



Request for Proposal (RFP)
One-Stop Operator (OSO)

Submit Responses to:

Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc.
Attn: One-Stop Operator RFP
14 Maine Street, Box 2
Brunswick, Maine 04011

Release Date:

November 18, 2019

Responses Due:

January 13, 2020

Request for Proposal

I. Background:

Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc. (CCWI) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) entity founded to administer and oversee the delivery of the workforce system's services for the Coastal Counties Area in Maine. The counties of York, Cumberland, Sagadahoc, Lincoln, Waldo, and Knox counties, have been designated as a Workforce Development Area under the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA). CCWI is the entity working on behalf of the Area's Local Board to ensure its responsibilities under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act are met.

Our workforce services are provided through the CareerCenter's and/or Workforce Solutions Center's (also known as WSC) delivery system. (Visit our website for more information: www.coastalcounties.org).

One of the main purposes of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is to assist individuals with barriers to employment increasing their access to employment, education, training, and support so they may succeed in the labor market.

Employment should be in good paying positions with adequate benefits. WIOA service agencies provide outreach and recruitment for program applicants, determine eligibility for programs, assess the interest and skill levels of job seekers, link and fund job training activities for seekers, assist with job placement, and follow up with employees for up to 12 months after job placement. All of these activities are provided along with the full range of supportive services necessary for individuals to ensure that they complete their job training.

Consistent with WIOA, this Area's goal is to provide program services for eligible adults, dislocated workers and youth in an **integrated service delivery** environment, which means co-enrollment of the job seeker into relevant and eligible programs, along with a seamless approach to services offered. Moreover, developing processes and documenting standard approaches to service delivery is crucial. Also required is a formal **memorandum of understanding (MOU) agreement, which includes an infrastructure cost agreement (IFA)**, with partners. Crucial to the work under WIOA is the goal of **engaging employers** throughout the region in order to: develop effective linkages with employers in hopes of promoting employer utilization of the local workforce system, ensure that system activities meet employer needs and that the strategies developed also meet the needs of workers.

As a result, CCWI is requesting proposals for One-Stop Operator (OSO) services which focus on these three aforementioned elements i.e., integrated service delivery, MOU/IFA development and engagement of employers within the Coastal Counties Area. Funding is available under the federal Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act. The contract award period will be from March 9, 2020 through March 8, 2021. Subsequent contracts will be issued based upon available funding and satisfactory performance.

Eligible applicants should optimally have experience providing Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and/or Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act services or, related program services. Previous OSO experience is ideal but not required. Additionally, applicants should have substantial experience overseeing and deploying large multi-agency projects and/or collaboratives.

It is estimated that there will be \$50,000 available in WIOA program funds for all six counties during the initial 12-month funding period. The funding amount is subject to federal budgetary policy decisions. Funding of contracts will be according to actual availability of funds. All funding under this RFP is contingent upon the Coastal Counties Area's receipt of funds.

II. Delivery of Services:

The One-Stop Operator will have office space in the Portland, One-Stop Center (OSC) location on Lancaster Street. Although a portion of this work can be undertaken remotely i.e., at a location other than at the OSC, the equivalent of one workday a week should be spent at the OSC. Additionally, it is anticipated that the OSO will spend the equivalent of one workday a week at the Local Workforce Board offices of CCWI in Brunswick. A total of no less than 25 hours weekly is required for this project.

The Coastal Counties Area has 7 service delivery locations:

- Workforce Solutions Centers in Belfast and Portland (our Area's One-Stop Center).
- Career Centers in Springvale, South Portland, Brunswick and Rockland.

III. Scope of Work:

Pivotal to the success of the One-Stop Operator will be the ability to work cooperatively with WIOA "core" and other required partners. The OSO will regularly convene meetings of the WIOA core partners which are WIOA:

- Title I - Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker Program
- Title II - AEFLA Program i.e., adult education
- Title III - Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service Program
- Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation Program

Additionally, the One-Stop Operator will need to convene meetings of the other "required" WIOA partners (see 20 CFR § 361.400 for required partners under WIOA).

The OSO will work closely with all these partners in order to implement service delivery that fosters an integrated service model. The One-Stop Operator will need to inspire others and lead change; demonstrate extremely high levels of professionalism, integrity, and collaboration; and enhance and develop partnerships. Moreover, the One-Stop Operator will have to work especially close with the MDOL, Bureau of Employment Services, and the WIOA Service Provider on activities related to joint centers/sites and deployment of WIOA programmatic elements.

The One-Stop Operator will be responsible for the following system's work:

- Serving as a liaison between the CCWI, core, and other required partners;
- Convening Partnership meetings, setting agendas, recording of minutes, and distributing action steps;
- Leading and convening core partners (and as appropriate required partners) in the design and implementation of functional integration to the degree possible, with the goal of seamless delivery.
- Drafting WIOA-required Area MOUs; Deploying a process for executing all MOUs;
- Assisting to negotiate and establish the One-Stop's Infrastructure Cost Agreement;

- Being knowledgeable of the mission and performance standards of all partners and when necessary, identifying cross-training needs among all staff;
- Addressing and resolving issues related to space usage, and site location; site operations, space configuration, customer flow, and integration;
- Defining and providing a means to meet common operational needs, such as training, technical assistance, additional resources, etc.;
- Facilitating sharing of data and information; and
- Ensuring effective referral processes are in place.

FOCUS AREAS:

a) Coordination/Integration of Services:

CCWI is in the initial stages of implementing an integrated services delivery approach to its WIOA program offerings. The goal of this RFP is to have the successful bidder fully participate, support, and spearhead CCWI's integrated services delivery efforts of the Area during the twelve-month contract period.

The intention is to promote a more integrated service delivery (ISD) system that will reduce duplicative and administrative activities that add little value, in favor of a positive customer experience. ISD will allow Workforce Solutions and WIOA partners' staff to provide customers higher value services including screening, assessment, skill development, and skill certification-related to the needs of local and regional economies and the resources of participating programs. In cases where full service or staff integration are not possible due to personnel restrictions, separate electronic data collection and/or regulations; OSO and core will strive for an efficient, coordinated service approach.

Staff working in an integrated or coordinated environment will be better organized and will work in an environment where better communication among partners results in better outcomes, creating an ecosystem where partners meet the needs of customers, rather than to administer specific programs. The goal is for more people to get jobs, keep jobs, and earn better wages; and for businesses to find the talent they need to succeed and grow.

The One-Stop Operator will lead the system redesign process to promote ISD which will include moving away from the current design of primarily siloed programming – WIOA versus Wagner–Peyser (e.g., Employment Services/Career Center), and including Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Adult Education, where staff deliver services separately and distinctly.

Staff will be organized by functions when feasible, that benefit the customer, such as Greeting/Intake/Triage, Preparing for Job Search, Training, and Placement. The One-Stop Operator will lead the redesign process in partnership with a Board created core comprised of MDOL, BES, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Adult Education, and WIOA Service Provider (i.e., Workforce Solutions).

The OSO role will be to deploy components of integrated and coordinated service delivery which include:

- Sharing of initial customer assessment data.
- Braiding/directing resources to provide appropriate services, regardless of categorical eligibility.
- Co-enrollment of job seekers when appropriate.
- Organizing staff and services around functions rather than programs or agencies.
- Using a common set of outcome measures for all customers.
- Providing a robust menu of services that improve outcomes.
- Ensuring appropriate referral processes are in place for core and other one stop partners' services.
- A greater focus on skill development and certification based on labor market requirements e.g., Career Pathways.
- Using customer input (job seeker and business) to continuously improve services.

b) MOU and Infrastructure Cost Agreement (IFA) Development:

The One-Stop Operator will lead, devise and deploy a plan for meeting the WIOA requirements and SWDB policy relative to local area memorandum of understandings (MOU). This will include the development/drafting and process for negotiation and execution of MOUs between the local board and the core partners and other required system partners. The one-stop partner MOU contains various mandatory provisions including, but not limited to, describing how services are to be provided through the one-stop delivery system, how the costs of operating the One-Stop Center are to be funded i.e., developing/executing an IFA, and how referral of individuals between partners will occur. (See WIOA regulations for further information at: WIOA §121: WIOA §512 20: CFR 678.300-320, 678.400-440, 678.500-510, and 680.320(b) and SWDB policy at PY16-01. (See Appendix A for SWDB policy PY16-01).

c) Employer Engagement & Sector Initiatives:

The One-Stop Operator will lead, devise and deploy a plan for meeting the WIOA requirements regarding sector (i.e., industry) initiatives which includes Career Pathways. Career Pathways are the new way of doing business under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act with the ultimate goal of serving populations that experience significant barriers to employment and serving employers that are in need of a skilled and qualified workforce align.

Working together, these collaborations i.e., sector initiatives and/or Career Pathways, identify industry needs for workers with specific skills, education, and credentials, and then make sure that educational and training opportunities are available to help people gain those skills and meet employer needs. Career Pathways are created by an industry-driven sector partnership and fulfilled by adult education and community colleges and other education and training providers.

The goal of the OSO will be to work with the workforce board i.e., CCWI, to spear head this work by convening - bringing together these stakeholders and facilitating the process of industry leaders articulating their workforce needs.

IV. Eligible Applicants:

Pursuant to WIOA, an entity (public, private, or nonprofit), may apply to be the One-Stop Operator. A consortium of entities that at a minimum, includes 3 or more One-Stop partners (see Appendix A for a description) is also eligible to apply to become the One-Stop Operator. Additionally, a single One-Stop partner may also be selected as One-Stop Operator.

The One-Stop Operator must be of demonstrated effectiveness and have experience in WIA or WIOA and may include:

- An institution of higher education;
- An employment service State agency established under the Wagner-Peyser Act on behalf of the local office of the agency;
- A community-based organization, nonprofit organization, or intermediary;
- A private-for-profit entity;
- A government agency; and
- Another interested organization or entity, which may include a local chamber of commerce or other business organization, or a labor organization.

V. Project Time Frame:

Contingent on the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act funding, the contract award period will be from March 9, 2020 through March 8, 2021. Subsequent contracts will be issued based upon available funding and satisfactory performance.

VI. Questions:

Immediately below are four questions to which bidders must respond, along with the maximum points which a response will be assigned. Be certain to include sufficient detail to demonstrate the bidder's understanding and compatibility for the work to be performed:

- 1) Relevant Experience (35 points): Describe at length your relevant experience. Include a description of how your entity's current work/mission dovetails with the mission of the OSO and workforce board.

Please include any experience:

- a. Working with WIA or WIOA and/or workforce development programs.
- b. Negotiating or facilitating agreements between system partners/stake holders such as MOUs and infrastructure cost agreements among partner agencies.
- c. Implementing/deploying systems and/or processes across partner agencies. Give examples of successes you have had working with multiple partners towards a common goal.

- 2) Approach to the Work (40 points): Taking into account the information provided above, thoroughly describe how you or your agency would structure an approach to the three focus areas described above over the 15 months of the project. Be specific and use timelines (assume a 3/9/20 start date). For each focus area, III. a through c, include discussion on:

- a. System Integration:

Focusing on system integration, how will you lead the system redesign process and ensure success?

b. MOU and IFA:

What will your approach be toward developing and deploying the partner MOU and IFA?

c. Employer Engagement & Sector Initiatives:

How will you develop and operationalize employer engagement and sector initiatives?

- 3) Budget (10 points): CCWI will provide an initial, 12-month contract for funds up to \$50,000 for these services. Assuming a contractual agreement, please provide an all-inclusive maximum fee, including itemization of all costs for which the requested work will be done. Your bid should include all of your staffing, travel, materials, and business costs. A cost schedule must be included to justify the all-inclusive maximum fee.
- 4) Staff/Project Management (15 points): Describe how this work will be staffed/managed. Identify the person in your organization who would be the primary staff person for the project. Please provide a detailed description of the staff person background. Also, describe your staff's ability to provide the leadership we seek. If your agency is also a One-Stop partner, please affirm that you understand that you may be required to enter into an agreement with the Local Board and CEO to clarify how your organization will carry out its responsibilities while demonstrating compliance with WIOA regulations, OMB circulars and State policy.

VII. Information Requested From the Bidder:

Bidder's proposal shall be submitted in several parts, as set forth below. The bidder will confine its submission to those matters sufficient to define its proposal and to provide an adequate basis for CCWI's evaluation of the bidder's proposal. To facilitate proposal evaluation, the bidder is directed to organize its proposal based on the following outline:

A. Title Page:

State the name(s) of the organization, titles, address, telephone number, name of the contact person, email address, and date submitted.

NOTE: State the name(s) of the person(s) who will be authorized to make representations for the bidder along with their titles.

B. Responses:

Provide complete responses to questions 1-4. Please include headers identifying the requested proposal material by section within your response.

C. Format:

Proposals must be:

- Single spaced;
- Typed on 8 ½" x 11" single-sided paper;
- One inch (1") margins;

- Times New Roman font,
- Size twelve font;
- Sequentially numbered pages; and,
- Maximum of 10 pages for Section III.

D. Time Frame:

- November 18, 2019 – Posting of RFP
- December 11, 2019 – Questions about the RFP must be received by noon.
- January 13, 2020 – RFP Responses due by COB.
- February 3, 2020 (on or about) - Decision on RFP will be made.
- March 9, 2020 - Deployment of One-Stop Operator contract.

I. Evaluation and Award:

The evaluation of proposals received under this solicitation will be based on scores received for each question posed in Section IV. Based on the above criteria, each proposal will be independently evaluated by two or more qualified individuals. Decisions shall be made on or about February 3, 2020.

Award of the contract resulting from this RFP will be based upon the most responsive bidder whose offer will be the most advantageous to CCWI in terms of cost, functionality, and other factors as specified elsewhere in this RFP.

CCWI reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all offers and discontinue this RFP process without obligation or liability to any potential bidder;
- Accept other than the lowest priced offer;
- Award a contract on the basis of initial offers received, without discussions or requests for best and final offers; and
- Award more than one contract

A proposal may be deemed "non-responsive" if any of the required information is not provided, the submitted price is found to be excessive or inadequate as measured by criteria stated in the RFP, or the proposal is clearly not within the scope of the project described and required in the RFP. CCWI reserves the right to cancel this procurement at any time, for any reason.

Please read this document carefully. Your proposal must conform in all respects to the requirements contained herein. The requester is the Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc., represented by its Executive Director, Antoinette Mancusi.

To qualify for consideration, three (3) copies of your proposal must be received at the address shown below by USPS or email in pdf format by 4:30pm on January 13, 2020.

Note: respondents submitting proposals via email assume full responsibility for successful transmittals. CCWI assumes no responsibility for failure in digital submissions. Late or incomplete proposals will be rejected as not meeting the requirement of this solicitation.

Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc.
Attn: One-Stop Operator RFP
14 Maine Street, STE 203A
Brunswick, Maine 04011

Your proposal will become part of the official contract file. If you are selected as the contractor, any commitments made in the proposal will be part of the contract and will be binding on the contractor.

The issuance of this solicitation in no way commits CCWI to pay any cost for the preparation and submission of a proposal. Bidder assumes all costs of preparation of the proposal and any presentations necessary for the proposal process.

NOTE: A bidder's conference is not planned at this time. It is the responsibility of the bidder to inquire about any requirement of this RFP that is not understood. Questions may be addressed via email at the following address: info@coastalcounties.org. Any substantive question asked by a bidder which in turn results in information provided to the requesting bidder will be sent via email to all other bidders. Bidders must supply an email address for the purpose of receiving such information in a timely manner. Questions and answers will also be posted on the CCWI website. The deadline for written emailed questions is noon on December 11, 2019.