
NORTHEASTERN WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT BOARD
2021 BIDDERS' CONFERENCE
AUGUST 23, 2021



AGENDA

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INTRODUCTIONS OF NORTHEASTERN WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT BOARD STAFF AND GUESTS
(Name, Title, & Organization)

PROTOCOLS - BIDDERS' CONFERENCE

- Participants will remain muted until the comment period at the end of the PowerPoint.
- When speaking, please identify yourself by name and organization.
- All questions must be submitted in writing no later than 4:00pm EDT today, August 23, 2021.
- Answers to all questions will be posted online at <https://www.northeasternwdb.org/news/> no later than 4:00pm EDT on August 27, 2021.

RFP SCHEDULE

August 2, 2021	RFP solicitations are published
August 23, 2021	Bidders' Conference is held from 2:30pm - 4:00pm EDT
August 27, 2021	Conference response posting by 4:00pm EDT
October 29, 2021	Proposals are due 4:00pm EDT
November 10, 2021	One hour bidder interviews via Zoom
December 3, 2021	Finalist presentations if needed
December 10, 2021	Successful bidder is announced
December 17, 2021	Appeal Letter Due by 4:00pm EST
July 1, 2022	Contractors begin PY 2022

Interested parties should check the NWDB's website to access the RFPs and revisit regularly for updates: <https://www.northeasternwdb.org/news/>.

PURPOSE OF RFPS

NWDB is issuing these RFPS to identify a service provider(s) of WIOA Youth Services and WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Services combined with the One-Stop Operator to support and serve the One-Stop Career System for the northeastern region. The workforce system serves Aroostook, Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis, and Washington Counties in accordance with WIOA. The period of performance will include a base contract year that begins **July 1, 2022** and ends on **June 30, 2023**.

The selected applicant(s) will implement a proven WIOA model with a dual-customer focus on employers and job seekers that aligns with the NWDB vision of the workforce development system. The system should be designed to serve a diverse range of customers with various needs. The NWDB recognizes that our system is a vital link in connecting job seekers and employers.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Proposals must be consistent with the WIOA and applicable State and Federal regulations.
2. Keep the proposal as concise as possible. The Narrative ‘Work Statement’ must not exceed 30 pages, 12 font, 1” margins, and 1.5 spacing between sentences. Do not send reports, brochures, or similar attachments.
3. 100% of the funds made available to the service provider(s) are **PROGRAM** dollars and must be spent on allowable program costs. The board expects all bidders to be familiar with WIOA requirements related to program costs.
4. These funds may not be used to supplant funds or pay for services that are available through other funding sources.
5. Bidders must demonstrate that services will be made available in all five counties.
6. If any portion of these funds are to be subcontracted, they must be identified in the proposal. Any negotiated sub-contract awarded after the procurement process is completed requires NWDB approval and must meet the State and Federal procurement policies and procedures.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS (cont.)

6. One electronic copy and one hard copy of the proposal must be received at the NWDB office located at 26 Franklin Street, Bangor, Maine no later than 4:00pm (EDT) October 29, 2021. **Proposals should be addressed to: Northeastern Workforce Development Board, 26 Franklin Street, Bangor, ME 04402-0737. Please provide the electronic copy on a flash drive and deliver with one hard copy proposal.**
7. **Proposals not meeting all the requirements, not conforming to the application format, or missing the submission deadline will be eliminated from funding consideration.**
8. **Budget Narrative- (Maximum 8 pages- please attach to the budget template when submitting the proposal- the budget narrative will NOT count towards the statement of work narrative):** Provide a budget narrative to accompany the budget. Describe the purpose of each cost, explain how all costs were estimated, and justify the need for all costs in meeting contract requirements. In the budget narrative, be sure to clearly communicate the calculation for staff, support services, space, equipment, general operations, technology, administrative, indirect costs, and any other costs necessary to perform the services described in this RFP. A strong budget narrative will minimize or eliminate the need for clarifications from evaluators reading your proposal.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS (cont.)

NWDB is not liable for any costs incurred by organizations prior to awarding the contract. Moreover, the submission of a complete full proposal does not commit NWDB to award a contract. NWDB reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals submitted under this RFP, to negotiate with any or all qualified bidders, and/or to cancel part or all of this solicitation. NWDB also may require the successful bidder to participate in negotiations and submit proposal revisions as needed.

Any changes to specifications will be posted on NWDB's website www.northeasternwdb.org under "RFP," and all attendees at the Bidder's Conference and Bidders who email questions electronically can access the posted NWDB's written response online Friday, August 27, 2021 at www.northeasternwdb.org under "RFP."

POSTPONEMENT DUE TO IMPACTS OF COVID-19

The NWDB's previous RFP review started on March 6, 2020. The NWDB's procurement process continued as specified in the last RFP's timeline until the State of Maine was feeling the impact of COVID-19. On March 24, 2020, the full board met, discussed the issues related to how the COVID-19 virus has affected our workforce area, and voted unanimously to postpone the procurement process as well as extend the current service providers' WIOA contracts for one more year.

Before COVID-19 significantly hit Maine and social distancing measures took place in March 2020, Maine's unemployment rate was 3.1% and the labor participation rate (seasonally adjusted) was 62.5%. As of May 2021, however, our state's unemployment rate has floated around 4.7% for a few months and the participation rate is 60.1% - 2.4% lower than pre-pandemic measures. At the same time, many employers report a struggle to find and retain employees, forcing many businesses to reduce operations. The NWDB is eager to hear how bidders plan to help 1) increase the labor participation rate (i.e., get people who are not looking for work to start doing so) and 2) current job seekers find and sustain a satisfactory job.

POSTPONEMENT DUE TO IMPACTS OF COVID-19 (cont.)

Given that we are still recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic and that another crisis could occur, the NWDB would like to ensure the service provider(s) are adaptable and better suited to future challenges. To that end, the board is interested in hearing how bidders adapted to the pandemic and its consequent impact on services and their forms of delivery.

Furthermore, bidders should explain how recent lessons have influenced preparation for future potential challenges. This can be demonstrated by sharing an up-to-date emergency management plan, a description of how customers can be served under various scenarios, or through another way the bidder prefers.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Eligible applicants include non-profit and for-profit organizations, private sector entities, educational institutions, community-based organizations, and other entities operating in accordance with federal, state, and local law, and must have been in business for at least three years. Eligible applicants must be in good standing with the federal government. Organizations currently barred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by a Federal, State, City, or County department/agency, quasi-governmental agency, or the NWDB are ineligible to apply.

A group of two or more applicants may apply as a consortium BUT the NWDB will award only ONE CONTRACT to the lead applicant/fiscal agent. In this scenario, the NWDB will contract with one lead organization. All entities, whether directly contracted or subcontracted via the lead applicant/fiscal agent, will be held to the requirements of federal, state, and local policies. Please be aware that additional monitoring, compliance, and assessment requirements will become the responsibility of the lead applicant/fiscal agent. All selected applicants will have demonstrated experience and expertise in the provision of high-quality workforce development services to the target populations described in this RFP. Providers will be expected to ground their organization within the communities they serve with staff focused on providing culturally competent services and a history of successful workforce development programming.

WHO CAN APPLY? (cont.)

All applicants must have the technical competence, knowledge and expertise, management and administrative capabilities/capacity, professional staff, financial resources, and stability, as well as administrative and fiscal systems to carry out the work described in this RFP. Applicants must meet high standards of public service and fiduciary responsibility. The NWDB requires assurance that the selected applicant's performance of the terms and conditions of any agreement resulting from this RFP be undertaken in accordance with the highest level of integrity and business ethics.

Applicants must be able to implement a system of self-monitoring, including the review of key data related to performance, quality assurance, financial integrity and accuracy, and one-stop center operations. Applicants are responsible for being knowledgeable of all laws, regulations, rules, and policies of the funding sources identified in this RFP.

If the NWDB determines, (at its sole discretion), that the selected applicant is not responsible or that it does not possess the administrative, fiscal, and/or technical resources and capabilities necessary to successfully perform under the terms and conditions of an agreement, it shall terminate the agreement immediately.

STATEMENT OF WORK – ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER SERVICES

The selected applicant will implement an innovative and proven workforce development model, driven by the needs of employers through delivery of services to adults and dislocated workers in collaboration with required and additional partners. The proposed model must align with the principles and requirements of WIOA and the Northeastern Workforce Development Board's vision of a workforce, ready to compete in a world class workforce system.

The primary goal is to match the labor demands of employers with the skills and talents of job seekers, helping businesses thrive and create viable career pathways for residents of the five counties. Work performed under any agreement resulting from this RFP will include but is not limited to delivery of Adult and Dislocated Worker Services as defined by the WIOA and all its implementing guidelines and regulations. The services described in this RFP will be delivered from One Comprehensive One-Stop CareerCenter and all affiliate sites in the five counties.

STATEMENT OF WORK – ONE STOP OPERATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The One-Stop Operator will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Coordinate in partnership with the NWDB staff the one-stop delivery system integration and ensure all required partner services are accessible and being effectively delivered at each site in the local area;
- Ensure universal access to career and training services;
- Provide data, information, and analysis of the regional labor market;
- Support and establish relationships and networks with large and small employers and their intermediaries and other community-based organization to boost and build the system and support the one-stop;
- Support the NWDB by leading in the development, writing, and execution of the One Stop Partner (OSP) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and its Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA).
- Conduct an annual “self-assessment” with local partners to reinforce the NWDB’s formal one stop certification.
- Achieve and measure customer satisfaction.

STATEMENT OF WORK – YOUTH SERVICES

As the primary provider of WIOA Title IB Youth Services in the five counties, the selected applicant will actively participate with the NWDB in shaping and informing the local workforce development system. As such, the selected applicant will assist in the development and will maintain current knowledge of and expertise in:

- Federal, state, and local policies including WIOA and its implementing guidance;
- Evidence-based workforce development practices and viable career pathways;
- Local workforce development programs, social service agencies, and related resources; and,
- Local labor market information including workforce and employer dynamics.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

- Cover Sheet
- Assurances & Certifications
- Staffing Plan
- Budget Form and Implementation Plan Summary
- Budget Narrative (Attach to Budget Form and Implementation Plan)
- Fiscal Questionnaire
- Transition Schedule
- Most recent COMPLETED financial audit report for the bidder's organization or company
- A copy, or copies, of the bidder's Youth and/or Adult/Dislocated Worker Program Year 2019 WIOA annual review report.

Adult/DW/OSO RFP must include copy(s) of **WIOA Adult and DW program review(s) for Program Year 2019** conducted by the State of Maine and all other states (if applicable).

Youth RFP must include copy(s) of **WIOA youth program review(s) for Program Year 2019** conducted by the State of Maine and all other states (if applicable).

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS (cont.)

References

Include the following letters of reference with the proposal from entities with whom there has been a collaboration in the past five years and for a period of at least three years:

- At least one financial reference that attests to the organization's financial management competencies;
- One letter from a funding organization that can attest to a responsible use of resources;
- One letter from a project partner which can attest to the organization's ability to collaborate; and,
- One letter from a sub-contractor which can attest to the ability to develop and implement contractual relationships.

Staff Resumes /Job Descriptions

Please provide staff resumes for existing staff who will be supported with WIOA funds, and job descriptions for all new (or unfilled) positions to be supported with WIOA funds.

Organizational Chart

Provide an organizational chart of the proposed operational structure for this project. The lead entity of a collaborative bid should show how the operational structure involves the partners.

Supplementary Information (if applicable)

Information included in this section may only relate to the following conditions (no other supplementary information should be included or will be accepted):

- Supplementary audit information as requested within the *FINANCIAL COMPONENT* of this RFP;
- Explanatory information as required by any responses to questions in the Bidder Background section of the required attachment, "Fiscal Questionnaire."

Emergency Management Plan (Maximum five pages and will NOT count as project narrative)



COMMENTS?

Please provide name and organization when speaking.



Thank you for attending the 2021 NWDB bidders' conference.

Reminder - answers to all questions will be posted online at <https://www.northeasternwdb.org/news/> no later than 4:00pm EDT on August 27, 2021.