

# NORTHEAST INDIANA WORKS



## INDIANA ECONOMIC GROWTH REGION 3 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL ONE-STOP OPERATOR SERVICES

RFP ISSUE DATE: *February 24, 2020*  
QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD: *February 24, 2020 – March 18, 2020*  
PROPOSAL DUE DATE: *March 27, 2020 12pm (noon)*

Northeast Indiana Works  
200 E Main St, Suite 910  
Fort Wayne, IN 46802

**Serving the following counties of Northeast Indiana:** *Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Grant, Huntington, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, Wells, Whitley*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Northeast Indiana Works (NEINW) is requesting proposals for qualified entities to serve as the One-Stop Operator in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA). This role will require the ability to create collaborative agreements, strategies and executable implementation amongst WIOA's required partners, including but not limited to: WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Career and Technical Education. NEINW insists on the full integration and coordination of the required and locally identified One-Stop career center partners, with this RFP seeking to engage an entity to serve as the coordinator of such activities.

## **BACKGROUND**

NEINW is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization, operating as the workforce board for Economic Growth Region 3 (EGR3) in northeast Indiana, in the counties of Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Grant, Huntington, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, Wells, Whitley. The workforce development board is comprised of representatives of business, education, organized labor, community based organizations, economic development, and other partners, to create a streamlined system that aligns the needs of business, facilitates a thriving workforce and supports regional economies.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Eligible respondents must meet one of the following criteria:

- The One-Stop Operator may be a single entity or multiple entities working together to form a consortium entity. If the consortium of entities is comprised of One-Stop career center partners, it must include a minimum of three One-Stop career center partners as described in 20 CFR 678.400
- A public, private, for-profit, or non-profit organization
- An institution of higher education
- A government agency
- A community based, non-profit organization or intermediary
- Another interested organization or entity which may include a local chamber of commerce or other business organization or a labor organization

Additionally, if the entity that has been disbarred, suspended or otherwise determined to be ineligible to receive funds by an action of any governmental agency; or the entity has not complied with an official order of any agency of the State of Indiana or the United States Department of Labor to repay disallowed costs incurred during its conducted projects or services; or the entity's previous contract(s) with NEINW have been terminated for cause; or the entity's name appears on the State's convicted vendors list; or for any other good and just cause, the entity will not be considered and should not submit a proposal.

## **CONTRACT TERM**

The contract will be a one-year term, renewable for up to three separate one year terms, for a total of four years, beginning on or before July 1, 2020.

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

NEINW defines the basic role of the One-Stop Operator as an entity that will coordinate the service delivery of participating (both required and locally identified) one-stop partners. This coordination shall, at a minimum, include the following responsibilities:

- Performance metric deliverables.
- One stop center workforce management service as well as activities for ongoing continuing quality improvement of deliverable services.
- Establish linkages between all One-Stop partners to review mission and value alignment.
- Facilitate conversations between partners to establish data sharing agreements and performance tracking between partners.
- Convene meetings to build relationship between and among the partners and facilitate conversations to streamline processes and create better efficiencies and effectiveness.
- Support discussions between NEINW and partners regarding infrastructure agreements among partners.
- Develop and assist in execution and maintenance of Memorandum of Understanding or other required documents that comply with partner funding requirements, delivery models and metrics to track objectives.
- Work with NEINW staff to conduct meetings with stakeholders to negotiate service delivery commitments.
- Serve as a facilitator between required One-Stop partners and NEINW to operationalize program coordination activities outlined in MOU.
- Participate in NEINW community or stakeholder strategic meetings related to partners' service delivery needs and design.
- Report quarterly to the NEINW President on progress and specific milestones negotiated via a service contract.

## **ONE-STOP OPERATOR DELIVERABLES**

The One Stop Operator, in collaboration with NEINW, will:

- Document the objectives, delivery model, service offerings and funding streams of all participating required partners.
- Establish a process that defines how the One-Stop partners will coordinate services to refer – customers share data and define common metrics to track the success of the efforts of the One-Stop delivery system.
- Establish a process between partners to articulate continuous improvement principles of plan, do, check, and adjust (PCDA) for the joint efforts identified.

- Participate in NEINW partner strategic meetings relating to program delivery needs and design to ensure the operational delivery of identified strategies.
- Produce monthly reports to include actions taken with respect to each of the deliverables highlighting the metrics, accomplishments, challenges. The One-Stop Operator will meet with NEINW's designee monthly to review activities, plan efforts, and coordinate operational activities to partner efforts.

In accordance with WIOA, a One-Stop Operator may NOT perform the following functions:

- Convene system stakeholders to assist in the development of the local plan;
- Prepare and submit local plans (as required under sec. 107 of WIOA);
- Be responsible for oversight of itself;
- Manage or significantly participate in the competitive selection process for one-stop operators;
- Select or terminate one-stop operators, career services, and youth providers;
- Negotiate local performance accountability measures; and
- Develop and submit budget for activities of the WDB.

This RFP is not seeking a provider of career services within Northeast Indiana Works career centers. Northeast Indiana Works' Service Providers have been designated as the entity to manage and provide career services within the regional workforce development area for the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs.

### **ONE-STOP OPERATOR QUALIFICATIONS**

NEINW seeks an entity that meets the following qualifications:

- Has demonstrated experience working within WIOA policy and regulation
- Has provided similar services in nature and complexity to at least one (1) organization within the last three (3) years
- Has knowledge of and the ability to work with the diverse demographics within the identified 11 county region of EGR3, specifically addressing economic and social factors
- Proven mediation or negotiation experience
- Knowledge of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
- Certificate of Incorporation to conduct business in the state of Indiana

### **TIME AND COMPENSATION**

A defined schedule will be established once an entity has been selected through the request for proposals process. NEINW expects proposing entities to identify anticipated annual costs. A negotiated rate will be agreed upon after selection.

## SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

This is RFP is a solicitation and is not a contract offer of any kind. Entities interested in providing services as described in this RFP must submit responses to NEINW in the following manner:

- Inquiries should be electronically to [eoneal@neinworks.org](mailto:eoneal@neinworks.org). Please type “INQUIRY: OSO” in the subject line.
- Proposals should be submitted electronically to [eoneal@neinworks.org](mailto:eoneal@neinworks.org) by attached documents in a PDF format compatible with Acrobat PDF. Please type “PROPSAL: OSO ENTER BUSINESS NAME” in the subject line.
- Proposals must be submitted by via email no later than 12pm EST on March 27, 2020.
- Any proposal submitted that does not meet the conditions referenced above may be rejected.

## PROCUREMENT TIMELINE (Tentative)

Date	Activities/Events
2/24/2020	RFP made available at on the Northeast Indiana Works (NEINW) website: <a href="http://www.neinworks.org">www.neinworks.org</a>
2/24/2020 – 3/18/2020	Question and Answer period: Questions must be submitted via email at: <a href="mailto:eoneal@neinworks.org">eoneal@neinworks.org</a> . <b>Please type “INQUIRY: OSO” in the subject line.</b> Response to all questions will be made available on the NEINW website: <a href="http://www.neinworks.org">www.neinworks.org</a>
3/27/2020	<b>Electronic RFP responses are to be submitted in PDF format</b> version compatible Acrobat PDF. Email containing proposal <b>must be received by 12:00 PM EST.</b>
3/27/2020 – 5/1/2020	Responses reviewed and scored; interviews conducted if needed
5/15/2020	Final determination of recommended entity
5/15/2020 – 6/30/2020	Negotiation with the recommended entity
7/1/2020	Contract begins

## PROPOSAL FORMAT AND CONTENT

Proposals should adhere to the following format outlined below:

All proposals must be complete and signed using the provided documents. The proposal shall be signed by an authorized individual or official of an organization. For proposals from organizations, the proposal shall also provide the following information: name, title, address, and telephone number of individual(s) with authority to negotiate and contractually bind the proposing entity, and the name of the person who may be contacted during the period of proposal evaluation if different from the signatory official. Responses to the RFP should include the following information in this order:

1. Cover letter that includes a statement that the firm understands the scope of the services being requested and their commitment to providing services stated in the proposal.
2. A narrative outlining the proposed approach for One-Stop Operator services

3. A 1-2 page budget narrative along with Budget, Attachment A
4. Additional Information: Please include any additional information considered essential to your response

Responses should be submitted on 8.5" x 11" paper, in a minimum of 12-point font size and single spaced. Responses shall not exceed 20 pages in length, excluding attachments.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated based on the criteria outlined below:

**(30 Points)** Proposer identified a clear strategy on how they will sufficiently address expected One-Stop Operator deliverables. Proposer statement regarding how they will accomplish each deliverable includes the following elements:

- Development of required memorandum of understanding that includes objectives, process maps, data sharing, common metrics and continuous improvement between partners
- Development of a one-stop partner referral plan
- Proposed process for developing a participant referral system for each one-stop partner
- Facilitation of ongoing one-stop partner meetings
- Identify the process of how partner services will be identified and delivered through the one-stop system
- Articulated strategy of how the requirements will be accomplished

**(30 Points)** Proposer sufficiently addressed their demonstrated knowledge of WIOA, operation of state or federal workforce programs, and one or more required partners. Proposer statements of their knowledge includes the following elements:

- Identifies other projects, assignment or work that involved WIOA
- Provides information on past involvement of one or more required partner programs
- Has conveyed an understanding of federal guidance and resources available
- Proven understanding of WIOA intention to collaborate
- Articulated comprehension of state and federal metrics

**(20 Points)** Proposer has sufficient qualifications to conduct the scope of services and satisfy all requested requirements to fulfill the role of a One-Stop Operator. Proposer statement of their qualifications includes the following elements:

- Identifies examples of facilitation of distinct groups to gain consensus
- States how the proposer will work with all 11 counties
- Provides expertise of various demographics in the local operation area
- Expressed skill in mediation or negotiation
- A listing of organizations to which similar or like services have been provided within the last three years

**(20 Points)** Proposer compensation is reasonable according to their qualifications. Proposer statement on compensation includes the following elements:

- Proposer's cost seems reasonable within current business environment
- Proposer's background is clearly identified
- Profit is separately stated if proposer is a for-profit entity
- Proposer is agreeable to potential negotiation

**TOTAL 100**

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

1. A Bidder or its principals shall be in good standing, not debarred or suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or otherwise excluded from entering into a financial agreement of federal or state funds.
2. Local, small, minority and women owned businesses and labor surplus area firms are encouraged to respond and shall not be discriminated against.
3. NEINW is an equal opportunity employer. All Bidders shall certify the same.
4. The Bidder certifies and agrees that it will provide and maintain a drug-free workplace.
5. Issuance of the Request for Proposals does not commit NEINW to award a contract, to pay costs associated with proposal development or to procure or contract for goods and/or services. Payment for services will be negotiated.
6. NEINW reserves the right to reject any and all proposals if it is in the best interest of NEINW to do so and waive any minor informalities or irregularities in the RFP process. NEINW shall be the sole judge of these irregularities.
7. For the top-ranked Bidder(s) selected, references or other points of contact as necessary will be made and any comments will be used to complete the evaluation process. NEINW reserves the right to enter into negotiations with one or more Bidders as a result of the RFP evaluation process and enter into a best and final negotiation with one or more of the Bidders.
8. NEINW will consider non-responsive any submittal for which critical information is omitted, lacking or represents a major deviation from the RFP.
9. Proposals received after the due date and time may be considered non-responsive and may not be reviewed or evaluated.

10. Bidders have the right to appeal any action or decision related to this RFP. Appeals will be reviewed and investigated by NEINW. Bidders wishing to make a formal appeal must provide, in writing, their specific rationale for the appeal. All written appeals must be submitted to Kathleen Randolph, President and CEO of NEINW, via email to [KRandolph@NEINWorks.org](mailto:KRandolph@NEINWorks.org).
11. Unless specifically requested by NEINW, changes and/or amendments to the originally submitted proposal may not be considered. In addition, NEINW reserves the right to: (1) amend or withdraw this RFP at any time, (2) reject any and all proposals, (3) negotiate with Bidders as required, and (4) re-issue this RFP if necessary.
12. By submitting a proposal, the bidder is certifying either no real or apparent conflict of interest exists in carrying out the scope of work described, or where conflict(s) of interest may exist; such potential conflicts will be clearly disclosed in the proposal.