CHICAGO COOK WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP
LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA #7

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR

BUSINESS INTERMEDIARY SERVICES

FUNDING PERIOD: JANUARY 1, 2013 – DECEMBER 31, 2013

CHICAGO COOK WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP
69 W. WASHINGTON – SUITE 2860
CHICAGO, IL 60602

RESPONSES DUE:
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24TH, 2012 – 12:00 P.M. (CST)

Pre-Submittal Conference: Thursday, October 11th, 2012 – 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M. (CST)
Richard J. Daley Center
50 W. Washington
Chicago, IL 60602
Room CL-115 (Pedway)
**** Attendance is not mandatory, but is highly encouraged ****

Deadline for submission of written questions: Monday, October 15th, 2012 – 3:00 p.m. (CST)
Send your questions to: businessRFP@workforceboard.org
Responses to questions from respondents will be posted at:
www.workforceboard.org
By Thursday, October 18th, 2012 @ 5:00 P.M. (CST)

Karin M. Norington-Reaves, CEO
Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership

Frank Clark, Jr., Co-Chair
Dr. Larry Goodman, Co-Chair
Chicago Cook Workforce Investment Board

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SECTION I. DEFINITIONS

Adult: An individual with an age of 18 years or older. (WIA Section 101(1) and 20 CFR 663.110)

Affiliate: An Affiliate Center is a location or an access point that provides one or more of the Workforce Investment Act required partner programs, services, or activities; assure minimally the availability of core services regardless of where the individual enters the statewide system. Affiliated Centers may have limited hours of operation.

Assessment: The process whereby applicants are interviewed to determine their employability, motivation, aptitude, family situation, education and training, attitudes, transportation, support needs, abilities and interests in order to assist in developing an Individual Employability Plan (IEP) for the attainment of the individual's career goals. Testing and counseling are a part of the assessment process.

Business Intermediary: An entity that provides Workforce Investment Act services and activities to regional business customers and job seekers by working with The Partnership and partner agencies to enhance business services and develop training initiatives in response to current demand and growing trends to better meet employers' needs.

Business Relations and Economic Development: The Business Relations and Economic Development unit of The Partnership supports the regional business community's growth and stability by leveraging economic and workforce development strategies and resources. This team engages the city and county economic development departments, regional chambers of commerce, and other regional workforce development partners to identify opportunities to provide innovative, quality and integrated services to regional employers. This unit will also lead cohorts of Business Services Teams to create a system-wide approach for continuity in the delivery of public workforce system services to regional business customers.

Case Management: The provision of a customer-centered approach in the delivery of services, designed to prepare and coordinate individual comprehensive employment plans, such as service strategies, for customers to ensure access to necessary workforce investment activities and supportive services, using, where feasible, computer-based technologies; and to provide job and career counseling during program participation and after job placement (WIA Section 101(5)).

Core Services: Core Services are WIA activities that may be self-directed or staff-assisted. By regulation, all self-directed activities must be available through the One-Stop system. (20 CFR 663.150). These services are provided free to anyone (i.e. universal access).

Self-Service and Informational Activities (No Registration Required) include, but are not limited to: outreach, intake and orientation to the information and other services available through the One-Stop Comprehensive and Affiliate Center; initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes and abilities; employment statistical information including job vacancy listings, job skill requirements for job listings; and information on demand occupations; information on supportive services and referral to supportive services; resource room usage; workshops and job clubs.

Staff-Assisted Services (WIA Registration Required) include, but are not limited to: staff assisted job search and placement assistance, including career counseling, job referrals; job development, workshops and job clubs.

Credential: A nationally recognized degree or certificate or state/local recognized credential. Credentials include, but are not limited to, a high school diploma, GED, or other recognized equivalents, post-secondary degrees/certificates, recognized skill standards, and licensure or industry-recognized certificates designed to equip individuals to enter or re-enter employment, retain employment, or advance into better employment. (TEGL 17-05)

Customer: An individual who has registered under 20 CFR 663.105 or 20 CFR 664.215 and has been determined to be eligible to participate in and who is receiving services (except for follow-up services) under a program authorized by WIA Title I. Participation commences on the first day, following determination of eligibility, on which the individual begins receiving other core, intensive, training or other services provided under WIA Title I. (WIA Section 101(34); 20 CFR 660.300) Customer as defined in the Common Measures.

Customized Training: Training that is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer (including a group of employers); that is conducted with a commitment by the employer to employ an individual on successful completion of the training; and for which the employer pays for not less than 50 percent of the cost of the training (WIA Section 101(8)).

Dislocated Worker: An individual who has been terminated or laid off, or who has received a notice of termination or layoff from employment; is eligible for or has exhausted entitlement to unemployment compensation; or has been employed for a time sufficient to demonstrate attachment to the workforce, but is not eligible for unemployment compensation due to insufficient earnings or having performed services for an employer that were not covered under a state unemployment compensation law; and is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation.

Economically Disadvantaged: Individuals who do not have an income that exceeds the federal Lower Living Standard Income Level/Poverty Standards and are not eligible to receive public assistance and may include those 18-21 years of age, or individuals who do not have an income that exceeds WIB determination of a self-sufficient wage, which is 200% of the federal Lower Living Standard Income Level/ Poverty Standards.

Eligible (Eligibility): Refers to an individual's status in relation to their ability to receive services under the Workforce Investment Act. (Ref. 20 CFR 663.110, 663.115, 663.120)

Enrollment: An eligible customer who has been referred for WIA services and for whom enrollment documents have been completed and entered into the State's tracking system, Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS).

Illinois JobLink: Illinois JobLink is a website developed and maintained by the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES). Illinois JobLink is a resource that provides links and tools the regional business community can use to access tax credit and labor market information, as well as post position vacancies and access a database of resumes. All Partnership WIA funded delegate agencies will be required to integrate Illinois JobLink into their delivery of

WIA funded services. This integration ensures that all case management, resource room, business services and supervisory staff are trained to utilize Illinois JobLink. All Partnership WIA delegate agencies will be required to participate in any other Illinois JobLink tasks and/or activities requested by IDES.

Illinois workNet™: IllinoisworkNet.com is a free resource that provides career, education and work support information for all Illinois residents and businesses. IllinoisworkNet.com connects individuals looking for employment with employers looking for workers through the convenience of a user-friendly website and onsite locations throughout the state. The program aims to cultivate a well-trained workforce by providing valuable resources creating a solid foundation for a thriving 21st century economy.

Job Retention: The period an individual remains in an unsubsidized job following placement. The period of required retention is determined in accordance with WIA, or as dictated by the funder as appropriate to the individual.

Job Search Assistance: Job search skills training including job club, which provides the customer with the instruction and necessary to obtain full time employment. These skills may include resume writing, interviewing skills, telephone techniques, and job acquisition skills. Job search assistance must be offered to all customers.

Job Development: The planned and organized effort by WIA representatives to encourage employers or business organizations to make jobs available for WIA customers.

On-The-Job Training (OJT): Training by an employer that is provided to a paid customer while engaged in productive work in a job that provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job; provides reimbursement to the employer of up to 50 percent of the wage rate of the customer, for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and additional supervision related to the training; and is limited in duration as appropriate to the occupation for which the customer is being trained, taking into account the content of the training, the prior work experience of the customer, and the service strategy of the customer, as appropriate (WIA Section 101(31)).

One-Stop Partner: An entity described in sections 121(b)(1) and (2) that is participating, with the approval of the local board and chief elected official, in the operation of a one-stop delivery system (WIA Section 101(30)).

Registration (Adults and Dislocated Workers): (a) Registration is the process for collecting information to support a determination of eligibility. This information may be collected through methods that include electronic data transfer, personal interview, or an individual’s application. (b) Adults and Dislocated Workers who receive services funded under Title I other than self-service or informational activities must be registered and determined eligible. (c) Equal Opportunity data must be collected on every individual who is interested in being considered for WIA Title I financially assisted aid, benefits, services, or training by a recipient, and who has signified that interest by submitting personal information in response to a request from the recipient. (20 CFR 663.105)

Self-Sufficiency: An objective of the Workforce Investment Act is to move individuals and families toward self-sufficiency with employment services, retention services, and increased earnings. At a minimum self-sufficiency means employment that pays at least the lower living standard income level. (20 CFR 663.230).

Self-Sufficiency Barriers: Include, but are not limited to: Learning Disability, Domestic Violence, Housing Issues, Legal Issues, Medical Problems, Transportation, and Child Care.

Supportive Services: Services such as transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIA (WIA Section 101(46)).

Workforce Center Operator: The Partnership will select Center Operators to serve as the representative(s) of the WIA Title I Administrative Entity to provide core, intensive and training services within The Partnership Illinois workNet centers. The Center Operators will be responsible for the overall operation of services delivered in the center as well as coordination with the mandated partners and are responsible for the physical operations and needs of the Center(s).

Youth Affiliate: Youth Affiliates provide services to assist youth ages 16-21 in achieving academic and employment success.

SECTION II. INTRODUCTION

Workforce Investment Act Overview

The U.S. Department of Labor's ("DOL") Workforce Investment Act ("WIA") Title I is the main source of federal funds for workforce development activities throughout the nation. WIA funding, which is distributed to states and, subsequently, sub-state agents, is used to serve two primary customers—businesses and job seekers. Services are managed and provided by local agents, which must meet performance goals set by DOL and the respective state overseer.

Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (The Partnership)

The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership ("The Partnership") is a collaboration between the City of Chicago and Cook County to create and administer a comprehensive workforce development system designed to work with the business community and job seekers. The Partnership integrates City and County Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programming in order to improve services and reduce costs. The Chicago Cook Workforce Investment Board (the "WIB") oversees The Partnership, has statutory responsibility for the local implementation of WIA and provides a forum for business, labor, education, government, community-based organizations and other stakeholders to work together to develop strategies that can address the supply and demand challenges confronting the local workforce.

The Chicago Cook workforce system comprises six types of organizations:

- ***Workforce Centers*** are high-capacity centers serving the general job-seeking population as well as businesses. Workforce Centers must serve both Adult and Dislocated workers (Youth optional) and must have active participation from one of the mandated WIA partners. The locations for Workforce Centers have been identified and approved by the predecessor LWIAs.
- ***Affiliates*** provide services to job seekers and businesses, differing from workforce centers in that they are smaller and may serve a smaller geographic area or special population.
- ***Youth Affiliates*** provide services to assist youth ages 16-21 in achieving academic and employment success.
- ***Business Intermediary*** provides services to regional business customers and Adult and Dislocated workers, is responsible for employer-focused employment and training services including, but not limited to, customized and on-the-job training services.
- ***Workforce Centers for Business*** *(aka Sector Centers)* are business service hubs concentrating on business and job seeker services related to a specific industry sector, such as manufacturing, and responsible for educating the other WIA delegate agencies on aspects of the given sector.
- ***Bridge Programs*** prepare residents with limited academic or limited English skills to enter and succeed in credit-bearing postsecondary education and training leading to career-path employment in high- demand, middle and high-skilled occupations.

These six groups work together to provide the most effective possible service to our customers. This collaborative system includes multiple entry points for both businesses and job seekers to access the full range of workforce development services and benefits.
In addition, WIA organizations are expected to work closely with the following WIA partners (as mandated by law) to ensure the highest quality of service:

- Adult Education and Literacy
- Youth Education and Literacy
- Perkins Post-Secondary Vocational Education
- Senior Community Service Employment Program
- Trade Adjustment Assistance Act
- Unemployment Insurance
- Veterans Employment
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Wagner Peyser
- Job Corps
- TANF Employment and Training Programs
- Food Stamp Employment and Training Programs

The Partnership's Mission and Goals

The Partnership's mission is to improve services, reduce costs and support job creation and economic development across the Cook County workforce system. In addition, The Partnership creates and supports innovative programs that allow for region-wide implementation of best practices and coordinated engagement with the region's business community in order to meet the workforce needs of employers.

The Partnership is particularly interested in delegate agencies contracted to deliver WIA services that will achieve the following goals:

- *Increase Skill and Educational Attainment for Customers to Find and Retain Employment*. In today's challenging economic climate, it is critical that our community members have the skills they need to compete in the workforce; that they can find and keep jobs; and that local businesses can access the skilled labor they need. The Secretary of Labor has issued a High Priority Performance Goal to increase credential attainment by participants of the public workforce system. Regardless of where they are starting, there needs to be a path to credentials for all residents. The public workforce system should help individuals achieve long-term self-sufficiency through career pathway models that articulate the connections between education and employment.
- *Support Economic Growth.* The public workforce system provides resources to help businesses grow. The main avenue for accomplishing this growth is assisting businesses in accessing the skilled labor they need. The Partnership identifies growing industries and addresses the local workforce's skills gaps to meet the needs of employers in those industries. The public workforce system helps businesses to find the skilled labor they need and to create opportunities for achieving economic self-sufficiency for employees.

SECTION III. PURPOSE OF SOLICITATION

This Request for Proposal ("RFP") has been released to allow The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership ("The Partnership") to recruit qualified vendors to submit innovative proposals for the delivery of business intermediary services to assist The Partnership and its delegate agencies in the offering, delivery and facilitation of job placement services with participating businesses within the geographic community served by The Partnership.

The Partnership is seeking proposals from qualified applicants to provide business intermediary services in one or all of the following industry sectors: 1) Transportation, Distribution and Logistics; 2) Hospitality; 3) Healthcare; 4) Business and Professional Services; 5) Information Technology; 6) Manufacturing and 7) Retail. Successful respondents will be required to work effectively with The Partnership's Business Relations and Economic Development unit in its implementation of a comprehensive system-wide approach to job placement and retention.

The Business Relations and Economic Development unit of The Partnership supports the regional business community's growth and stability by leveraging economic and workforce development strategies and resources. This team engages the City and County economic development departments, regional chambers of commerce, and other regional workforce development partners to identify opportunities to provide innovative, quality and integrated services to regional employers. This unit will also lead cohorts of WIA Business Services Teams to create a system-wide approach for continuity in the delivery of public workforce system services to regional business customers.

Successful respondents will be required to:

a. Engage businesses as active partners in the region's public workforce system;
b. Link existing businesses to programs, services and resources offered by The Partnership through its delegate agencies to ensure the success of the services offered and gain necessary acceptance from the business community;
c. Identify and expand the number of employers in the relevant geographic area serviced by The Partnership that are actively hiring and are committed to partnering with the public workforce system in meeting their hiring needs;
d. Serve as a liaison between delegate agencies and employers to identify pools of candidates currently enrolled in the public workforce system either by referral from the partnership or its delegate agencies for entry-level, skilled and professional job openings and ensure employers receive information and support for assessment and training that employers may require;
e. Provide placement-specific information by target industry which would include skill requirements, anticipated earnings, demographic trends, and potential career opportunities;
f. Coordinate with The Partnership to improve and maximize their access to and utilization of publicly-funded workforce resources;
g. Work within the existing workforce and business services system managed by The Partnership to serve as a resource and enhance the existing system; and
h. Provide or coordinate other, non-workforce business services to businesses that strengthen The Partnership's programs, such as marketing, strategic planning, and penetration of new markets.

Successful respondents will be required to deliver high quality services designed to meet the workforce needs of regional employers and residents. Additional expectations include:

a. Providing access to a broad continuum of employment and training opportunities through a coordinated and seamless service delivery structure;
b. Offering high-quality, market-driven, accessible and convenient services to both the employer and job seeker customer;

c. Ensuring all customers receive appropriate, timely and effective workforce development services;
d. Coordinating with mandated partners to ensure partner services are offered in collaboration with the Workforce Center(s) and through a structured and documented referral process;
e. Coordinating with Adult and Dislocated Worker Affiliates to ensure the service delivery is cohesive and non-duplicative;
f. Preparing reports as required by The Partnership and state and federal funding agencies; and additional reports as requested;
g. Ensuring the highest level of customer satisfaction and utilizing sophisticated tools to measure it; and
h. Working with the local workforce leaders, including the Chicago Cook Workforce Investment Board to create a culture and environment where businesses, workers, partners, and training providers are able to maximize their success.

SECTION IV. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Authority

The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership issues this Request for Proposal (RFP) to solicit submittals from organizations interested in providing business intermediary services to eligible Adult and Dislocated Workers under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. WIA provides Federal funds for services aimed at increasing employment, job retention and earnings, as well as increasing the occupational skill levels of program participants. The Partnership has program and administrative responsibility for all WIA services provided in Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA) 7, which serves the entirety of Cook County inclusive of the City of Chicago. The Chicago Cook Workforce Investment Board provides leadership, strategic planning, policy direction and oversight for WIA services in LWIA 7.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I of 1998 (112 Stat. 936) provides federal funding for workforce development activities. WIA provides for customer-focused comprehensive system. It is designed to help Americans access the tools to manage their careers through information and quality services, and to help U.S. companies find skilled workers.

Guiding principles of the WIA include: streamlining services through a "One-Stop" service delivery system focused on service integration and outcomes; providing information and access to training services; providing universal access to employment-related services, and increasing accountability (improving employment retention and earnings, improving the quality of the workforce, sustaining economic growth, and reducing welfare utilization). A copy of the WIA and its regulations are available for review at the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Employment and Training Administration website at www.doleta.gov.

B. Eligible Respondents

Any governmental, not-for-profit, local agency, educational institutions or for-profit entity properly operating in accordance with Federal, State and local law, and in business for at least three years, may submit a proposal for consideration. Minority-owned, women-owned and disadvantaged businesses are encouraged to apply as well.

Respondents must be eligible to do business with the City of Chicago and Cook County. Further, to receive consideration, a respondent must have a direct service location within Cook County or identify a location in their proposal that is secured for occupancy as of the grant agreement start date if the respondent is selected and awarded a grant. Respondents must indicate the full address for their Board members, administrative offices, as well as for each proposed service location in their response.

Respondents may submit proposals in which subcontractors are identified to provide program components. Respondents may also identify organizations offering collaboration to enhance the project design. Such subcontracting relationships or collaborations that enhance the capacity to provide services across the County, throughout various neighborhoods and to any target populations, are encouraged. However, any collaboration of two or more entities should clearly provide the following information in the narrative portions of the proposal:

- Identify the lead agency for the collaborative partnership
- State the roles and responsibilities of each collaborator
- Include an organizational chart for each organization and for the collaborative
- Describe how funds will flow within the collaborative
- Identify the qualified fiscal agent for the collaborative partnership

Entities are **ineligible** if they: 1) are currently barred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by a Federal or State department/agency; 2) have existing grants with any State or County agency that are suspended or otherwise not in good standing; or 3) are not in compliance with the Illinois Department of Revenue or the Federal Internal Revenue Service requirements.

C. Targeted Populations

Funds awarded through this RFP will be directed towards: general Cook County residents (inclusive of the City of Chicago) seeking workforce services (universal customers); Adults and Dislocated Workers who meet the eligibility requirements; individuals who reflect the demographics of the region; individuals in need of specialized services such as the re-entry population; veterans; individuals with disabilities; limited-English proficient individuals; homeless individuals and individuals over 55 years of age. Funding is also dedicated to the needs of local businesses and employers. Eligibility criteria for adult and dislocated workers activities can be found in Section 101 of the WIA, Sections 663.110, 663.115, 663.120 of 20 CFR Part 652.

D. Available Funding and Performance Period

The Partnership will award WIA funds to one or more entities that demonstrate an ability to effectively deliver and manage services as described herein. It is the expectation of the Workforce Investment Board that respondents will be proficient in their understanding of the Workforce Investment Act services and regulations. All proposals must be comprehensive and address the full scope of services or demonstrate a partnership with other entities that together will deliver the full scope of services contemplated by this RFP.

The Partnership anticipates awarding up to approximately $3.5 million in WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Formula funding for Business Intermediary Services from January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013. The funding is derived from both current PY ’12 allocations and anticipated PY ’13 awards.

Funding Year	Anticipated Allocation
PY ‘12	$1,750,000
PY ‘13	$1,750,000

NOTE: The successful respondent will utilize the majority of these funds for demand-driven/employer-responsive training costs, including OJT reimbursements and customized training.

SECTION V. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

A. Required Services

All services to Adults and Dislocated Workers must be designed and operated in accordance with requirements of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) (P.L.105-220) and the WIA regulations (20 CFR-Part 660-667). Respondents are obligated to review these requirements and to structure proposals accordingly. The Workforce Investment Act law and regulations can be accessed through the United States Department of Labor–Employment and Training Administration at www.doleta.gov. OMB Circulars impose additional requirements relevant to the administration of WIA service programs. Respondents must identify the specific OMB Circulars applicable to them and structure and administer programs accordingly. OMB Circulars can be accessed at www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars.

Proposed services for Adult and Dislocated Workers must also comply with all State policies by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) accessed at www.illinoisbiz.biz/DCEO/Bureaus/Workforce_Development.

B. Relevant WIA Program Elements

Adult Program: To be an eligible Adult customer, an individual must meet the requirements as defined in the Workforce Investment Act. To be eligible to receive staff assisted core services all individuals must be registered; and to receive intensive and training services, individuals must have previously received a staff assisted core service. Individuals registering for services to be provided through Adult program funding must fulfill the following requirements:

a. Be 18 years of age or older;
b. Is a United States citizen or eligible non-citizen; and
c. Comply with Selective Service (males only) legislation by providing documents to demonstrate compliance with Selective Service requirements.
d. 75% of Adults served must meet the low income standard. Please refer to the Income Eligibility Requirements for WIA Title 1 Adult Policy located at www.workforceboard.org .

Dislocated Worker Program: To be an eligible Dislocated Worker, an individual must meet the requirements defined in the Workforce Investment Act. To be eligible to receive training services, individuals must have previously received a staff assisted core service. Individuals registering for services to be provided through dislocated worker funding must fulfill the following requirements:

a. Has been terminated or laid off, or has received notice of termination and is eligible for or has exhausted entitlement to unemployment compensation; and
b. Is unlikely to return to prior industry or occupation; or
c. Laid off or terminated due to plant closure or substantial layoff; or
d. Formerly self-employed or unemployed; or
e. Is a displaced homemaker who has been providing unpaid services to family members in the home.

C. Services to Job Seekers / Individual Customers

At least 60% of candidates served by the Business Intermediary will be comprised of referrals from The Partnership, or its delegate agencies, of those currently enrolled in WIA services. (These will be known as *referred clients*). All customers accessing training services must be determined WIA eligible and must complete an assessment. Customer needs and eligibility guidelines, in conjunction with availability of funds, will determine the combination of services appropriately provided to individual customers. The Partnership (and its delegates) shall be responsible for screening its referred job seekers in accordance with the job specifications delineated by the Business Intermediary on behalf of the business customer.

The Business Intermediary shall be responsible for registering any *non-referred* clients (no more than 40%) and completing the required WIA application, obtaining the necessary eligibility documentation, identifying barriers to employment, and maintaining case files. This may be done by the Business Intermediary directly or through the use of a sub-contractor or through a Memorandum of Understanding with an approved WIA Adult or Dislocated affiliate or Workforce Center.

1. Training Services

Customers may need specific training services to equip them with the required skills for entry into the workplace and employment retention. The following training opportunities are available with WIA funding:

a. Occupational Classroom Training - Individual Training Accounts

Occupational training services may be provided to WIA eligible Adults and Dislocated Workers, who have met the eligibility criteria for intensive services, received at least one core and one intensive service but are still unable to obtain or retain employment. The Individual Training Account (ITA) or "voucher" is established on behalf of the individual and is based on individual assessment and choice of selected training programs that will facilitate them in obtaining employment in a high growth, high demand occupations.

Successful completion of a training course MUST lead to recognized certificate/credential or their equivalent. A certificate is awarded in recognition of an individual's attainment of measurable technical or occupational skills necessary to gain employment or advance within an occupation. These technical or occupational skills are based on standards developed or endorsed by employers. A credential is a nationally recognized degree or certification.

The Business Intermediary is expected to issue and pay the associated costs of the vouchers through funding provided in their contract. If the Business Intermediary is an organization which provides training though ITAs or "training vouchers", respondents must detail in their responses how they will ensure that customers will be exposed to other training options and that all regulations regarding, "customer choice" and "honest broker" are followed.

b. On-the-Job Training Program (OJT)
The Partnership is utilizing On-the-Job Training as an available training option to provide targeted work experiences to prepare customers for a new job opportunity with a high likelihood of continued employment. In addition, OJT provides increased education and broadens skill sets for individual customers.

c. Customized Training
Training that is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer (including a group of employers); that is conducted with a commitment by the employer to employ an individual on successful completion of the training; and for which the employer pays for not less than 50 percent of the cost of the training (WIA Section 101(8)).

2. Supportive Services
Supportive services are intended to enable an individual to participate in program activities and to secure and retain employment. Examples include: assistance with local transportation costs, childcare and dependent care costs, housing and food. Affiliates should consider the need for services essential to successful completion of the program objectives. All services provided by a third-party vendor must be in compliance with WIA provisions and approved by The Partnership. (**NOTE:** *Referred clients—as defined above in Section V. C. -- are expected to receive these services from their referring agency. These services must be directly provided to non-referred clients by either the Business Intermediary or its subcontractor*).

3. Case Management
Case management services are required as a critical element to ensure all individuals are receiving individualized career counseling. Case management services should be structured to maximize the employment potential of the individual by implementing job attainment and retention strategies that are continually re-evaluated as the individual progresses through services. Case management services should highlight career guidance and exploration while facilitating career path decision-making activities; promoting awareness of education and training options, support services, and partner services. Case management services must contain an ongoing assessment component; and evaluate basic skills and employment barriers to provide strong employment planning. Individual Employment Plans (IEP) must be developed with the customer to identify benchmarks and justify the need for services to be provided. (**NOTE:** *Referred clients—as defined above in Section V. C. -- are expected to receive these services from their referring agency. These services must be directly provided to non-referred clients by either the Business Intermediary or its subcontractor*).

4. Job Retention / Follow-up
After job placement, the Business Intermediary will be responsible for assisting WIA-registered customers and their respective employers with job retention. The intent of this job retention assistance to help customers placed into jobs to remove any barriers to success and to ensure further progress toward long-term employment and self-sufficiency. Follow-up activities should include frequent contact with the customer and with the employer. The Business Intermediary

shall define and adhere to a follow-up schedule with all individual customers that have received a WIA training service, including OJT.

D. Scope of Work - Essential Functions of the Business Intermediary

The scope of work must describe how the entity will effectively and efficiently deliver outcome driven business intermediary services at the direction of The Partnership and in conjunction with the workforce system partners and stakeholders. The following key areas have been identified as essential to a fully developed and responsive workforce system:

1. Business and Employer Services

Employers and businesses are the primary focus in the workforce development system. The successful respondents are required to maintain the employer as the primary focus and carry out the employer customer-related functions. Employer services will be delivered through mechanisms that offer a broad range of integrated services to all employers to support economic and workforce development efforts. The Partnership is seeking providers with an understanding of and experience and commitment to the delivery of quality services to employers in conjunction with local and regional workforce development partners.

Respondents are expected to demonstrate that customized and innovative business services will be employed using multiple strategies based upon the needs of local businesses.

The Partnership has established the following key priorities to serve employers:

a. A series of defined strategies that have demonstrated effectiveness in contacting area businesses to develop and maintain partnerships;
b. A business and employer services model that is result driven against a spectrum of services from self-access to enhanced recruitment, screening and training collaboration;
c. A broad understanding of the local industry sector strategy and a plan of action that is in accord with the sectors;
d. A comprehensive and diverse talent pool available to the employers seeking candidates;
e. A set of tools for understanding and evaluating the immediate and future needs of the employer;
f. An ability to identify qualified workers to provide the business community with a well-trained and job ready workforce;
g. An array of customized training and OJT opportunities to address the skills gap; and,
h. Ensuring effective job-matching and placement through a defined continuous improvement strategy.

2. Job Seeker Population Defined

Job seekers and individuals who are customers of the public workforce system can represent any age group, ethnic or racial group, or socio-economic status. They may be new to the workforce, employed, unemployed, or dislocated. The successful respondent must be able to serve to diverse populations with widely different needs and expectations offering universal access and services under WIA Title I to individuals needing additional assistance to secure employment. Funding awarded must be directed towards:

a. The general public seeking workforce services; with preference being given to veterans;
b. Adults and Dislocated Workers;
c. Individuals who meet the requirements for WIA; and
d. Other individuals in need of specialized services such as the re-entry population, veterans, individuals with multiple barriers, limited English proficient, older adults and those with disabilities.

The primary goal of serving the job seeker is to provide seamless and streamlined services for all adults driven by individual customer needs rather than structured program offerings that result in adults gaining employment and achieving self-sufficient wages.

3. Marketing and Community Outreach/Engagement

A comprehensive marketing and communications plan must include strategies for reaching out to the primary customer groups – job seekers, employers, and community/partners. The strategies must deliver an ongoing, up to date message as to the professional, quality, and targeted services that are the cornerstone of the workforce development system with the intent to attract, engage and ensure the needs of the customer groups are addressed. The Business Intermediary is expected to extend the services into the communities and develop a positive awareness of business related services and information.

The Partnership has identified the following key priorities for this area:

a. Establish a strong communication plan and marketing strategy for all customers, employers and community groups;
b. Develop a positive, clear and consistent message to the community and key stakeholders;
c. Establish a contact strategy for all local businesses and delegate agencies and job seekers;
d. Promote customer success stories to workforce partners and the community at large.

4. Accountability and Performance

Successful respondents will be held accountable for attaining key performance measures which demonstrate the benefit of workforce services to both the employer partners and job seekers. These metrics will also be used to assess the effectiveness of the respondent’s program.

The selected Business Intermediary will be required to document and report:

a. Training-aligned placements in the sectors identified;
b. Job retention for one year following placement;
c. Net wage increase (over immediately previous employment);
d. Industry-recognized credentials attained;
e. Total number of job placements to total number of job orders; and,

f. Percentage of delegate agency referrals placed.

The Partnership has identified the key priorities for this area:

a. Defining the quantifiable outcomes and demonstrating services are delivered through performance goals and benchmarks;
b. Developing and maintaining systems that define how performance measures will be achieved;
c. Identifying ways to measure success of the program elements, marketing and outreach strategies; and,
d. Establishing a continuous evaluation mechanism to monitor program effectiveness across every design element.

E. WIA Performance Requirements

WIA establishes a comprehensive performance accountability system in order to optimize the return on investment of federal funds and to assess the effectiveness of local areas in achieving continuous improvement of workforce investment activities funded under Title 1B. The accountability requirements for WIA programs, including core measures and numerical goals for each measure are listed below. WIA has established core indicators of performance for the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and respondents will be required to collect data pertaining to those indicators.

It is important to note that once an individual is registered into WIA, the customer will also be counted in the federal WIA performance measures. Delegate agencies will be required to meet the following performance measures based on the rates The Partnership negotiates with DCEO each year. The new measures for PY 2012 are not finalized at the time of this writing. However, The Partnership anticipates the following measures ranges will qualify as “meeting” the measure related to Adult and Dislocated Worker:

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	ESTIMATED PY 2012 GOAL	MEETING RANGE
Adult Entered Employment Rate	**75%**	**74.9%-60%**
Adult Employment Retention Rate	**82%**	**81.9%-65.6%**
Adult Average Earnings	**$12,000**	**$11,999-$9,600**
Dislocated Worker Entered Employment Rate	**84%**	**83.9%-67.2%**
Dislocated Worker Employment Retention Rate	**89%**	**88.9%-71.2%**
Dislocated Worker Average Earning Rate	**$16,500 (6 months)**	**$16,499-$13,200 (6 months)**

F. Deliverables

All Business Intermediaries are required to provide the following deliverables:

- ***Monthly and Quarterly Reports:*** Routine monthly and quarterly written reports shall be due by the tenth (10^{th}) calendar day of the month following the month or period being reported on.
- ***Invoices:*** Monthly invoices are due to The Partnership's fiscal unit by the tenth (10^{th}) calendar day of every month for expenses incurred in the preceding month.
- Other requirements may be incorporated into the grant agreement.

G. File Retention and Ownership

Selected respondents will be responsible for retaining program files and records, including customer files and records, in compliance with Federal and State WIA requirements, and the Workforce Investment Board's record retention policies. The Partnership retains ownership of all files and records related to the services provided pursuant to this RFP.

H. Record Keeping

Business Intermediaries must maintain accurate case files for every WIA-registered customer. Case files must contain a variety of documentation including, but not limited to: program eligibility/determination of need; assessment data; Individual Employment Plans (IEP); regular updates (minimally every 30 days); progress reports, time and attendance (training services); and case notes.

I. Oversight, Evaluation and Planning

The Partnership will monitor and evaluate the Business Intermediary to determine: if employer and job seeker customers are receiving the most comprehensive, streamlined set of services, ensure program compliance and evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the service strategies. External monitoring and evaluation may also be conducted periodically by the U.S. Department of Labor, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and any other agencies that provide funds that are used by The Partnership to contract for services in the area's workforce system.

J. Business Services

Business Services are a key component of WIA service delivery—they are critical to the alignment of training to current and prospective career opportunities and to the needs of local industry and businesses. Respondents must work with all Centers and mandated partner agencies to effectively meet the needs of area employers. The Business Intermediary will work together with The Partnership and partner agencies to enhance business services and develop training initiatives in response to current demand and growing trends to better meet employers' needs. Respondents will perform the following business services:

1. **Recruiting and Screening Services:** 1) Advertise job openings throughout The Partnership's affiliate and workforce center system; 2) Provide access to space for candidate interviews, recruitment events, and informational meetings; and 3) Relay job screening criteria to referring agencies; and 4) Screen job candidates.

2. **Information and Technical Assistance:** 1) Educate businesses on the value of the public workforce system's services and how to access these services; 2) Provide information on tax incentives, labor market statistics, and other workforce-related information of value to businesses; and 3) Provide workplace accommodation information for individuals with disabilities.

3. **Employee Development Services:** 1) Educate businesses on training models to improve skills for their current employees; 2) Broker On-the Job Training (OJT) and Customized Training Agreements; and 3) Provide retention services to help employees stay on the job or advance in their positions.

K. Collaboration

Respondents must draw upon the resources of other agencies and partners to comprehensively serve customers. This requires referring job seekers to other WIA providers if necessary and sharing programmatic best practices for both job seekers and business services.

L. Accessibility

The Partnership is committed to equal access for all customers to all services. Affiliates are expected to demonstrate full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) and all other equal opportunity laws. This involves ensuring that staff receives accessibility training, and may involve developing accessibility plans. All respondents must ensure all written materials and communications include the statement: ***"Reasonable accommodations and auxiliary equipment and services are available upon request."***

M. Information Dissemination

Respondents will be required to allow The Partnership to access the center location and to obtain, publish, disseminate or distribute any and all information obtained from the program without restriction and without payment or compensation by The Partnership. The Partnership retains ownership of all materials related to this award.

N. Costs

Successful respondents must identify an average unit cost-per-customer with an explanation to justify this unit cost and identify the staff to customer ratio. If the entity is a for-profit entity, respondents must also identify the profit percentage built into the proposed budget, and describe the risk and other factors taken into consideration to arrive at this percentage. **NOTE**: The Partnership will separately negotiate the percentage of profit with each successful for-profit respondent. (See the policy on Fixed Fee plus Cost, located at www.workforceboard.org)

O. De-Obligation of Funds

Respondents awarded funding will be subject to performance measures. Failure to meet performance measures identified in the grant agreement, and/or repeated non-compliance with local, State or Federal guidelines may also result in the de-obligation of funding, suspension of payments and or the termination of the grant agreement.

P. Customer Tracking

Successful respondents will be required to submit customer tracking information and data and follow procedures as identified by The Partnership. Customer tracking details must include the number and type of customer served per month. Monthly performance reports must detail information such as the number of: individuals placed into employment; individuals trained; and individuals placed into employment in a training-related field. Respondents must also gauge and track customer satisfaction through monthly surveys.

Q. Freedom of Information Act / Confidential Information

Funded proposals are subject to public disclosure, in response to requests received under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/1 *et seq*.) Information that could reasonably be considered proprietary, privileged, or confidential commercial or financial information should be identified as such in the proposal. The Partnership will maintain the confidentiality of that information only to the extent permitted by law. If the respondent has a special need to maintain the confidentiality of proprietary or privileged information, a supplemental letter of explanation must be attached to the proposal and all allegedly proprietary or privileged information should be identified as such.

R. Insurance

Prior to a Contract being executed, the following insurance requirements must be met:
The Contractor should be self-insured and shall maintain the following minimum insurance coverages and limits of liability at all times during the term of the Contract:

- **Workers' Compensation –** Workers' Compensation and Employers' liability as required by Illinois law.
- **Commercial General Liability -** Coverage at a minimum shall be $1,000,000 per occurrence and $2,000,000 in the aggregate for bodily injury and property damage liability.
- **Business Automotive Liability -** Including coverage for all owned, hired and non-owned vehicles. Coverage shall at a minimum be $1,000,000 combined single limit, bodily injury & property damage.
- **Fidelity Bond Insurance –** The Contractor shall provide bonding for every Officer, Director, agent or employee who handles funds (cash, checks or other instruments of payments for program costs) under this Contract. The amount of coverage shall be the higher of the highest reimbursement or cash draw down planned during the term of this Contract or $100,000. The contractor shall be responsible for the payment of unemployment insurance, premiums for worker's compensation, other insurance premiums, and statutorily required taxes and benefits.

S. Suspension

If The Partnership determines that the Contractor fails to comply with the provisions and/or the terms of the contract, the Contractor will be placed on a "Suspension" status. No payments will be processed or paid until said Suspension is lifted.

SECTION VI. PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS

A. Period of Solicitation

This RFP will be released on October 3, 2012. The deadline to submit a response to the RFP is October 24, 2012 no later than **NOON** (12:00 p.m. CST).

B. Submittal Procedure

To be considered for funding, applicants must submit one (1) paper original and four (4) legible paper copies of the completed response to this RFP.
All proposals must be submitted in **both electronic and paper form**, according to the following rules.

- **ONE ORIGINAL AND FOUR COPIES** will be submitted for each proposal.
- One complete proposal containing original signatures in blue ink signed by the President, CEO or equivalent of the organization and marked "Original."

- A maximum of 20 pages excluding the Executive Summary and Appendices
- 8 1/2 x 11 letter size paper
- Single-sided printing
- One inch margins
- Double-spaced
- 12-point font
- Each section of the proposal bound separately i.e. appendices bound separately from narrative.
- Bind on the left side with a 2 hole punch and a sliding clasp.
- Proposals must be submitted on a USB flash drive or CD with Executive Summary and question responses saved as a MS Word file with the fiscal and budget documents saved as an MS Excel file. The outside of each envelope or package should be labeled according to the RFP to which respondent is responding using the following guide:

    - Proposal for WIA Business Intermediary
    - Date of Submission:
    - Name of Respondent:
    - Package ___ of ___

Delivered to:

Illona Sheffey-Rawlings, CAO/General Counsel
c/o The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership
69 W. Washington, Suite 2860
Chicago, IL 60602

Completed RFP responses must be submitted by Wednesday, October 24, 2012 at **NOON** (12:00 p.m. CST). **Proposals received after this date and time are late and will not be accepted**.

The Information Session will be held:

October 11, 2012
1:00 p.m.
Richard J. Daley Center
50 W. Washington
Room CL115 (located in pedway)
Chicago, IL 60602

Responses to all questions received by The Partnership prior to October 15, 2012 will be posted on its website at www.workforceboard.org by close of business October 18, 2012.

C. Schedule

Activity	**Date**
RFP Release	**October 3, 2012**
Pre-submittal conference	**October 11, 2012 at 1:00 p.m.**
RFP Submittal Deadline	**October 24, 2012 at NOON (12:00 p.m. CST)**
Award Announcements	**Week of December 10, 2012**

Contract begins	**January 1, 2013**

D. Proposal Evaluation

Applications will be evaluated by a team of reviewers, which may include Board members and staff. Applicants may be contacted, in writing, to answer questions or provide clarification to the evaluation team. An entity's failure to submit a complete proposal or to respond in whole or in part to RFP requirements may cause The Partnership to deem the proposal unresponsive and thus ineligible for review.

1. **Fiscal Review**
   The Partnership will also conduct a fiscal review on qualified proposals. Selected Partnership staff will review proposal budgets, cost allocation plans, agency audits, leveraged funds and responses to questions related to fiscal operations. The Partnership reserves the right to review and request further information on the respondent's financial situation, if not sufficiently outlined in the submitted audit(s). The Partnership reserves the right to assess the risk posed by any recent, current or potential litigation, court action, investigation, audit, bankruptcy, receivership, financial insolvency, merger, acquisition, or other event that might affect an organization's ability to operate the requested program.

2. **Past Performance Review**
   Through this process, The Partnership will review a respondent's performance on any previous and/or existing Partnership grant agreement(s) as well as legacy LWIA contracts. Achievement of grant agreement goals such as WIA number of enrollments, job placements and retention of enrollees along with compliance with programmatic and fiscal guidelines and timelines will be evaluated.
   The review panel will perform an in-depth evaluation of all responsive proposals based upon the criteria herein. Prior to its final funding decision, The Partnership may also: 1) Meet with representatives of the responding entity to discuss the proposed program and budget; 2) Identify and/or negotiate program or budget changes the responding entity must make as a condition of funding; and 3) Identify other documentation the entity must provide as a condition of funding.

   Based upon its review, the panel will present its findings to The Partnership which must make final funding recommendations to the Workforce Investment Board.

   After analyzing all of the above data, including the geographic disbursement of the programs to ensure community access for Cook County residents as well as coverage of special populations, The Partnership will select respondents for recommendation to the Chicago Cook Workforce Investment Board for approval. Once approved by the WIB, The Partnership may award grant agreements to successful respondents. Selections will not be final until The Partnership and respondent have fully negotiated and executed a contract.

   Entities that fail to meet the evaluation criteria specified herein, or proposals that do not meet the service needs will not receive further consideration for funding. Failure to meet evaluation criteria can include, but is not limited to, non-responsive language in the submission, failure to clearly address all areas in the project narrative as required, lack of required documentation, and proposing programs, which do not address the specific needs of the population(s) being targeted.

E. Notice of Award

All respondents will be notified by mail as to their award status. Unsuccessful respondents who wish to obtain information on the evaluation of their proposal should submit a written request to this effect to The Partnership's Chief Administrative Officer/General Counsel. Unsuccessful respondents are encouraged to re-apply in subsequent funding cycles.

F. Disclaimers

The issuance of this RFP does not obligate The Partnership to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal. The Partnership reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP. The Partnership can cancel or rescind this RFP, in part or in whole, if deemed necessary.

All contract awards by The Partnership, pursuant to this RFP, are contingent upon the availability of funds. Respondents are liable for any and all costs incurred prior to final authorization by the WIB and the execution of a contract with The Partnership.

The Partnership also reserves the right to:

- Rescind an award and/or reallocate the funding to another applicant should the successful respondent fail to execute its grant agreement in a timely fashion;
- Increase funding levels for any or all delegate agencies selected pursuant to this RFP, if additional funds become available, based on delegate agency performance, effectiveness and other details;
- Change and amend as necessary its policies or procedures governing the delivery or scope of services described herein;
- Perform an assessment of the risk that any recent, current, or potential litigation, court action, investigation, audit, bankruptcy, receivership, financial insolvency, merger, acquisition, or other event might have on an organization's ability to operate a proposed program.

SECTION VII. ORGANIZATION OF THE PROPOSAL

A. Submission Format

All proposals must be organized and assembled as described in this Section. The brackets below indicate the documents that are to be bound together for review. Each proposal should be submitted in accordance with the Application Checklist as indicated on our website at: www.workforceboard.org Copies of all required forms as identified in the descriptions below are included as Appendices to this RFP.

1

1. Agency Information Form
2. Executive Summary (specific to this Business Intermediary Application)
3. Business Intermediary Application Narrative (specific to this Business Intermediary Application)

2
3

4. 1A Budget (If requesting 1A Funding under this application)
5. 1A Budget Narrative (If requesting 1A Funding under this application)
6. 1D Budget (If requesting 1D Funding under this application)
7. 1D Budget Narrative (If requesting 1D Funding under this application)
8. Organizational Chart
9. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with partners
10. Draft Subcontract (if applying with subcontractors)
11. Job Titles and Descriptions
12. Resumes Organized by Job Title
13. List of employees proposed for the WIA project and their length of time employed by the respondent
14. List of Board Members (including their addresses)
15. Map of Service Location
16. Letters of Support
17. Agency Declaration

B. Executive Summary

The Executive Summary (**2 pages only**) must be submitted on the organization's letterhead and must provide:

1. An overview of the organization's qualifications, including the number of years it has successfully provided services, types of customers and communities served under WIA or other employment training programs;
2. A concise description of the proposed program, including number of customers to be served (explain how this number was determined), existing partnerships and, if applicable, the occupations in which training is planned or has been previously conducted; and,
3. The amount of WIA funding requested.

C. Proposal Narrative

The proposal narrative must provide specific detailed responses and data for the past three years (January 1, 2009 - June 30, 2012) for the items listed below:

1. Experience (25 points)

a. Entity Experience

Provide a concise description of the entity's experience and success providing services under WIA or other similar programs, including identifying the number of years the entity has been providing these services. Describe any special qualifications or expertise that may distinguish the entity's programs and services from other delegate agencies.

b. Staff Experience

Identify proposed staff and specify the educational levels for each individual. Describe internal staff development and training efforts. Attach resumes for proposed staff to be used on the project, including names, titles, job descriptions and whether the position is full or part-time. If you anticipate the creation of additional positions in response to this

RFP, please provide detailed job descriptions including qualifications sought and hiring criteria. Documentation of specific qualifications or credentials for specialty staff positions should also be included in your submission.

2. Program Description (25 points)

a. Business Services

Provide a concise description of the proposed business services. Your submission must at a minimum: 1) describe respondent's existing relationships with businesses including estimated number of active business relationships and the respective industry sectors; 2) discuss respondent's strategic approach to pursuing new business relationships and securing job orders including, but not limited to, targeted strategies, methods for identifying companies and contacts within those companies, methods for outreach to targeted employers, electronic system(s) respondent uses or plans to use for tracking business relationships and monitoring frequency and nature of employer contact, and other strategies and methods used to locate and/or "develop" employment opportunities for job seekers, 3) list and describe the services the respondent intends to provide to business customers; and 4) for all services listed, identify how customized training and on-the-job training will be linked with other workforce development and/or economic development incentive programs. Highlight any aspects of these services or resources the respondent believes to be innovative.

b. Program Design

Provide a concise description of the design of the proposed service program. Your submission must at a minimum: 1) identify the entity's basic strategy to help place participants in career ladder positions within high growth industries; 2) identify the specific occupations that will be targeted by the proposed services. Provide documentation to illustrate the entity's history of success providing services targeted at these occupations in Cook County; 3) describe how a mix of training services will be used as a part of an overall strategy to help participants obtain career ladders positions within high growth industries; 4) describe planned career counseling, career planning and employment counseling strategies and techniques; and 5) summarize the process the respondent will use to work with each participant to identify a training program for the occupation in which training will occur.

c. On the Job Training / Customized Training

Identify or describe the following: 1) the specific high-paying jobs in high growth occupations that will be the focus of the OJT and/or customized training program; 2) any additional assessments that will be undertaken to determine the employer and participant's suitability for OJT or customized training; 3) how customer skill levels will be assessed; 4) how the employer reimbursement amount will be determined; 5) how the length of training will be determined; 6) the processes through which participants will be matched to employers; 7) processes, procedures and timeframes for onsite monitoring to review participant progress and to assess adherence to the training plan; 8) procedures for monitoring job retention at the completion of the training period; 9) the number of participants enrolled who will receive training services and the percentage this number represents of all participants enrolled in the program.

Summarize the respondent's strategy for achieving the WIA Adult & Dislocated Worker performance measures. Identify the frequency of, and how outcomes will be monitored. Describe the process and criteria to screen participants prior to enrollment to ensure that they can obtain appropriate outcomes. Describe the respondent's plans to serve WIA Adult & Dislocated Workers in collaboration with THE Partnership's delegate agencies and other WIA partners to ensure an effective referral and employment placement process.

d. Follow-Up Services

Identify follow-up services that will be offered to support participants and the entity's strategy to ensure that the participant will cooperate after exiting the program. Describe strategies and processes to work with participants and employers during the follow-up period to increase job retention, including, but not limited to strategies to identify and remove barriers to job retention.

e. Support Services

Identify support services that will be available to program participants and the factors that will determine when supportive services are appropriate. Identify the estimated amount of supportive service payments per participant, including the portion of this amount to be paid directly to the participant. Indicate if participants will be referred for needed supportive services not proposed and how and to whom these referrals will be made.

3. Past Performance and Project Support/Partnerships (25 points)

The Partnership reserves the right to consider any and all data of previous performance on workforce development programs. The Partnership also requests the following information from respondent:

a. Provide an overview of respondent's experience in managing government-funded workforce development programs or grants or other related activities. Include, as relevant, the following:

- The number and length of such programs and grants and the extent of services provided under each
- Experience providing workforce development or other services specifically within the context of the geographic area of the location for which the respondent is applying
- Instances, projects or relationships in which respondent has led or worked closely with one or more Chicago Cook Workforce System members, WIA system partners or other workforce development entities on workforce development projects, programs or initiatives

b. Identify employer supporters of the project and describe their interest in or link to the program. Provide written letters of support from employers that identify contributions of additional "in-kind" resources, or employer participation in training, commitment to hiring participants. (Attach letters of support of this nature only). Discuss the partnerships that your organization has with other agencies, which focus on providing services to adult and dislocated workers, and how these services will be coordinated through your program. (Attach copies of executed Memoranda of Understanding or letters indicating an intent to partner).

4. Financial Structure and Cost Effectiveness (25 points)

Describe the basis on which the requested amount was calculated. Identify an average unit cost per participant and provide an explanation to justify this unit cost. Identify the staff to participant ratio. If the entity is for-profit, identify the profit percentage built into the proposed budget, and describe the risk and other factors taken into consideration to arrive at this percentage. NOTE: The Partnership will separately negotiate the percentage of profit with each for-profit entity whose proposal is selected.

a. Describe the respondent's fiscal capacity, including a description of any other grants over $100,000 and includes the organization's total annual budget.

b. Does the organization do its own accounting? If no, indicate name, address, contact person and phone number of accounting firm. If yes, describe the respondent's accounting/financial procedures, type of accounting software used and system of oversight.

c. How often are bank reconciliations prepared?

d. Describe the organization's payroll system including internal controls for accuracy and validity. What is the method for documenting employee time?

e. Describe how the organization will ensure that costs charged to the program are reasonable, allocable, allowable, and necessary?

f. Please give name, address and contact person of auditing firm. How long has the agency used this auditing firm?

g. If staff or other costs charged to this budget will be shared between one or more funding sources, please detail the overall cost allocation plan for sharing costs, including the method of allocating shared costs.

h. Please attach a copy of the current Cost Allocation Plan (CAP). For guidance on preparing a cost allocation plan, please refer to OBM Circular A-87.

i. Attach a copy of the organization's most recent audited financial statements, management letter, and federal and state tax returns. For organizations whose total public contributions in a single year are below the State of Illinois threshold for an audit (see below), please provide the organization's most recent 2-year comparative financial statements (e.g., statements of financial position, statements of activities, statements of cash flows, and statements of functional expenses – if applicable).

   Note: Per (225 ILCS 460/4), the audit threshold for charitable organizations whose fund-raising functions are carried on solely by staff and volunteers is **$300,000**. The audit threshold is **$25,000** for charitable organizations who use the services of a paid professional fundraiser.

j. For audits, indicate what action has been taken in regard to the following:

1. Auditor’s opinions or recommendations regarding internal controls.
2. Cost disallowances and any other “qualitative” changes the organization has undertaken in response to audits.

k. Has the organization ever been declared seriously deficient in the operation of a grant? If so, please describe the circumstances.

l. Describe leveraged funds that respondent or collaborators will bring to this project. This can include cash contributions, staff effort, space, fee-for-service or other revenue generation and in-kind contributions. In answering, list each source of leveraged resources and the function of each leveraged resource, for example to spread operating costs or to broaden the scope of services. Note that budgets must back up this information with a breakdown of the funding from each source as it is utilized in the program. **No proposal will be accepted whose budget does not clearly and specifically identify the leveraged funds.**

m. Describe respondent’s resource development experience and capacity to access various sources of funding in order to operate high-quality programs.

F. Budget Instructions

The Budget contains the following items: budget narrative, budget summary, personnel budget, non-personnel summary budget, non-WIA matching contribution which should be indicated on the other column of the first budget page. Respondents are encouraged to complete the forms electronically and print them for inclusion in their submission. *The budget forms are included as an excel spreadsheet file as part of the complete application packet.*

WIA allows for-profit respondents to include fixed fees (aka profit) in the budget. Private for-profit organizations should indicate anticipated program fixed fees over program costs in the space provided on Budget Form 3. Fixed Fees will be negotiated as a separate element of cost during the grant agreement negotiations. In negotiating fixed fee, the following factors will be considered: (1) the complexity of the work involved; (2) risk borne by the grant recipient; (3) the grant recipient’s investment; (4) the amount of subcontracting; (5) the quality of its past performance; and (6) the industry profit rates in the surrounding geographical area for similar work. Further, the fixed fee amount may not exceed 7% of the total other cost categories (less pass through). For more information see Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership Policy Letter, “Cost Plus Fixed Fee”.

Please note, the policy on profit, stated profit levels, and procedures for determining and paying profit are all subject to change in keeping with Federal or State or Local regulations, or Chicago Cook Workforce Investment Board policy.

Please complete a separate set of budget forms for each applicable funding stream: WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker.

The following forms are required as part of this proposal submission:

a. **Budget Summary Forms and Instructions**
The Budget Forms are included as a separate set of attachments.

b. Fiscal Questionnaire – Self-explanatory

c. Stand-In Contributions Worksheet
This form shows source(s) and amount(s) of any cash contribution or match for the proposed project that may be used to off-set disallowed costs.

E. Certificate of Good Standing

All respondents **MUST** provide the following information: 1) A completed IRS W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification Number & Certification. This form can be emailed upon request or downloaded at www.irs.gov ; and 2) A copy of the most recent financial audit completed by a certified public account.

Non-governmental entities MUST also provide the following: 1) indicate the year the organization was legally established; 2) attach list of current Board Member names, mailing addresses (other than responding agency's address), occupation/affiliation, e-mail address and phone numbers; 3) if applicable, submit a *current* letter (within last three years) from the IRS verifying the organization is exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, IRS Department of the Treasury, (877) 829-5500; 4) submit a copy of the most recently filed IRS Form 990.

Attach documentation of **Good Standing Status**:

- Entities that are incorporated as a not-for-profit under the General Not For Profit Corporation Act of 1986 (805 ILCS 105/101.01 *et seq.*) are required to submit a certificate of good standing from the Illinois Secretary of State's Office, Department of Business Services, (217) 782-7880 or (217) 782-6961 (TDD: (800) 252-2904).

- Entities that are organized as a Charitable/Not-For-Profit entity, which includes any person, individual, group of individuals, association, not-for-profit corporation, or other legal entity under the Charitable Trust Act (760 ILCS 55/1 *et seq.*) are required to submit a letter of good standing from the Charitable Trust Bureau, Office of the Illinois Attorney General, 100 W. Randolph St, 11th floor, Chicago, IL 60601, (312) 814-2595 (TTY: (312) 814-3374).

- Entities that are neither of the above, but are exempt from paying sales/use tax under the Use Tax Act (35 ILCS 105/1 *et seq*.) are required to submit a copy of the tax exemption certificate issued by the Illinois Department of Revenue, Central Registration, PO Box 19030, Springfield, IL 62794-9030, (217) 785-3707 (TDD: (800) 544-5304).

H. Evaluation Criteria

The Partnership is not required to contract with the entity receiving the highest average score as a result of the proposal review process. Proposals evaluated with an average score below 70 of a possible 100 points will not be considered. Proposals that do not meet minimum standards will be considered non-responsive. The Partnership reserves the right to contract with any respondent that falls within the acceptable point range.

All proposals will be scored according to the evaluation criteria and rank ordered from highest to lowest score. A recommended funding level will be determined based on a number of factors including overall ranking of proposal rating scores, the availability of funds, the number of applications submitted, geographic factors, reasonable unit cost as determined by The Partnership, the need for the proposed services, and past performance.

Weighting of Evaluation Criteria

Category	Category Total
Experience	25
Program Description	25
Past Performance and Project Support / Partnerships	25
Financial Structure and Cost Effectiveness	25
TOTAL	**100**

SECTION VIII. PROTEST PROCEDURES TO RESOLVE PROCUREMENT DISPUTES

All protests to resolve disputes concerning this RFP shall be submitted in writing, must specify in detail the grounds of the protest, the facts and evidence in support thereof, and the remedy sought. The written protest must be delivered to The Partnership (c/o Illona Sheffey-Rawlings, CAO/General Counsel) within the time limits provided below. In the absence of a timely and properly submitted written protest, no party responding to this RFP shall be eligible for any remedy. Any applicant desiring to protest a determination concerning this RFP must file a protest, in writing, with The Workforce Investment Board no later than five (5) calendar days following release of the staff recommendation. The Workforce Investment Board shall resolve any protest based upon the written protest and any oral and written response thereto provided by The Partnership staff before, or in conjunction with, the Board's consideration of the application and the staff recommendation. Resolution of the protest shall be deemed final.

SECTION IX. LIMITATIONS

The Partnership shall not pay for any costs incurred by the applicant agencies in the completion of this RFP. Submission of an RFP does not, in any way, obligate The Partnership to award a contract. The Partnership reserves the right to accept or reject any applications, to negotiate with all qualified sources, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP, if it is in the best interest of The Partnership to do so. The Partnership may require successful applicants to participate in contract negotiations prior to contract finalization. The Partnership shall reserve the right to terminate, with or without cause, any contract entered into as a result of this RFP process.

SECTION X. MODIFICATION OF CONTRACTS

Any contract awarded pursuant to this RFP may be unilaterally modified by The Partnership upon written notice to the contractor under the following circumstances:

a. Contractor fails to meet performance and service expectations set forth in the contract, or
b. The federal or state government increases, reduces or withdraws funds allocated to The Partnership, which impact services solicited under this RFP, or
c. There is a change in federal or state legislation and/or their regulations, local laws, or applicable policies and procedures.