULT grant funds and \$83,750 in DISLOCATED WORKER grant funds for Program Year 2024 (July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025). The contract awarded would also include optional contract renewal not to exceed two additional years, based upon defined contract performance outcomes as it related to meeting WIOA measures, future availability, contractor's satisfactory performance and other factors as may be deemed appropriate and necessary as negotiated and approved by both parties and the Board. The Workforce Board reserves the option to modify contracts as required to meet federal and state requirements.

The facilitator asked if anyone had questions, they wished to have addressed up front prior to summarizing the specifics of the program. An inquiry was made regarding the "Assurances and Certifications" (starting on page 29 of the package). Specifically, number two: "Contractor agrees that all activities shall be non-sectarian and not involve construction, operation, or maintenance of any facility to be used for the sectarian instruction and/or religious worship."

The facilitator noted that this clause meant that the contractor performing work under the agreement must ensure all activities are not affiliated with any specific religious sect and will not be involved in building, managing, or maintaining any facility that is primarily used for religious instruction or worship services; essentially, the work must remain neutral in terms of religion.

The attendees were provided with an overview of the solicitation packet. The facilitator discussed the implementation schedule outlined on page 6. It was reiterated that all proposals must be received in the Job Training Division offices at Columbus City Hall, 1111 1st Avenue, 2nd Floor, Suite 2145, Columbus, Georgia, no later than 5:00 PM EST Friday, March 8, 2024.

Proposals MUST be submitted in a sealed envelope and marked "Proposal: PY24 WORKFORCE REINTEGRATIVE TRAINING (WORK EXPERIENCE & PLACEMENT SERVICES) FOR ADULTS AND DISLOCATED WORKERS".

Each proposal submitted should contain one (1) "Original Signature" proposal and four (4) additional copies of the signed respective proposal. It was stressed that each proposal must be clearly marked "Original" or "Copy" and that the original copy and all attachments (which require signatures) must be signed by the individual authorized to enter a contract on behalf of the organization/agency and signed in a color other than black ink (preferably BLUE INK).

The facilitator noted that services to adults and dislocated workers would be a decentralized delivery system utilizing both public and private sector service delivery operations. Although WIOA is a fund source and oversight entity, successful contractors retain operational control of their program, so long as functions under WIOA are within the scope of contract guidelines established by the WIOA Administrator, federal and state laws, regulations, and processes relates to services provided with WIOA Funds.

The facilitator noted that the definitions started on page 7 and were a helpful tool in understanding the terms used throughout the solicitation package.

A summary of the specific funding information was discussed. It was clarified that \$83,750 in funding for each of the two different funding streams – Adult and Dislocated Worker (a combined total of \$167,500) would be awarded for a Work Experience activity that must result in job placement into full time, unsubsidized employment upon completion of training.

The Facilitator stressed that the Workforce Board reserves the option to modify contracts as required to meet federal and state requirements. All funding is linked to defined performance outcomes including federal, state, and local negotiated performance measures, future finding availability, contractors' satisfactory performance, and other factors as may be deemed appropriate and

necessary.

The facilitator noted that Page 15, describes how proposals must be submitted.

Upon receipt, proposals will be reviewed to determine whether or not they are responsive. Proposals will be considered responsive if they meet the criteria outlined on Page 17 of the proposal packet. The Administrative, Programmatic & Oversight Committee will review only responsive bids. The review is rated on a 100-point scale, with 5 additional points for local ownership. Minority and female business are encouraged to submit proposals.

Attendees were informed that the successful bidder will be provided training prior to the start of the program to cover what the Administration requires of contract implementation and reporting. Attendees were informed that it will be the successful bidder's responsibility to recruit participants for the services funded. The WIOA Administration will determine eligibility, administer assessment/testing to determine basic skills functioning levels of the Adults and Dislocated Workers served and other requirements that are part of the WIOA Administration policy.

Attendees were informed that the contract awarded will be "cost reimbursement", which means that the WIOA Administration will reimbursement any costs outlined in the agreed budget that have been incurred and support documentation provided.

It was stressed that a detailed budget form must be completed for each funding stream (ADULT and DISLOCATED WORKER) separately meaning there should be two detailed budget forms completed and that a budget narrative must be submitted with the proposal that explains the costs identified in each of the budgets. No material, labor, equipment or facility costs will be provided by the Administration unless specified in the budget and agreed upon by the WIOA Administration/Board.

Section V (beginning on page 23) provides instructions of the RFP responses and the submission requirements.

The facilitator gave a summary of the proposed program specific information. Attendees were informed that Part 2 of the RFP Package contained the cover page (required to be submitted with the proposal), checklist, and additional proposal information required for submitting a responsive proposal.

The Participant Characteristics (Priority of Service) form found on page 10 will indicate the participant characteristics that your program will give priority of service. This form must be completed for each funding stream "if" the planned number/percentage differs from the two funding streams (ADULT and DISLOCATED WORKER). Should your focus remain the same regardless, then only one form would need to be submitted with the proposal clearly marked Adult and Dislocated Worker. Your agency must describe it will conduct outreach and recruitment of individuals for WIOA services to satisfy your contractual obligations. You must also identify the training occupations which will be targeted, and the minimum prevailing entry-level wage for each occupation.

The Target Occupations Chart (found of page 12) requires listing occupational titles that you will target and entry-level wages. You can find the O'Net codes for the positions you will target at <http://online.onetcenter.org/>

Attendees were informed that members of the Administrative Entity will conduct a pre-award monitoring during the period of negotiations and prior to the actual signing of contracts with selected bidders. Monitoring (review) of programs to assess effectiveness of planning, operation, and management will be conducted on a quarterly basis for compliance, performance, programmatic and financial management.

The Management Plan describes your organization. Tell us how you are set up; provide organizational chart, and how you will monitor yourself. You are asked to discuss your financial capability. You must provide a copy of your UI Tax and Federal Identification number (State and Federal Tax Numbers) and SAM registration number.

The facilitator provided the specific fidelity bonding requirements. A certified copy of your agency's fidelity bond which shows coverage for the period that would be covered (July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025) must be included in the proposal submission. The Fidelity/Assurance Bond schedule can be found on page 18.

The facilitator stressed the importance of completing all the forms in the solicitation package.

The following list contains some of the general questions that were asked during the bidder's conference, followed by responses from the Administrative Entity. We extend our thanks to each of the agencies in attendance and wish all bidders good luck.

Questions & Answers

- Q Number 2 under the “Assurances and Certifications” (starting on page 29 of the package) reads, “Contractor agrees that all activities shall be non-sectarian and not involve construction, operation, or maintenance of any facility to be used for the sectarian instruction and/or religious worship.” What does this mean?
- A. *This clause means that the contractor performing work under the agreement must ensure all activities are not affiliated with any specific religious sect and will not be involved in building, managing, or maintaining any facility that is primarily used for religious instruction or worship services; essentially, the work must remain neutral in terms of religion.*
- Q What Counties are we serving?
- A. *WDA-14 serves the eight counties of Chattahoochee, Clay, Harris, Muscogee, Quitman, Randolph, Stewart and Talbot.*
- Q Are there specific “Pathways” targeted or is it entirely up to the individual?
- A. *The State of Georgia does have a High Demand Career Initiative (HDCI) where objectives in each workforce development area have been identified in-demand talent needs of business with the purpose of aligning education and training to meet those specific needs. WDA-14 has identified Health Care, Transportation and Manufacturing as the in-demand career paths for our area. Ultimately, it is up to the individual which career path they wish to explore. WIOA is a program of choice.*
- Q How many hours can an individual participate in the work experience activity?
- A. *The maximum number of hours allowed in the work experience activity is up to 480 hours. Any additional hours that may be required will be negotiated with the WIOA Administration. This does not include the hours for any other activities associated with program design.*
- Q How can agencies obtain information regarding the prevailing entry wages for a specific occupation?
- A. *You may inquire through the local Georgia Department of Labor, located at 700 Veterans Parkway, Columbus, GA; thru the GDOL website at www.dol.state.ga.us; or you can find the information through the O’Net codes for the positions you will target at <http://online.onetcenter.org/>.*
- Q What are “allowable” reimbursement costs?
- A. *Allowable reimbursement costs are reimbursements of payments that are made to the contracted agency for incurred actual expenses against approved line items and expense amounts contained in a budget that was negotiated by both parties and approved by the Board.*
- Q How often is reporting due?
- A. *Counseling Notes are due once a month from all contracted Service Providers. Follow-up services must be conducted for 12 months beginning on the first day after completion of training and shall continue through attainment of unsubsidized employment or until the expiration of the contract award period, at which time the participant follow-up record will be transferred to the WIOA Administration, unless a renewal option has been approved. If renewed, the contractor will remain responsible for those active participants still enrolled in the activity unless otherwise approved by the WIOA Administration.*
- Q What is the “fidelity bond”?
- A. *Another term would be “liability insurance”. This covers policyholders for losses that they incur because of fraudulent acts by specified individuals. As stated in the package, bidders must provide a “fidelity bond” that adheres to the requirements discussed on Page 18 of the solicitation package.*

The facilitator asked if there were any additional questions that needed to be asked; any clarification required of what was being requested in the solicitation. No further questions were asked during the Bidders Conference.

Attendees were further reminded that once the meeting adjourned, no additional questions or responses could be provided. With no further discussion, the Bidder's conference was adjourned. Good Luck to all interested parties.