

**CHICAGO COOK WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR**

**Strategic Planning Consultant  
Youth Workforce Development Programs**



**CHICAGO COOK  
WORKFORCE  
PARTNERSHIP**

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

**RESPONSES DUE:  
June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014 - 4:00 P.M. (Central Time)**

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## SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

### The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership

In April 2014, the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (The Partnership) received a one year grant from the Robert R. McCormick Foundation to develop a blueprint for the targeted use of federal youth workforce dollars. The Partnership is a collaboration between the City of Chicago and Cook County to create a comprehensive workforce development system designed to work with the business community and job seekers. The Partnership administers the Workforce Investment Act (“WIA”), the federal funding for workforce development activities. 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 serve both Adult and Dislocated workers (Youth optional) and have active participation from one of the mandated WIA partners.
- **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 training services including, but not limited to, customized and on-the-job training services.
- **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 of organizations 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 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**

Mission: 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.

### **Youth Services**

Since the formation of The Partnership in 2012, youth services have been provided in a way that minimized interruption while the inaugural year of operation focused on policy changes, elimination of duplicative services and cost reduction of the entire local workforce development system. Understanding that the youth population presents complex issues different than the adult population, The Partnership seeks a workforce development consultant to help create a strategic plan for providing youth services. Our goal is to develop a youth service strategic plan that will inform the regional workforce system, create or replicate youth programs that will produce a skilled and competitive workforce and to focus our resources in the most efficient and effective ways.

The Youth Council is mandated under the Workforce Investment Act and is composed of a diverse group of stakeholders who have interest and expertise in addressing the needs of youth. The role of the Youth Council is to provide oversight and guidance over youth development programs. The youth strategic plan will be used to inform their work and improve the performance of the local system.

The Partnership has pursued several youth workforce development pilot projects. We were recently awarded a \$1.46 million dollar grant from the Vera Institute of Justice to provide 365 juvenile offenders, ages 16 and over, with a comprehensive set of services that will help them connect to education and employment opportunities. The Partnership will lead the service providers in developing and continually refining a program model that draws upon each agency's unique perspective and expertise.

The Michael Reese Health Trust's Youth Workforce Hospital/High School initiative is a sophisticated work-based learning and internship program that yields tangible benefits for multiple stakeholders, including hospitals and Chicago Public Schools Career and Technical Education students and administrators. Unlike many other youth internship programs, the Michael Reese Health Trust (MRHT) youth workforce initiative was designed in response to specific employer needs. Hospitals and clinics in Chicago are facing a workforce shortage and a need for greater diversity across all healthcare positions. The MRHT youth workforce initiative enables these employers to develop relationships with youth enrolled in Chicago Public Schools, thereby cultivating their interest and preparedness for a career in healthcare. Hospitals may also hire youth directly after graduation as many earn industry-recognized credentials.

The Manufacturing Careers Internship Program (MCIP) provides youth ages 18-21 with exposure to the manufacturing sector through a multi-week training module that includes classroom training and paid internships with local manufacturing companies. The majority of graduates of the program have been

offered permanent full time employment at the intern sponsoring employers. The MCIP has operated from a workforce center so successfully that The Partnership is seeking opportunities to expand the program.

The Partnership has taken advantage of these unique opportunities but would like to strategically pursue ways to most effectively respond to the needs of youth in Cook County through a comprehensive needs assessment.

## **SECTION II. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION PROCESS**

### **Available Funding and Performance Period**

The Partnership will award the strategic planning consultant contract to one entity/individual that best demonstrates an ability to effectively deliver services as described herein. All proposals must be comprehensive and address the full scope of services contemplated by this RFP.

The Partnership anticipates funding a contract effective August 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014 for an amount not to exceed \$35,000.

### **Proposal Deadline**

***THE DUE DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS, IN RESPONSE TO THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS IS JUNE 27, 2014 at 4:00PM CENTRAL TIME.*** Proposals received after the due date and time may be deemed NON-RESPONSIVE and therefore subject to rejection.

### **Submittal Procedure**

All proposals must be submitted in **both electronic and paper form**, according to the following rules. Paper versions must adhere to all of the following requirements:

- One original and two copies of the full proposal.
- A maximum of 5 pages excluding the Appendices
- 8 1/2 x 11 letter size paper
- Double-sided printing
- Bound on the left side
- One inch margins
- Double-spaced
- Minimum 11-point font

The outside of each envelope or package should be labeled using the following guide:

RFP for STRATEGIC PLANNING CONSULTANT

Date of Submission:

Name of Respondent:

Delivered to:

Chicago-Cook Workforce Partnership  
69 W. Washington  
Suite 2860  
Chicago, IL 60602  
ATTN: Carole Ko

Complete proposals will be accepted prior to the due date from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday – Friday at the same location. Late or incomplete proposals may not be reviewed. In-person or bonded messenger delivery of proposals is encouraged.

**Questions**

Respondents are strongly encouraged to submit all questions and comments related to the RFP via e-mail to youthstrategicplan@workforceboard.org

**Schedule of Events**

Release of RFP	May 27, 2014
Proposals Due to The Partnership	June 27, 2014
Announcement of Awards	July 28, 2014
Contract Period Begins	August 1, 2014

**Notice of Award**

All respondents will be notified as to their award status.

**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 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;
- Change and amend as necessary its policies or procedures governing the 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 provide services.

**SECTION III. ORGANIZATION OF THE PROPOSAL**

**Submission Format**

All proposals must be organized and assembled as described in this Section.

- Proposal Narrative
- Appendices

**Proposal Narrative**

The proposal narrative must provide specific detailed responses for the items listed below in 3-5 pages. Spell out acronyms for technical terms upon first use in the narrative.

## Technical Plan

- 1) Briefly explain your experience with developing strategic plans.
- 2) Scope of Work – use the questions below to provide a detailed strategic planning scope:
  - a. *Survey*: Describe your plan for assessing the current state of the local workforce development system. Do you have established relationships with entities that could provide data? Are you familiar with the Workforce Investment Act? Is your knowledge current regarding workforce policy and funding at the local, state and national levels?
  - b. *Literature Review*: Describe your approach to the literature review. How will the literature review inform the stakeholder engagement process and strategic plan?
  - c. *Stakeholder Engagement*: Describe your methodology for engaging stakeholders including workforce providers, funders and public agencies. Reference any specific experience your agency has conducting similar stakeholder engagement. Describe specific staff member roles in the stakeholder engagement process.
  - d. *Technical Assistance*: Describe how you would assess the service delivery at multiple agencies? How would you identify best practices? How would you capture ways for agencies to become more efficient? Describe how this will help inform policy decisions.
  - e. *Programming*: Describe how you would evaluate the provision of youth workforce programming? Explain how this information can be used to guide funding decisions.
- 3) What environmental factors, technical issues, areas of uncertainty, and/or possible risks do you anticipate, and how will your plan address those issues if they arise?

## Project Timeline & Deliverables

- 4) Provide a description of project deliverables and a timeline for implementing each element of the scope and deliverables.

## Budget

- 5) The maximum strategic planning budget is \$35,000. Provide a budget narrative and overall budget total that is matched to the specific deliverables and timeline described in the Project Timeline and Deliverables section above.
- 6) The strategic planning contract will be deliverables-based whereby the contractor will invoice upon submission of deliverables.

## Appendices

Please provide the following documents as appendices. If a document is not applicable, please note this on the Checklist:

- A completed IRS W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification Number & Certification. This form can be emailed upon request or downloaded at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).
- Three references, preferably from projects of similar scope and magnitude as described in this RFP. Include the organization name; contact name, address, phone number and email address; brief description of work performed; project start and end dates; initial and final (or current, if project is in process) contract amount.
- **Non-profit entities must also provide the following:**

- List of current Board Member names, mailing addresses (other than responding agency's address), occupation/affiliation, e-mail address and phone numbers.
- Most recent audited financial statements.
- Unaudited financial statements for the current fiscal year.
- If your agency was subject to OMB A133 audit in the past three years, submit a copy of the most recent A133 audit report.
- 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.
- If applicable, submit a copy of the most recently filed IRS Form 990.

## **SECTION IV. PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS**

### **Process**

A panel of workforce development professionals selected by The Partnership will review and evaluate all proposals based on the criteria outlined below. Panel members may include Partnership staff, foundation officers, and other City and State representatives. The panel will perform an in-depth review of the proposals based on the review criteria.

The Partnership reserves the right to award contracts on the basis of proposals received without further discussions with respondents. However, The Partnership may conduct post-application investigation prior to awarding grants including the following:

- Interview references from respondent's current or past funders;
- Review respondent's performance on any previous and/or existing contracts associated with The Partnership or its antecedent organizations, the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services, the Chicago Department of Community Development, the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development, Cook County Works, the President's Office of Employment and Training, the Chicago Workforce Investment Council and the Workforce Board of Northern Cook County.

### **Criteria**

All proposals will be scored according to the criteria outlined below. The top scoring respondents may be interviewed. Because the final selection will be based on a combination of scores and interviews, The Partnership is not required to contract with the entity receiving the highest raw average score.

***Technical Plan (20 points)***. The extent to which the Technical Plan meets the expectations and requirements outlined in the scope of services. This includes quality and clarity of proposed implementation of each element of the scope, demonstrating a clear understanding of The Partnership's goals for the strategic plan and a reasonable staffing plan for project implementation.

***Project Timeline and Deliverables (15points)***. The proposed timeline and deliverables achieve the necessary outcomes in the required timeframe.



**Budget (10 points).** The extent to which the proposed budget will realistically finance the strategic plan's goals and scope. This includes the accuracy of the budget; its applicability to the tasks, timeline and deliverables; and the overall cost effectiveness of the proposed services.

**Proposal Quality (5 points).** Proposals should clearly and concisely articulate proposed outcomes and means of accomplishing them.

## **SECTION V. 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, 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 Partnership no later than five (5) calendar days following release of the staff recommendation. The Partnership 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 Partnership's consideration of the application and the staff recommendation. Resolution of the protest shall be deemed final.

## **SECTION VI. LIMITATIONS & MODIFICATION OF CONTRACTS**

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.

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.