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**Workforce Development Board Herkimer, Madison & Oneida Counties, Inc. (WDB)**

**Request for Proposals**

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act One Stop Operator**

**Contract Period: April 1, 2021 to June 30, 2023**

*\** *At its discretion the WDB may amend contracts based on performance and funding availability, and/or renew contracts for up to 2 consecutive contract periods (July 1 through June 30) based on performance and funding availability, through June 30, 2023.*

***Essential Information w/Dates***

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| **Release Date** | **January 15, 2021** |
| **Deadline for Submission** | **March 1, 2021** |
| **Workforce Board Approval** | **March 12, 2021** |
| **Formal Award Notification**  | **March 19, 2021** |
| **Target Start Date** | **April 1, 2021** |

**Contracting Entity:**

Workforce Development Board Herkimer, Madison & Oneida Counties, Inc. (WDB)

209 Elizabeth Street

Utica, New York 13501

**1. BACKGROUND**

The Workforce Development Board Herkimer, Madison & Oneida Counties, Inc. (WDB) is a not-for-profit agency with a long history of providing employment and training programs in the three county region. The system is funded under the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) and connects multiple federally funded employment and training programs in the local workforce area. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law on July 22, 2014 with the intent of strengthening the workforce system through alignment of services to promote innovation, as well as individual and national economic growth. (To read the full law: <https://www.doleta.gov/wioa/> ) Inclusive in the requirements under WIOA is the necessity to competitively select a ‘One-Stop Operator’ to support the implementation of services within the career center system locally.

The WDB is responsible for the oversight of programs and funding the workforce development system. The WDB is located at 209 Elizabeth St., Utica, NY 13501.

To service the local area, thousands of local job seekers and businesses receive employment and training services through four (4) Working Solutions Centers, American Job Centers. This includes, comprehensive career centers located at 320 N. Prospect St., Herkimer, NY 13350, 133 N. Court St, Wampsville, NY 13163, 300 W. Dominick St., Suite 1, Rome, NY 13440 and 207 Genesee St., Utica, NY 13501, with additional services supported through competitively procured contracts with local organizations.

The Working Solutions Centers are “One-Stop” access points for services available through the system. Job seekers can utilize resource rooms stocked with computers, copiers, faxes, telephones, and job search materials, attend workshops, receive one-to-one job search assistance, career counseling, and access training funds to improve skills. Businesses find qualified employees, post jobs, access training funds to upgrade their workforce skills, and use the Working Solutions (American Job) Centers to conduct recruitment events, get tax credit information, access outplacement services for laid-off employees and get connected to other economic development resources and initiatives. Additional information on programs and services can be found at [www.working-solutions.org](http://www.working-solutions.org).

# 2. PURPOSE

*Background:*

WIOA’s focus is on enhancing the high quality One-Stop center system by aligning investments in workforce, education, and economic development to regional in-demand jobs. The law places emphasis on local resource coordination to better meet the needs of jobseekers, workers, and businesses. This includes the cultivation of partnerships and strategies necessary for One-Stops to provide job seekers and workers with high-quality career services, education and training, and supportive services. Therefore, under WIOA the Working Solutions (American Job) Centers are required to partner with a range of federally funded employment and training programs to promote the coordination of services on behalf of job seekers and businesses.

The One Stop Operator will be integral in supporting the system and coordinating these services. The mandated partners include:

* WIOA Title I: Workforce Development Board Herkimer, Madison & Oneida, Inc.
* WIOA Title II: NYS Department of Education
* WIOA Title III/TAA/Unemployment Compensation/Wagner Peyser: NYS Department of Labor
* WIOA Title IV: Rehabilitation Act, NYS Commission for the Blind and ACCES-VR
* Title V: Associates for Training & Development, Inc.
* CTE-Perkins: DCMO BOCES
* CSBG: Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency, Community Action Program for Madison County, Inc.
* Temporary Assistance to Needy Families: Herkimer County Department of Social Services, Madison County Department of Social Services & Oneida County Department of Social Services

*Role of the One Stop Operator:*

The One Stop Operator (“Operator”), in a consultant role, will play a critical role in supporting the local workforce system to coordinate its diverse partners to achieve its service delivery vision and reach its ‘to be defined’ performance goals. Specifically, the Operator will:

* Convene up to four meetings per year of mandated partners to support the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)[[1]](#footnote-1) implementation. The Operator will develop meeting agendas (in conjunction with WDB staff), meeting activities, facilitate meetings, and provide meeting notes.
* Additionally, in conjunction with staff from the WDB the Operator will develop an appropriate mechanism to semi-annually report on the progress and performance of the partnerships across the system to the Workforce Development Board.
* Support the WDB in developing benchmarks to measure a baseline of “system performance,” e.g., customer service, system flow, etc. In future years, the expectation is that the Operator will make recommendations for continuous improvement based on this data.

**3. FUNDING**

WDB intends to obligate no more than $6,000 annually for this reimbursement-based contract. At its discretion the Board may amend contracts based on performance and funding availability, and/or renew contracts for up to three (3) consecutive contract periods (July 1 through June 30). Proposers must include the proportion of the rate that is staff time, versus other expenses, e.g., fringe, travel, etc.

# 4. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

The WIOA Joint Final Rule requires Local Workforce Boards to use a competitive process based on local procurement policies and procedures, and the principles of competitive procurement in the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) at 2 CFR part 200 and 2 CFR part 2900, which may be found at <http://www.ecfr.gov>. To ensure an unbiased competition, WDB is soliciting proposals from governmental units, public or private not-for-profit or for-profit entities (including corporations, partnerships, or sole proprietorships), eligible local educational agencies, faith-based and community-based agencies, and/or a consortium of WIOA partners as described in the law. For more information on eligibility see: <https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL/TEGL_15-16_Acc.pdf> As a result of this process, the Workforce Development Board’s Executive Committee will make the selection.

Qualifications are as follows:

* An understanding of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Similarly, a general understanding of the local workforce system and its stakeholders is not required, but preferred.
* Strong, demonstrated experience (3-5 years) facilitating large, diverse stakeholder groups to a common goal or outcome is expected. The ability to remain a neutral facilitator will be critical.
* Experience in meeting agenda development, planning, and execution.
* Ability to work closely with the Workforce Development Board to monitor the system’s strategic objectives and make recommendations for system continuous improvements.
* Other roles and responsibilities as defined by the Board.

# 5. PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

**5.1 Deadline**

Proposals submitted in response to this RFP must be received as a solitary PDF document no later than 12:00 p.m. (Noon) on March 1, 2021, via mail or email (subject line to read “One Stop Operator Proposal for HMO WDB”) to Alice Savino at asavino@working-solutions.org. All proposals should be addressed to:

Alice Savino, Executive Director

Workforce Development Board

209 Elizabeth St., 3rd floor

Utica, New York 13501

**Proposals received to the above address/email on/or before the deadline and that comply with all RFP requirements will be reviewed and considered for funding.**

**5.2 Evaluation Criteria**

A committee of the WDB will review all proposals to ensure compliance with the requirements of the RFP, and rate the proposals accordingly. WDB intends to host an evaluation based on but not limited to:

The committee will look for demonstrated experience, capability and description of proposed approach of each proposal. The rating scale (Maximum of 75 points) is as follows:

* + Understanding of the local workforce system and WIOA (5)
	+ Convening and facilitating diverse partners to an outcome (20)
	+ Client engagement approach (15)
	+ Meeting development (10)
	+ Development of performance reports and outcomes for “partnerships” (10)
	+ Understanding of continuous improvement (5)
	+ Proposed budget (10)

If necessary, to clarify specific points regarding what is proposed, WDB staff will reach out directly to the proposer.

Based on the results of the review process, the WDB committee will make recommendations to the Executive Committee of the Board the week of March 8, 2021. The Workforce Development Board makes the final approval of funding on March 12, 2021, and notifies the vendor by March 19, 2021.

**5.3 Format of Proposal**

* A single PDF document
* Arranged in proper order
* Not to exceed three (3) pages of narrative
* Formatted to 8.5 x 11 paper size using 12 point font, 1 inch margins and Times New Roman
* Text lines may be single spaced
* All pages of narrative section must be numbered and contain the applicant name as the footer
* Quantify hours of service, and other crucial components of service delivery
* Any proposed collaboration must be supported by detail
* Be concise and avoid extraneous references and unnecessary detail

#  Content Requirements

Organizations with interest in providing the requested services should submit a proposal narrative of not more than three pages that outlines the following information (see Sections 4 and 5.2 for more detail):

* The organization or entity’s understanding and experience in workforce development, including the local system, and/or of WIOA and the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).
* Overview of the organization or entity’s previous experience facilitating large, diverse stakeholder groups to a common goal or outcome is expected. Specific examples are strongly encouraged. What is your approach in navigating and resolving challenging partnerships?
* Description of the organization or entity’s expected client engagement approach. Frequency and methods of communication; expected approach in meeting agenda development, planning, and execution, etc.
* Other information, experience, or products deemed relevant to this solicitation.

Required attachments will not count against the narrative page total. Such attachments include:

* Resumes of key staff who will be assigned to this project and their roles on the project;
* Hourly rate, and expenses included within the hourly rate calculation;
* And three recent (last 5 years) references.
1. Under WIOA, each mandated partner is required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding that outlines the service delivery and financial relationship for co-located partners, and service delivery coordination and “cost sharing” for non-co-located partners. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)