



Request for Proposals

Seeking qualified vendor(s) to perform customer satisfaction surveys, with accompanying reports and analysis, for WIA youth, adult, and dislocated worker programs.

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The Workforce Opportunity Council, Inc. is a sponsor of the NH WORKS system, a proud member of America's Workforce Network, and an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

Request for Proposals

Purpose/Background:

The Workforce Opportunity Council (Council) is New Hampshire's state Workforce Investment Board under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), and administers the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs funded under WIA.

Under current law, Customer Satisfaction surveys must be performed with participants who have exited their respective program activities, and with employers who have used the services of the "One-Stop" system created under WIA. In New Hampshire, this system is called NH Works. The results are reported on a calendar year basis (January to December) for the year prior to the reporting period. In other words, January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006 will be reported to USDOL in the state's annual report by October 1, 2007.

The law requires that three questions be asked, with a minimum response rate of 70%:

- How satisfied are you (were you) with the services?
- To what extent have the services met your expectations?
- How well do the services compare to the ideal?

The overall customer satisfaction scores reflect a weighted average of participant and employer ratings of the three questions, reported on an American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) scale of 0-100. The exact methodology of how this weighting is performed is defined by USDOL in their Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 10-05, dated December 22, 2005 (the latest instruction), which is attached to this proposal for the respondent's further information.

Historically, New Hampshire approached the customer satisfaction requirement by using an independent professional vendor to conduct the surveys. A much-expanded survey instrument was also used in an effort to gain information useful to the continuous improvement of the system. This expanded survey was quite helpful in the beginning of WIA, and the survey results were used to initiate several continuous improvement projects in our NH Works Centers. Over the years, however, the process of refining questions to "get to the heart of the matter", has resulted in a survey instrument that has become somewhat unwieldy. Additionally, as the programs have matured, survey results have not been as useful as they once were. Further, with ever-increasing costs to deliver services in an efficient and effective manner, the ability to support a large survey instrument is no longer feasible.

The original vendor was chosen through a competitive bid process, and the contract has been routinely renewed each year. However, the Council has recently revised its competitive procurement policy, requiring the release of this Request for Proposals (RFP) for the upcoming year.

Applicant Eligibility:

Individuals and organizations (including the existing vendor), whether for-profit or not-for-profit, having the appropriate experience and expertise are eligible to apply to this RFP, including faith or community-based organizations. Incorporated or d/b/a applicants must show proof of being registered with the NH Secretary of State.

Applicants will be deemed not eligible for funding for any of the following reasons:

1. Failure to deliver the proposal by the time and date it is due.
2. Failure to provide the required content, or follow the prescribed application format as set forth in this RFP.

Statement of Work:

A. Participant / Employer Survey: Surveys are conducted by telephone interviews on a quarterly basis, and results must be tabulated and provided to the Council within 40 days of the quarter's end. See "Required Deliverables" Section below.

Within 2 weeks of the calendar quarter's end, the vendor will receive the list of participants/employers eligible to be contacted, in a fixed-width data file. The list will include appropriate demographic and contact information. The vendor shall receive a complete list of participant exiters each quarter, which may result in duplicates from past quarters. *It is the vendor's responsibility to determine which customers they have already surveyed and to not contact the customer(s) again.*

USDOL requires a minimum response rate of 70% for both participant and employer surveys. On average there are between 1,500 and 1,800 participants per year, who exit the program and are eligible for the survey.

The vendor shall survey:

1. All WIA participant exiters (to the extent possible) who exited the previous quarter. Participants fall into four (4) classifications:
 - a. Adult
 - b. Dislocated Worker
 - c. Older Youth (aged 19-21)
 - d. Younger Youth (aged 14-18) [Must obtain parental permission to interview.]
2. 125 employers per quarter. Employers who utilize/receive services at any of the 13 NH Works Centers (placing job orders, receiving candidate referrals, etc.), as well as employers who receive services outside the NH Works environment shall be surveyed. These "outside" services might include, but not be limited to, incumbent worker training, apprenticeship, and rapid response.

B. Survey Instrument: The vendor shall ask the required three questions of both participants and employer groups. In addition, the vendor shall ask additional questions of participants and employers, as noted in the attached set of questions. The Council will work with the selected vendor to clarify any lack of understanding there may be around the purpose of the questions.

C. Analysis and Report: On a quarterly basis, the vendor shall prepare a written report that provides an analysis of the information gathered. An oral presentation, using Power Point (or other appropriate software), shall also be provided at the first available joint Consortium/Performance Assessment Committee following the close of the calendar quarter. The oral presentation may be organized to focus only on the significant highlights, or to walk the committee members through the entire report. Council staff shall work with the vendor to determine the appropriate approach. Ordinarily, the expectation is that the oral presentation would take between 30-45 minutes.

The written report shall depict the survey results graphically, and each graph shall be labeled with the question asked, as well as the number of individuals surveyed in the identified demographic group. The Council will identify the desired demographic breakout of the information, and reserves the right to request ad hoc charts or questions in response to an identified need of the Board, Consortium, or Performance Committee.

The two examples in the attached questionnaire provide a basic representation of the Council's reporting expectations. The sample demographic breakout in "Chart 2" relates to the Adult and Dislocated Worker surveys. Additional categories that shall be depicted may include:

- Satisfaction level based on types of services received (core, intensive, training, etc)
- Satisfaction level based on length of time in program
- Satisfaction level based on office at which services were received
- Comparison between scores of previous quarter(s) and current quarter

Similar informational categories, although perhaps not as detailed, are expected for the Youth population.

The Council shall work with the selected vendor to refine the requirements of the report.

Please note that due to the timing of this RFP, the selected vendor will likely have approximately three (3) quarters of data in the first transmission, thus the first report will require more effort to organize the results in a quarterly format. The first report will be due within ninety (90) days of receipt of the first data transmission.

Required Deliverables:

A. **On a quarterly basis**, the vendor shall, within 40 days of the calendar quarter's end:

1. Report the number of participant/employer customers eligible to be surveyed (Note: this number shall be reconciled with the Council's numbers)
2. Report the number of surveys completed for both participants and employers
3. Report the response rate for both participants and employers
4. Report the ACSI score for both participants and employers
5. Complete a written report based on the criteria provided by the Council within 50 days from the quarter's end (10 days after the scores are reported).
6. Present, orally, the survey results and analysis to the members of the Consortium and Performance committees (Note: The oral presentation will be made at the next available meeting scheduled after the quarter's reporting period, which will likely take place outside the 40 calendar days from the quarter's end.)

B. **On an annual basis** (for the Council's required annual report due to USDOL by September 29), the vendor shall perform any final surveys that may be required (additional participant exiters that may fall into the reporting period) and update its numbers for items 1-4 above.

Proposal Review Process and/or Funding Decision Process:

A subcommittee comprised of Council members and staff will evaluate proposals in accordance with the requirements provided in this RFP.

The Council reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted. In addition, the distribution of this RFP shall not commit the Council to award funds to any applicant.

Any costs incurred in responding to this request for proposal shall not be reimbursed.

The Council reserves the right to seek clarification of any information contained in a proposal submitted, or to hold discussions, but is not obligated to do so.

Unless otherwise noted in the RFP, any work performed by a successful applicant prior to the effective date of a contract shall not be reimbursed.

Funding of any contract awarded under this initiative is subject to the availability and continued appropriation of federal funds awarded through U.S. Department of Labor. The Council shall not be liable for any payments in excess of such available appropriated funds. In the event of reduction or termination of those funds, the Council shall have the right to withhold payment until such funds become available, if ever, and shall have the right to terminate or amend the contract immediately upon giving the contractor notice of such termination or amendment.

Proposal Inquiries:

All questions about this Request for Proposals (RFP) must be submitted in writing by e-mail or fax no later than Monday, September 11, 2006 to:

Cindy Naiditch
Workforce Opportunity Council
Fax: (603) 228-8557
E-mail: cnaiditch@nhworkforce.org

Submission Requirement:

Proposals must be typed. An original proposal with original signatures on the cover sheet and four (4) identical copies of the proposal must be received **by no later than 4:00 p.m. EST on Monday, September 18, 2006** at:

Workforce Opportunity Council
Attn: Cindy Naiditch
64 Old Suncook Road
Concord, NH 03301

Estimated Schedule of Events (subject to change):

<u>Event</u>	<u>Completed by no later than</u>
Submission of Proposals	September 18, 2006
Committee Review/Selection Process	October 2, 2006
Notification of Award	October 4, 2006
Contract Negotiation/Finalization	October 13, 2006
First Transmission of Data File	October 17, 2006

The vendor will be expected to begin the surveying process immediately upon receiving the data file and to provide the first written report (broken out by quarters) within 90 days from the date of the data transmission.

Scoring of the Proposal:

Qualifications.....	25 points
Statement of Work.....	50 points
Budget.....	25 points
TOTAL.....	100 points

Qualifications of Vendor

The vendor will be evaluated based on previous experience (same or similar), thus the vendor should describe past projects that demonstrate an ability to perform the requested work, within the required timeframes. Samples of previous reports are encouraged to illustrate the vendor’s approach to information dissemination. Resumes of staff performing the work, if available, should be attached to the proposal. While not required, submission of at least two references from previous projects will be looked upon favorably.

Statement of Work

The vendor’s ability to do the work as outlined in the Statement of Work must be clearly illustrated. Also important, is the vendor’s approach to a collaborative working style as reporting requirements and other expectations are clarified.

Budget and Budget Narrative

The vendor must provide a detailed budget with a narrative describing the logic used in arriving at a total for each line item in the budget. Include how personnel costs are calculated; the basis used in estimating costs, and how the cost items relate to the proposed activities.

For planning purposes, it is expected that the selected vendor will enter into a one-year contract, with an annual option to renew for an additional two (2) years. Thus, the vendor is requested to present not only the cost for the first contract year, but also to project the renewal cost for each of the two years following the initial contract year. While some negotiation over fee might be anticipated, the expectation is that the projected renewal costs will represent the actual 2nd and 3rd year costs.

<p align="center">Deadline for Receipt of Proposals: 4:00 p.m. Monday, September 18, 2006</p>

Proposal Cover Sheet

Applicant: _____

Contact Person: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone: _____ FAX: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Federal Tax ID No.: _____

If awarded funding, the applicant hereby certifies and assures that it will fully comply with the following federal regulations (if applicable to your organization):

- 29 CFR Part 96 (Single Audit Act)
- 29 CFR Part 98 (Debarment and Suspension: Drug-free Workplace)
- 29 CFR Part 93 (Lobbying Certification)
- 29 CFR Parts 33, 34, and 37 (Non-discrimination and Equal Opportunity Requirements)
- Assurances (Non-Construction Programs)
- 29 CRP Part 97 (Uniform Administrative Requirements), Part 95 (Administrative Requirements for Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Non-Profit Organizations), and any subsequent amendments
- P.L. 101-166, Sec. 511 (Federal Dollar Amount Participation)
- RSA 193:13 (Gun-Free Schools)
- Public Law 105-220, Workforce Investment Act
- 20 CFR Part 652 et al (Workforce Investment Act, Final Rules)

Applicant's signature below indicates organization is agreeing to comply fully with the assurances and certifications as part of its responsibilities as a successful vendor/contractor.

Signature	Date	Printed Name and Title
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Certification and Other Terms/Conditions

1. The signing individual certifies that he/she is authorized to contract on behalf of the organization offering this proposal.
2. The signing individual certifies that the prices in this proposal have been arrived at independently, without consultation, communication, or agreements made for the purpose of restricting competition.
3. When delivering services under an approved contract, the contractor shall work under the broad supervision of Council staff.
4. The signing individual certifies that there has been no attempt by him/her or anyone in their organization to discourage any potential applicant from submitting a proposal.
5. The signing individual certifies that he/she has read and understands all of the information in this Request for Proposals.
6. The signing individual certifies that his/her organization, and any individuals to be assigned to the project, does not have a record of substandard work and has not been debarred or suspended from doing work with any federal, state, or local government.
7. Unless otherwise deleted or modified by mutual agreement between the Council and the contractor, all general provisions contained on the Proposal Cover Sheet (attachment A) shall be incorporated into the contract.
8. The Council reserves the right to negotiate a best and final offer with applicant selected.
9. Payments shall be made on a cost reimbursement basis (no advances). Invoices shall detail expenses based on the line items in the proposal budget. Generally, the Council will pay invoices within 15 days of receipt, unless questions arise as to the appropriateness of an expense.
10. All information received by the contractor during the course of the contract period is considered confidential, and shall be protected to the utmost ability of the contractor. The contract shall include more specific language on this issue.
11. The contract awarded under this RFP shall be subject to and interpreted under the laws and jurisdiction of New Hampshire.

Signature

Date

(signed certification/conditions to be returned with the proposal)