

# **Request for Proposal**

## **Workforce Innovation Program**

Issued by:

***Northwest Central Illinois (NCI) Works***

The Workforce Development Board for  
Bureau, Carroll, Jo Daviess, LaSalle, Lee, Ogle, Putnam and Whiteside  
Counties

For:

NCI Works is requesting a consultant to address three common barriers to employment that adversely impact Veterans, Individuals with Disabilities, and Returning Citizens who are striving to enter/re-enter the workforce. These barriers are lack of a support network, lack of knowledge when seeking careers and employment, and overcoming employer misconception in hiring these individuals.

Funding is provided through the local funding of  
The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Project Administration provided by:

NCI Works

815 N. Orlando Smith Avenue, Room C328  
Oglesby, IL 61348

Contract Administration provided by:

Business Employment Skills Team, Inc.

1680 S. Galena Avenue  
Dixon, IL 61021

**Request for Proposals  
NCI Works  
Statewide Workforce Innovation Program**

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# I. General

## A. Background

*NCI Work's mission is to work hand-in-hand with business, service, government, education and non-profit organizations to enable workers to work and businesses to compete.*

Since its organization under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, NCI Works has worked to address the workforce needs of Bureau, Carroll, Jo Daviess, LaSalle, Lee, Ogle, Putnam and Whiteside Counties. The mission statement of NCI Works reflects its desire to “enable workers to work and businesses to compete”.

In the Executive Summary of the final regulations, it states that the purpose of WIOA is to “seek[s] to deliver a broad array of integrated services to customers of the public workforce system, which include both individuals seeking jobs and skills training and employers seeking skilled workers. The law improves the public workforce system by more closely aligning it with regional economies and strengthening the network of about 2,500 one-stop centers.”

In order to enable the community to understand and address the workforce-related issues faced by individuals with disabilities, veterans and returning citizens, NCI Works is seeking a proposal to develop a curriculum to address at a minimum three specific barriers faced by the targeted population. The barriers to be addressed include: support network, job search skills/career exploration, and addressing employer misconceptions.

## B. Purpose of the Request for Proposal

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires local workforce boards such as NCI Works to develop a “local workforce investment system” that:

- ▶ Improves the quality of the workforce;
- ▶ Reduces welfare dependency; and
- ▶ Enhances the productivity and competitiveness of the Local Workforce Area

NCI Works seeks a consultant(s) to:

- Research, adapt, supplement, or design an innovative curriculum that will provide Work Readiness/Soft Skills Training for targeted populations addressing identified barriers. The targeted populations for purposes of this RFP are Individuals with Disabilities, Returning Citizens (formerly incarcerated), and Veterans.
- Identify an innovative approach to assist the targeted population in ways to establish a positive support network through a mentoring program or other means.
- Develop innovative marketing approach/materials to be utilized in working with employers in order to overcome the misconceptions of hiring an individual from these targeted populations.

The consultant will work with Targeted Population Committee of the NCI Works Board.

#### C. Submittal of Proposals

Proposals may be submitted electronically to [Pam\\_Furlan@best-inc.org](mailto:Pam_Furlan@best-inc.org).

Proposals must be received by 4:00 p.m. on March 13, 2018. Any proposal received after the deadline will not be reviewed.

#### D. Funding

Available funding for the combined project is anticipated to not exceed \$20,000-100,000.

#### E. Duration

The Consultant should plan to begin on or shortly after May 1, 2018 and may end any time activities are completed but not to exceed 12 – 18 months, unless agreed upon by all parties prior to completion of the project. The final product is subject to acceptance by NCI Works. Roll-out of the project is expected to occur prior to the end of the project.

#### F. Inquiries

Inquiries should be addressed to Pam Furlan, Executive Director/LWDB and Programs at [pam\\_furlan@best-inc.org](mailto:pam_furlan@best-inc.org) or (815)224-0375.

## II. Project Description

### A. Goal

To increase participation of Individuals with Disabilities, Veterans, and Returning Citizens adversely impacted by lack of a support network, job search skills/career exploration, and addressing employer misconceptions, and to reduce the time involved in obtaining or returning to employment and self-sufficiency.

### B. Required Components

#### Coordination of Efforts in the Area

The consultant will work with the Targeted Population Committee of the NCI Works Board. This committee includes WIOA staff, veterans groups, groups that work with individuals with a disability, and returning citizens.

#### Documentation of Need

Applicant will describe the issues, problems, and/or needs of these targeted populations (i.e. at-risk factors' market needs; occupational advantages that are available).

Applicant will provide a detailed explanation of how the curriculum will assist in developing the necessary skills for the successful transition of the targeted populations into employment.

Describe the elements of the project that are innovative and provide evidence supporting the innovation, the specific intended outcomes derived from the innovation and how the impact of the innovation will be measured.

#### Cost Effectiveness/Return on Investment

Describe how the project will result in Youth, Adults or Dislocated workers being placed in permanent employment.

Describe how the project could be sustained beyond the time period for the project.

Describe how this project could be implemented on a statewide basis and what benefit the State will realize from the statewide implementation.

#### Develop Work Readiness/Soft Skills Curriculum

Research, adopts, supplement or develop an innovative and interactive curriculum that will address specific barriers that the targeted populations face when trying to obtain and retain employment. The primary barriers to be addressed include: support network, job search skills/career exploration, and Employer's Misconception.

Develop a manual that will assist staff in delivering the curriculum to their clients and present this to staff by conducting a "train the trainer" workshop.

Curriculum may be deliverable to job seekers in various training platforms.

#### Design Methodology for Establishing Positive Support Network

Develop innovative approaches that will assist the targeted population in gaining direction in establishing a positive support network that will help the individuals in making behavioral changes.

#### Marketing Materials to Overcome Employer Misconceptions

Develop innovative marketing materials to be used in reaching the employer communities. These materials will address demystifying misconceptions of hiring the targeted populations.

### C. Reporting Requirement

Monthly updates of the projects progress is required. This can be done in person, by phone or through webinars.

### III. Contract and Proposal Information

- A. Bidders are required to follow the guidelines contained in this document in preparing response proposals. Guidelines address both the structure of the proposal and the content of the proposal.
- B. **All** proposals submitted in response to the RFP will be subject to review by a review committee of members of NCI Works.
- C. NCI Works retains the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received, to negotiate with any qualified source, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this proposal process if it is in the best interest of NCI Works to do so.
- D. This proposal does not commit NCI Works or BEST, Inc. to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal, or to procure or contract for services or supplies prior to issuance of a written contract document.
- E. Bidders shall submit their proposals electronically.
- F. Proposals submitted and not selected for funding will not be returned.
- G. The content of the proposal submitted by the selected bidder (contractor) will become part of its contract with BEST, Inc., for NCI Works.
- H. Proprietary rights to all data, materials, documentation, and products originated by and prepared for NCI Works pursuant to the contract shall belong exclusively to NCI Works.
- I. Throughout the duration of the project, the consultant(s) must recognize the NCI Works in all surveys, correspondence and communications with relevant stakeholders in region.
- J. The contractor will be prohibited from disseminating products and information developed under the contract without the prior written consent of NCI Works.
- K. NCI Works and BEST, Inc. will consult with the contractor regarding implementation of the contract. As part of the consultation, the contractor will receive instructions on the billing schedule and submittal procedures.

- L. A designated committee of NCI Works is authorized to accept and approve or reject the services furnished by the contractor.
- M. The contractor shall provide oral and/or written progress reports to NCI Works during the contract period. Such reports will address the contractor's progress in completing project activities.
- N. Payment for services provided under the contract shall not be construed as evidence of the NCI Works acceptance of the project deliverables, as described in the Program Description of the proposal. The contractor will provide copies of all written deliverables in draft and final form to NCI Works. Should NCI Works reject any or all of the project deliverables, NCI Works will notify the contractor in writing of such rejection giving the reason(s) therefore. The right to reject the report shall extend throughout the term of the contract and for ninety (90) days after the contractor submits the final billing for payment.
- O. The contract may be modified to include additional tasks reasonably related to the initial project with additional funding to support completion of those additional tasks. Modifications must be in writing and approved by NCI Works.

#### IV. Guidelines for the Preparation of the Proposal

The proposal **must** be assembled according to the following outline:

- A. Cover Sheet
- B. Table of Contents
- C. Executive Summary (1 pages)
- D. Project Description
- E. Budget Information Worksheet
- F. Implementation Plan
- G. Attachments

Please read and follow the guidelines. Specifications are presented on the following pages, along with comments and suggestions which will appear in *italicized* print.

Bidders are cautioned to submit the Proposal(s) on the most favorable basis, price and terms. Acceptance of the Program Proposal enables an entity to enter into detailed negotiations based on the information that is initially submitted.

**A. Cover Sheet**

- 1) Complete all items of information on the cover sheet.
- 2) Include the cover sheet as the first item in the proposal

*Comments and Suggestions: The cover sheet is the identification tag for the proposal. Be sure that all the information has been completed accurately.*

**B. Table of Contents**

- 1) Indicate all headings and subheadings with appropriate page numbers.
- 2) List all appendices by title and page number. For ease of the reviewer, appendices should be inserted at the end of the appropriate section rather than at the end of the entire proposal.

**C. Executive Summary**

Prepare a brief (1page) abstract that summarizes the **key** points regarding the completion of this project.

*Comments and Suggestions: The summary is probably the first thing that will be read. It should be clear, concise and specific. It should identify the proposer and the projected cost for performing project activities and producing the project deliverables identified in Section II. It should also briefly describe the approach to be used for performing project activities.*

**D. Project Description**

Prepare a narrative description of how the activities listed in **Section II Project Description** will be completed and deliverables will be achieved.

**E. Project Activities Schedule**

Proposers shall include an Implementation Plan schedule for each project component identifying the critical project activities, associated task(s), projected time-frames, and deliverables. The project activities and tasks that are identified on this form will be the basis for providing the monthly report. The Implementation Plan can be found with the attachments.

The Projected Activities Schedule should reflect, complement and support the required activities in the **Section II Project Description**.

## **F. Budget**

Develop a budget using the Budget Information Worksheet and Budget Information Summary, Attachment A. A separate worksheet for each line item is to be developed and submitted as back up to the Budget Information Worksheet.

## **G. Evaluation Criteria**

Evaluation of each proposal will be based on the following criteria:

- adherence to Proposal guidelines 10%
- how the proposal narrative meets the requested research and analysis requested in the Program Description. 50%
- competitive total cost for performing proposal activities 20%
- evidence of the proposer's knowledge of the populations in question and the use of independent sources of data and information to support that the curriculum developed will achieve the projects goals and objectives. 20%

# **Attachments**

**Cover Sheet  
Budget Information Summary  
Budget Information Worksheet  
Implementation Plan**

NCI Works  
Statewide Workforce Innovation Proposal

*Proposal Cover Sheet*

Name of Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Project's Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name/Title) \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Title of Person \_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized to Negotiate Contract

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Title of Person \_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized to Sign Contract

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge that the governing body of the proposer's organization has authorized the submission of this proposal

Authorized Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Budget Information Summary

Complete the line item Budget Summary page for each proposal that is being submitted for review.

1. Personnel – Salaries to be paid for Project Personnel
  
2. Fringe Benefits – Payments other than salaries and wages made to staff, or paid on their behalf.
  
3. Travel – Amount requested for staff travel to conduct official business in carrying out project activities.
  
4. Program Costs – Amounts necessary to carry out the project activities.
  
5. Indirect Cost Rate – Indicate indirect costs. You must also include a copy of your Indirect Cost Agreement.
  
6. Other – Indicate all direct costs not clearly covered by lines 1 through 5.

**Total Funds Requested:** Show total lines 1 through 6.

## **Budget Information Worksheet**

Attach a separate detailed budget worksheet for each line item listed below.  
Enter total funding requested from each separate line item.

- 1. Personnel – \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Fringe Benefits – \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Travel – \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Program Costs – \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Indirect Cost Rate – \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. Other - \_\_\_\_\_
  
- Total Funds Requested:** \_\_\_\_\_

