

WIOA Bidders Conference
Questions and Answers
High Country WDB
March 30, 2015

RFP overview highlights included the following:

- Statewide and regional branding efforts continue. Contractors will be expected to operate under the NCWorks branding banner.
- Currently High Country has two, Tier 1 certified centers. Each of the five smaller centers just completed the process to become certified as a Tier 2 center. Please refer to Career Center Analysis for operating details.
- Procurement for Career Center Operations is a new requirement. This entails coordination and functional management of staff.
- Youth services has an increased emphasis on out-of-school youth. Currently in the High Country, sixty-two percent (62%) are out-of-school and services are integrated into the career centers.
- Work-based learning has an increased emphasis across all programs.
- Business services should be seen as an innovative team approach to meet needs of business and should be part of the coordination efforts of all employer services, including job listings, hiring events, recruiting services, all work based learning, employer group convening, and outreach.

Questions received during the bidders conference:

1. How will future considerations of center locations and leases impact budgets?

Each center in the region has a different arrangement regarding lease agreements. New locations/leases can be proposed if it improves service delivery or is a cost savings. Any plans related to possible new lease consideration should be coordinated with HCWDB staff. Any changes initiated by HCWDB staff will be closely coordinated with service providers and current lease holders. It is expected that several centers will relocate in PY2015.

2. Is there an anticipated enrollment goal in mind regarding service delivery?

Proposers should base projections that fit within the service delivery designed and proposed budget. Over the past year, the number of those enrolled in intensive and classroom training has declined while numbers served in core services has increased substantially. It is anticipated that outreach and marketing efforts will drive traffic to the centers and result in an increased demand for general career services. Note that WIOA

places an increased emphasis on work-based learning in all programs which may impact enrollment numbers due to the cost of these activities. As additional information is available regarding performance measures, this may also impact service delivery goals. Proposers should refer to the 2nd Qtr PY 2014 Report & Active Numbers for RFP document posted on the website.

3. How will board staff plan to calculate “measurable skills gain”?

It is expected that additional guidance will be available to assist in defining what a measurable skills gain will look like under WIOA. At this time, the calculation has not been defined.

4. Do staff perform follow-up for participants?

Yes, follow-up is a function of contracted staff. Currently, for adults/dislocated workers, follow-up begins when the customer enters employment. Currently for WIA, follow-up is not required for adults/dislocated workers; however, WIOA seems to place more emphasis on retention/follow-up which may require additional staff time for follow-up. Currently, it is expected that youth follow-up is still a requirement that occurs for twelve (12) months after exit.

5. Please clarify the expectation of partners and their commitment to funding expectations.

WIOA states there are to be shared cost agreements among partners. Contracted service providers must play a role and be part of the negotiations to meet the needs of the center. At this time, it is unclear exactly what the shared cost agreements will look like.

6. Please provide clarification on changing center partners/adding center partners.

Each center looks different in regards to current partnerships that are in place. It is expected that partnerships will continue to grow, especially regarding mandated partners such as Basic Skills and Vocational Rehabilitation. Please refer to the Career Center Analysis document for those partners currently located in the centers. Service Providers are expected to assist with cultivating an atmosphere of partnership and cooperation in order to serve customers.

7. How is unemployment handled?

Currently, the majority of unemployment issues are directed to the state call center. Staff in the centers provide limited assistance regarding unemployment issues.

8. When will the regional policy of Priority of Service be available?

It is expected that additional guidance will be forthcoming regarding the expectation of Priority of Service. It is anticipated that the current Self Sufficiency Policy will be replaced with the Priority of Service Policy.

9. The RFP references change to electronic files. When will this happen and how much paper documentation will need to be kept?

Currently, staff are using NCWorks to store various items related to eligibility and keeping a paper file. The future goal is that all files will be electronic files. Additional state guidance is needed regarding the full implementation of electronic files.

10. The RFP references regular reporting. What kind of reports will be required?

These reports currently have not been defined.

11. Can you clarify the requirement about submitting a yearly audit?

Federal OMB circulars identify expectations for the necessity of annual audits. It is expected that state level organizations annual audits will continue to be coordinated through the North Carolina State Auditor's Office. Programmatic and financial monitoring will also be performed by WDB staff annually.

12. In reference to the requirement that a contractor must retain auto insurance, can the contractor use the "harmless agreement" clause instead?

Providers are required to maintain at a minimum, adequate insurance coverage for their organization and their vehicles. Organizations that plan to provide travel to participants by employee car or organizational vehicles should provide adequate insurance coverage for this purpose.

13. What is the JDI NEG funding and is it available annually?

Funding for the Job Driven National Emergency Grant (NEG) is designed for placing dislocated worker customers who are long-term unemployed in on-the-job training or classroom training. This NEG is a two-year grant that ends June 30, 2016. It is not available annually.

14. Can a contractor be reimbursed for indirect costs?

Yes, if there is an approved indirect cost plan and it is included with the response, then this will be considered as part of the grant proposal, subject to negotiation.

15. Can you provide clarification on the roles of the WDB and the service provider regarding the provision of business services?

The WDB does not have a business services staff. Business services are provided through service providers. The WDB partners on special projects and serves in a support role with business service activities.

16. Can bidders visit the Career Centers?

Yes, please coordinate visits with WDB staff.

17. When will the answers to these questions be available?

Answers will be posted on the website by end of day Thursday, April 2nd.

Addendum

Questions received after the bidders conference. This addendum will be updated as questions are received.

1. Can a copy of the proposal in a Word document be made available?

Yes, it has been posted to the website.

2. Is it required and/or highly preferred that a bidder submit the proposal for all counties under High Country WDB?

Bidders can choose to bid on any county or counties in the region. It is required that for those counties they choose to bid on that they propose the full range of services to be provided to include the following: center operator, adult/dislocated worker and business services, and youth services. Multi-county proposals are preferred but not required.

Addendum – 04.20.15

1. Can the Certification of a Drug Free Workplace document be provided?

Yes, the certification document has been added to the website.

2. Concerning number 24 on the ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATION form, “that it will have an annual single audit performed in accordance with current federal regulations and that upon receipt of completed audit, contractor will submit a copy to the HCWDB within thirty days (30) unless a longer period is agreed to;” - if that is something that the college is not prepared or able to do, is it acceptable to strike through number 24 and state what the college can do?

Please include an addendum that explains how the community college audits are conducted and what is planned for upcoming program year.