

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

**RFP NUMBER
NW145 # 16-04**

FOR

WIOA PROGRAM SERVICES FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH

ISSUE DATE

March 28, 2017

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS:

April 21, 2017

SUBMIT PROPOSALS TO:

**WEST CENTRAL JOB PARTNERSHIP, INC.
217 West State Street, 3rd Floor
Sharon, PA 16146
Attention: Program Director
724-347-7855**



An Equal Opportunity Employer
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities

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Section 1 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Introduction

West Central Job Partnership, Inc (WCJP) Administrative Division is issuing this Request For Proposal (RFP) to solicit innovative workforce development programs primarily for out-of-school youth participants to operate under the provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). There may be occasions when the provider will be required to serve participants enrolled in other programs, such as WIOA Adult and Dislocated Workers, Employment And Retention Network (EARN), and other programs funded by Federal and State awards.

This RFP aims to receive a wide variety of innovative proposals that best meet the needs of out-of-school youth in the workforce development system within the West Central Workforce Development Area (WDA).

1.1 Purpose

This RFP solicits proposals designed for the successful bidder to provide a variety of services and activities at the PA CareerLink® locations in Lawrence and Mercer Counties. Eligible participants will be scheduled by their WCJP case managers to attend various activities designed to provide: increased literacy and numeracy levels; instruction that leads to taking and passing the GED; and, an increase in job readiness skills which leads to the ACT recognized WorkKeys® certification and finally employment. All activities will be geared toward the expected outcomes of: placement of eligible participants into post-secondary education and training to learn new occupational skills; and/or placement directly into employment with family sustaining wages.

1.2 Issuing Agency

This RFP is issued by WCJP Administrative Division, 217 West State Street – Third Floor, Sharon, PA 16146. WCJP is a private non-profit corporation created by the elected or appointed Commissioners for both Lawrence County and Mercer County and chartered under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The County Commissioners, by joint resolution, designated WCJP as the grant recipient and fiscal agent for all WIOA funds, United States Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration (USDOL/ETA) funds, Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) funds and private foundations made available to the West Central WDA, which consists of Lawrence and Mercer Counties.

With 31 years of experience in workforce development, WCJP continues to provide and improve job training services, including job counseling and assessment, individual training accounts, and on the job training to residents of Lawrence and Mercer Counties.

WCJP will administer the contract and will be responsible for supervision of all activities of the selected vendor.

1.3 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

On July 22, 2014, President Obama signed WIOA into law, which supersedes the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA). Key changes under WIOA for serving youth include increasing the minimum percentage of funds to be spent on OSY from 30% to at least 75%, an increased focus on work-based learning and career pathways, extending the out-of-school age limit from 21 to 24 years, and streamlining the eligibility process.

These changes are consistent with DOL's commitment to providing high-quality services for disconnected youth and young adults; beginning with career exploration and guidance, continued support for educational attainment, opportunities for skills training in in-demand industries, apprenticeships and culminating with a good job along a career pathway, enrollment in post-secondary education, or a Registered Apprenticeship.

The [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \[Public Law 113-128\]](#) requires the establishment of a one-stop delivery system (known in Pennsylvania as the PA CareerLink®) within the local WDA. Within each PA CareerLink®, partnering agencies unify numerous training, education, and employment programs into a single, customer-friendly system to serve job seekers/workers and the business community.

The CareerLink® system will benefit the customer by having multiple agency services and/or referrals available in one location rather than the need to travel to the various partner agencies in the county. Successful responses will assure WCJP that the successful bidder will become a partner of the PA CareerLink® in Lawrence and/or Mercer Counties during the contract period. All responses to this RFP must coordinate and provide linkage to the following goals of the PA CareerLinks®:

- * Universality – Efficient and timely access to a wide variety of job-seeking and employment services provided to any job seeker on the basis of need.
- * Integration – A seamless, functional coordination of services through joint development of the system's vision, goals, service strategies, resource allocation and team-based management.
- * Customer Choice – Customers can choose where and how they get information and services. Information and guidance is available to help them make choices, such as performance information on training programs.
- * Accountability – Performance-driven, outcome based system that uses data collection, customer feedback and other tools to assess program success.

Although the initial award will be for a 12-month period, bidders may design a multi-year program with longer-term interventions that provide for continuous performance improvement. Based on successful performance, timeliness of start-up and quality of service, WCJP and the contractor will have the option, depending on future funding and satisfactory performance, to negotiate two additional one year contracts.

1.4 Overview of the Project

The local WDA consists of Lawrence County and Mercer County, Pennsylvania. The geographical area to be served by the proposed project must include **both** counties. The successful bidder(s) to this RFP will locate staff and operate all program activities in the PA CareerLink® locations:

- PA CareerLink® Lawrence County, 102 Margaret Street, New Castle, PA 16101; and
- PA CareerLink® Mercer County, 217 West State Street, Sharon, PA 16146.

The PA CareerLink® location in Lawrence County is open from 8:30 am until 4:30 pm Monday – Wednesday and Friday and from 10:00 am until 4:30 pm on Thursday. The PA CareerLink® location in Mercer County is open from 8:00 am until 4:30 pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and from 10 am until 4:30 pm on Wednesday.

The successful bidder will be expected to provide services to eligible individuals who are 16 years of age or older and meet the local, state, and federal WIOA Out-of-School Youth eligibility definition, as well as Adult, Dislocated Worker and EARN eligible individuals referred by WCJP staff. The goal is to provide workforce development activities that increase employment opportunities and retention for job seeking customers. All activities must be open entry/open exit and must be available on a year-round basis. All activities should be designed to assist eligible individuals improve their marketability to reenter employment as quickly as possible.

1.5 Procurement Timetable

DATE	EVENT/ACTIVITY
March 28, 2017	WCJP releases RFP to potential bidders; Q&A period opens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RFP becomes active - Bidders may submit inquiries for RFP clarification
April 4, 2017	Bidder Question period closes, 12:00 noon (for inquiries on RFP clarification) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No further inquiries for RFP clarification will be accepted
April 6, 2017	WCJP provides final vendor question & answer document on wcjp.org (estimated)
April 21, 2017	Deadline for bidders to submit proposals to WCJP, no later than 12:00 noon. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This is the proposal opening date, beginning the WCJP process of proposal review.
May 18, 2017	WCJP issues award notification letter (estimated) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bidders that submitted proposals in response to this RFP will be sent letters stating whether their proposal was accepted for the award.
July 1, 2017	Contract begin date– (estimated, following notification of all contractual and funding approvals)
June 30, 2018	Contract end date – All work must be satisfactorily completed by these dates and approved by WCJP. Based on performance and availability of funding, contracts may be eligible for optional yearly extensions for a second and third year.

All times shown are Eastern Standard Time (EST). West Central Job Partnership reserves the right to adjust the schedule if determined to be in the best interest of WCJP or to extend the published deadline. It is the bidders' responsibility to check WCJP's website at www.wcjp.org for changes to the procurement schedule and/or deadline to submit proposals.

1.6 Email Question & Answer Period; RFP Clarification Opportunity

Potential bidders may ask clarifying questions regarding this RFP via email during the Q&A Period as outlined in [Section 1.5 Procurement Timetable](#). To ask a question, potential bidders must prepare the question in writing and forward it to WCJP's Program Director at ddonahue@wcjp.org. The potential bidder must also include the name of the representative of the potential bidder, the company name, the representative's email address and business phone number. WCJP may, at its option, disregard any questions which do not appropriately reference an RFP provision or location, or which do not include identification for the originator of the question.

WCJP responses to all questions asked via email will be compiled into one document and posted to WCJP's website at www.wcjp.org. **Bidders will be responsible to check the website for answers to questions.** Bidder proposals in response to this RFP must take into account any information communicated by WCJP in the Final Q&A Document for the RFP.

There is an established time period for the bidder Q&A process (as outlined in [Section 1.5 Procurement Timetable](#)). WCJP will only answer those questions submitted within the stated time frame for submission of bidder questions, and which pertain to issues of RFP clarity, and which are not requests for public information. **WCJP is under no obligation to acknowledge questions submitted through the Q&A process if those questions are not in accordance with these instructions.**

Should potential bidders experience technical difficulties in submitting email as outlined above, they may contact the WCJP Office at (724) 347-7855 Extension 312 for guidance.

Section 2 BIDDER EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

Bidders' proposals must address all the following minimum qualifications as well as organizational and staff experience and capabilities:

2.1 Mandatory Bidder Qualifications

WCJP will only consider proposals from bidders with a minimum of 3 years experience developing and implementing programs similar to those outlined in Section 3 of this RFP. Providers must be able to provide staff to cover sickness and vacations of staff. It is the responsibility of the successful bidder to train new staff on the design, processes and functions related to contracted services.

2.2 Organizational Experience and Capabilities

In order to be considered for the contract expected to result from this RFP, WCJP requires that interested bidders provide names and contact information for at least three entities for which they have performed similar projects in the past 3 years.

2.3 Staff Experience and Capabilities

The bidder must demonstrate significant expertise by assigning staff to key leadership roles for this project. The vendor must, at minimum, identify by position and by name those staff they consider key to the project's success and include resume(s) of key staff expected to work on the project. Provide a current organizational chart (including any subcontractors) and specify the key management and administrative personnel who will be assigned to this project. All staff working directly with youth under 18 years of age will be required to obtain and provide copies of the following clearances to WCJP:

- ✓ Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance;
- ✓ Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check; and
- ✓ Federal Bureau of Investigation Criminal Background Check.

Bidders who do not meet all of the above experience and qualifications will be disqualified from further consideration for the contract award.

Section 3 PROGRAM COMPONENTS AND SCOPE OF WORK

There are two distinct program components to be operated that all potential bidders need to include in their proposals:

1. Literacy/Numeracy – instruction to increase individuals reading and/or math levels to meet levels needed to apply for Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). This component also includes General Educational Diploma (GED) instruction that will result in individuals who reach a proficiency level to be able to pass the GED test.
2. Work Readiness Skills – this component includes activities and/or curriculum that prepare individuals to acquire or enhance the knowledge and skills needed to obtain and retain employment. This component includes facilitation of the Worldwide Interactive Network® (WIN®) curriculum to individuals to reach a proficiency level needed to be successful on the WorkKeys® assessment.

All bidders must be willing to operate both program components to be considered for approval. Program components will operate under one contract from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018 with options for a second and third year extension based on satisfactory performance and availability of funding.

3.1 Literacy/Numeracy Component

Each participant, who is assessed as deficient in basic skills or who needs to increase skill levels to pursue higher education, must have the opportunity to take part in activities designed to remedy those deficiencies and/or increase their skill levels.

The proposal must describe the strategies to increase literacy and numeracy gains and provide or connect youth to academic instruction who are functioning behind their grade level and increase their understanding of how academic skills acquired in the classroom are applied in the workplace. Pre- and post-tests must be completed to determine skill attainment levels utilizing the following Commonwealth approved assessment tools: ABLÉ; TABE (9-10). Documentation of reading and math grade levels may also be obtained from the school district in which an out-of-school youth was enrolled as long as the test(s) were administered within the previous six months.

This component must enhance a participant's abilities to read, write, and speak English and to compute and solve mathematical problems to a level of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society. Instructional methodologies employed should include an appropriate mix of class-size training, individual tutoring and self-directed, computer assisted, study.

Participants in such activities are expected to:

- Increase test scores in vocabulary, reading comprehension, mathematical computation, mathematical concepts and applications, language mechanics, language expression, and spelling;
and
- Demonstrate the ability to apply basic mathematical and communications skills correctly in the performance of specific occupation related tasks or in common workplace situations.

Literacy/Numeracy training must include both pre- and post-testing to determine its success. Written progress reports, including all pre-and post-test results, must be maintained on file in the participant's individual case record.

Each participant's progress in attaining learning objectives must be assessed after a minimum of twelve (12) hours of instruction. The minimal average level of gains for participants assessed as basic skills deficient must be at least one grade level as measured by the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE).

The Literacy/Numeracy Component must also include General Educational Development (GED) instruction. Each participant, who is a school dropout, must have the opportunity to take part in activities leading to the attainment of a GED. This activity must develop or enhance the subject-matter competencies needed to prepare a participant to successfully complete the General Equivalency Diploma examination.

Instructional methodologies employed should include an appropriate mix of class-size training, individual tutoring and self-directed, computer assisted study. Participants in General Educational Development activities are expected to pass the GED examination and obtain a GED. GED instruction must include both pre- and post-testing to determine its success. Written progress reports, including all pre- and post-test results, must be maintained on file in the participant's individual case record.

Each participant's progress in attaining learning objectives must be assessed after a minimum of twelve (12) hours of instruction. The minimal level of gains for participants who are school dropouts must be an average of three (3) points across sub-tests using the Practice GED Test as a pre-test and either the Practice GED or the GED Test itself as a post-test.

Historically, there has not been a local need for English as a Second Language (ESL) as a component in this project. The proposal, however, should include a discussion of the strategies that would be employed by the contractor should a participant lack proficiency in the English language.

NOTE: Instructor(s) in the Literacy/Numeracy component must have baccalaureate degrees, PA certification as teachers, Acts 33/34 and FBI clearances.

3.2 Work Readiness Skills Component

The Work Readiness component includes activities and/or curriculum that prepare individuals to acquire or enhance the knowledge and skills needed to obtain and retain employment. The proposal must include activities designed to permit participants to acquire knowledge of fundamental employment rules and employer expectations and to demonstrate the application of employability skills. Activities may include, but are not limited to: Self Assessment - assessment of what the individuals' motivating factors are; Development of a job search plan; Development of individual employment plans; Goal setting in relation to job search activities; Communication/interviewing skills; On the job conduct/success; How to stay positive and not give up; Résumé and cover letter development; Interview preparation; Determining personal wage value; Application preparation and submission – electronic and paper; Emerging job market; Cross walking current skills to growing occupations; Overcoming hurdles to finding and keeping a job; and Dress for success. Work Readiness Skills also includes facilitation of the Worldwide Information Network (WIN®) curriculum and proctoring the ACT sponsored WorkKeys® testing already in operation at each of the PA CareerLink® sites in the LWDA.

The Work Readiness component must also include life skill activities for participants determined to be in need and referred by case managers. Life skill activities may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Interpersonal Skills (e.g., determining priorities and decision making, problem solving,

anger management, self-esteem building, coping with adversity, resisting drug use influences from the media and peer, etc.).

- b. Intra personal Social Skills (e.g., understanding group dynamics, working as a team member, organizing and leading a team, dealing with diversity, accepting and benefitting from constructive criticism, etc.).

NOTE: Instructor(s) in the Work Readiness component must have baccalaureate degrees, PA certification as teachers, Acts 33/34 and FBI clearances.

Section 4 PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

It is expected that all WIOA and EARN funded programs meet and/or contribute to the achievement of the negotiated performance levels of the WIOA Common Performance Measures. Eighty percent (80%) of all participants will achieve one or more of the following measurable objectives:

1. Increase their tested proficiency in reading and/or mathematics by at least one full grade level, and/or
2. Pass the GED Examination, and/or
3. Satisfactorily complete the WIN® post-test, and/or
4. Obtain a National Career Readiness Certificate®.

Section 5 CONDITIONS AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Through this section of the RFP, WCJP notifies bidders seeking award of a contract of certain conditions and requirements which may affect their eligibility or willingness to participate in any procurement process; or their eligibility to be awarded a contract; and of requirements that would be in effect should they be awarded a contract.

5.1 Interview

Bidders submitting proposals may be required to participate in an in-depth interview as part of the evaluation process. The interview, if necessary, may include individuals from WCJP, members of the Review Committee, and/or Youth Standing Committee members, as appropriate. WCJP reserves the right to select from responding bidders for interviews and may not interview all bidders submitting proposals. The bidder shall bear all costs of any scheduled interview.

5.2 Start Work Date

The selected bidders must be able to begin work no later than the start date of the contract as stated in [Section 1.5 Procurement Timetable](#). **Any work begun by the successful bidder prior to the start of the contract will NOT be reimbursable by WCJP.**

5.3 Proposal Costs

Costs incurred in the preparation of this proposal are to be borne by the bidder, and WCJP will not contribute in any way to the costs of the preparation. Any costs associated with interviews will also be borne by the bidder and will not be WCJP's responsibility (See [5.1 Interview](#)).

5.4 Trade Secrets prohibition: Public Information Disclaimer

Bidders are prohibited from including any trade secret information in their proposals in response to any WCJP procurement efforts. WCJP shall consider all proposals voluntarily submitted and shall be free of trade secrets and such proposals shall, in their entirety, be made a part of the public record.

All proposals and any other documents submitted to WCJP in response to this RFP shall become the property of WCJP. This RFP and, after formal announcement by WCJP of the results of the RFP project (e.g., notices provided to responding bidders regarding bidder selection, notice of project cancellation, etc.), any proposals submitted in response to the RFP are deemed to be public records. For purposes of this section, “proposal” shall mean both the research and the proposal budgets (if opened by WCJP) submitted by the bidder, any attachments, addenda, appendices, or sample products.

Any proposals submitted in response to this or any WCJP RFP which make claims of trade secret information shall be disqualified from consideration immediately upon determination that such unallowable claim has been made.

5.5 Conditions Governing the Response

1. No funds are committed because of and no contract is implied by the advertisement of issuance of the RFP or by the acceptance or evaluation of any response to this RFP.
2. If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, an amendment will be posted on WCJP’s website at www.wcjp.org. It is the bidder’s responsibility to check the website for amendments prior to the submission of a proposal.
3. The contents of any proposal submitted become contractual obligations, if a contract is entered into.
4. Proposals that do not follow the format prescribed in [Section 6](#) of this RFP will not be considered.
5. Proposals should be prepared simply and economically as well as providing a straightforward, concise description of the services to be provided and the provider’s ability or potentiality to perform those services satisfactorily. Elaborate presentations, beyond that sufficient to produce a complete and effective proposal, are not desired.
6. Proposals sent by mail must be received no later than the time and date specified in the Procurement Timetable in this RFP. Hand delivered proposals must be received no later than the time and date specified in the timetable and will be time and date stamped when delivered. Late proposals will not be considered, regardless of the reason.
7. The proposal must be separated into two parts, a TECHNICAL PLAN and a FINANCIAL PLAN. The TECHNICAL PLAN and the FINANCIAL PLAN must be submitted in separate packages that are glued, taped, stapled, or otherwise physically closed securely. The outside of each package must be clearly and prominently labeled indicating whether it contains the TECHNICAL PLAN or the FINANCIAL PLAN and showing the RFP Number.
8. All cost or price data related to the proposal must be kept separate from the TECHNICAL PLAN. Failure to meet this requirement will result in automatic disqualification of the proposal.
9. An official authorized to bind the entity submitting the proposal to its provisions must sign the proposal.
10. The proposal must remain valid for a period of at least ninety (90) calendar days from the date of submission.
11. The qualifications of the entity submitting the proposal and all information and assurances provided in the proposal are subject to verification by the issuing agency.

12. The contents of proposals submitted in response to an RFP remain confidential until the proposal is mutually agreed upon and becomes part of a duly executed contract.
13. The primary consideration in the selection process will be the submitting entity's demonstrated ability or potentiality to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of this RFP and any resultant contract.
14. Specific aspects of a proposal may require clarification during the evaluation process. All changes, however, must be in the nature of clarification; and, proposals may not be materially altered nor added to during the evaluation process.
15. All proposals received become the property of West Central Job Partnership, Inc. and will not be returned.

5.6 Subcontractor Identification

Any bidder proposing to use a subcontractor for any part of the work described in the RFP must clearly identify the subcontractor and their tasks in their proposal. The proposal must include a letter from the proposed subcontractor(s), signed by a person authorized to legally bind the subcontractor, indicating the following:

1. The subcontractor's legal status, federal tax ID number, and principle business address;
2. The name, phone number, fax number, and email address of a person who is authorized to legally bind the subcontractor to contractual obligations;
3. A complete description of the work the subcontractor will do;
4. A commitment to do the work, if the bidder is selected;
5. A statement that the subcontractor has read and understands the RFP, the nature of the work, and the requirements of the RFP.

**If subcontractors are not known at the time of the proposal submission – bidders must obtain prior written approval from WCJP to subcontract any contracted program services.

Successful bidders will be required to monitor the performance of subcontractors at regular intervals. The review must include programmatic and fiscal aspects of the services delivered by the subcontractor. Administrative reviews must be conducted at least once during the contracted period. Successful bidders must maintain written monitoring reports of subcontractor reviews.

5.7 Monitoring of Contracts

WCJP and/or any funding source agency may perform on-site visits; both announced and unannounced, to monitor successful bidders performance and to determine if the terms and conditions of the contract are being met. For the purpose of verification, the successful bidder must permit authorized agents of WCJP and/or funding agency staff to inspect all documents and records pertaining to the contracted services and to interview the successful bidder's staff performing said services.

5.8 Termination of Contracts

All contracts and subcontracts pertaining to this RFP will contain a termination clause that allows termination for cause (*e.g.*, unacceptable contractor performance), lack of an appropriation of funds, and for convenience by the issuing agency, if appropriate. This clause will include the manner by which the termination will be effected and the basis for settlement.

5.9 Work Location

Proposals must explicitly state the location(s) [city, state/province/country] where work described in this RFP would be performed, whether by the successful bidder or by any subcontractors.

5.10 Bidder Selection Restriction

Any bidder deemed not responsible, or submitting a proposal deemed not to be responsive to the terms of this RFP, shall not be awarded the resulting contract.

5.11 Required Bidder Information

WCJP requires the following information on bidders who submit proposals in response to any procurement opportunity in order to facilitate the development of the contract with the successful bidder:

1. Bidder's Name (legal name of the bidder – person or organization – to whom contract payments would be made).
2. Bidder's Federal Tax ID Number or Social Security Number
3. Bidder's Corporate Address
4. Bidder Remittance Address (if different from the Corporate Address)
5. The name, title, address, phone number and email of the bidder's representative/contact person authorized to answer questions on the proposal and address contractual issues.

Bidders must provide the required information on their letterhead as the opening page of their proposal. It is mandatory that the information provided is certified with an original signature from a person with authority to represent the bidder.

WCJP reserves the right to reject any proposal if this information is not provided fully, accurately, and by the deadline.

5.12 Communication Prohibitions

From the issuance date of this RFP until an actual contract is awarded to a bidder, there may be no communication concerning the RFP between any bidder that expects to submit a proposal and any employee of WCJP in the issuing office, or any other WCJP employee, or any other individual regardless of their employment status, who is in any way involved in the development of the RFP or the selection of the successful bidder. Bidders are not entitled to information about the amount of money available for the contract.

The only exceptions to this prohibition are as follows:

1. Communication conducted pursuant to the [Procurement Timetable](#) and [Email Q&A Period](#);
2. As necessary in any pre-existing or on-going business relationship between WCJP and any bidder that could submit a proposal in response to this RFP;
3. As part of any bidder interview process or proposal clarification process initiated by WCJP, which WCJP deems necessary in order to make a final selection;
4. If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, WCJP will post those revisions, amendments, etc. to the WCJP website at www.wcjp.org; and
5. Any request for public record information made through the WCJP Office.

WCJP is not responsible for the accuracy of any information regarding this RFP that was obtained or gathered through a source other than the Q&A process described in this RFP. Any attempts at prohibited communications by bidders may result in the disqualification of those bidders' proposals.

Section 6 PROPOSAL FORMAT & SUBMISSION

6.1 Proposal Submission Information

WCJP requires proposal submission in both paper and electronic format. The proposal must be prepared and submitted in accordance with instructions found in this Section. The proposal must be comprised of:

6 paper copies - One original and five copies **and** one CD or flash drive copy of the TECHNICAL PLAN; (NOTE: only one copy of the required attachments in Section IV of [6.2.1](#) needs to be submitted) **AND**

6 paper copies - One original and five copies **and** one CD or flash drive copy of the FINANCIAL PLAN. The bidder must submit the Financial Plan in a separate, sealed envelope/package labeled: **“NOTE: DO NOT OPEN. RFP PROPOSAL FINANCIAL PLAN ENCLOSED FOR TECHNICAL PLAN, SUBMITTED BY [BIDDER’S NAME HERE].”**

The original and each copy must be clearly and prominently labeled indicating whether it is a TECHNICAL PLAN or a FINANCIAL PLAN and showing the RFP Number.

Bidder’s total proposal submissions (both the Technical and Financial Plans and all required copies) must be received by WCJP complete no later than 12:00 noon on the date indicated in the [Procurement Timetable](#). Faxed or e-mailed submissions will not be accepted.

Proposals must be addressed to:
West Central Job Partnership
217 West State Street – Third Floor
Sharon, PA 16146
Attn: Program Director

Bidders’ original Technical Plan proposal and Financial Plan (proposed budget) must contain all the information and documents specified in [Section 6.2 Format for Organization of the Proposal](#). All copies (both paper and CD) of the original proposal must include copies of ALL information, documents and pages in the original proposal (with exception of attachments noted in Section IV).

The CD or flash drive copy of the Technical Plan proposal must include all components of the Technical Plan proposal, including any required or voluntary attachments to it. The CD or flash drive copy of the Financial Plan must include all budgetary items that are necessary to complete the requested services including explanations of grouped amounts on budget worksheet. **The CD or flash drive containing the Financial Plan must be submitted in the sealed envelope containing the hardcopy Financial Plan.** CD or flash drives must be labeled with the bidder’s name, the RFP name and number, and the proposal submission date of proposal due date, at minimum. The requested CDs or flash drives will be used by WCJP for archiving purposes and for fulfillment of Public Records Requests, and failure to include them or to properly label them may, at WCJP’s discretion, result in the rejection of the bidder from any consideration. ***All information submitted on CD or flash drive must be either in PDF or Microsoft Office® formats. No other formats will be accepted.***

All proposal submissions must be **RECEIVED**, complete, at the specified address, via mail or hand delivery by the specified date and time. Materials received separately from a bidder’s proposal submission (*e.g.* letters of recommendation from past customers of the bidder’s services) will not be added to the proposal nor considered in the review and scoring process. Materials received after the date and

time as stated on the Procurement Timetable will not be included in any previous submissions, not will be considered. WCJP is not responsible for proposals incorrectly addressed or for proposals delivered to any location other than the address specified above. No confirmation of mailed proposals will be provided.

Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the bidder of the conditions contained in this RFP, unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract between WCJP and the bidder selected. The successful bidder will be expected to enter into contract negotiations with WCJP. A Master Agreement will be executed by and between WCJP and the successful bidder, which sets forth the standard conditions and requirements that each party formally agrees to accept and by which each party agrees to be bound. Information contained within the WCJP Master Agreement can be found in **Appendix A**.

6.2 Format for Organization of the Proposal

6.2.1 Technical Proposal Organization

Proposals must contain the following components in the order described below. Any other information thought to be relevant, but not applicable to a specific RFP section number/letter must be provided as an appendix to the proposal and so marked. WCJP reserves the right not to review submitted appendices which includes information/materials not required in the RFP. All pages beyond **Section I** below shall be sequentially numbered.

The bidders' proposal **must contain the following components**, at a minimum. Wherever appropriate, sections/portions of the bidder proposal make reference by section number/letter to those RFP requirements to which they correspond.

Bidders **must** organize their proposals in the following order:

Section I

- Transmittal Letter (**Appendix B** of this RFP)
- Vendor Required Information ([Section 5.11](#) of this RFP)

Section II

Management Summary - In a one-page summary, present a clear and concise description of your proposed project. Provide the evaluators with sufficient information to enable them to determine what the project intends to accomplish and how the project will accomplish it.

Section III

- Scope of Work and Specifications of Deliverables ([Section 3](#) of this RFP)
- Prior Experience - Relate prior experience that demonstrates your ability or potentiality to successfully conduct or perform the activities or services proposed.
- If applicable, include a general description of:
 - a. Activities conducted or services provided by you or your organization that are the same or highly similar to those requested and/or
 - b. Your personal or your organization's experience in serving individuals having the same or similar characteristics as the participants described in the RFP.

Provide the names, addresses, and phone numbers of at least three (3) organizations and/or individuals that would be familiar with the quality of your work. If available, you may attach documentation received from other organizations or from former project participants expressing satisfaction with your performance.

Organizational Summary - Describe your organization.

- Indicate the form of organization under which you do business or conduct operations (*e.g.*, a unit of local government; a Federal or state government agency; a local public educational agency; a private or public post-secondary education institution; a labor union, business association, or labor/management organization; a for-profit corporation, partnership, or sole proprietorship; or, a not-for-profit social service organization).
- List the address of the principal administrative or business office.
- Describe the principal purpose of the organization, and list the primary activities in which it routinely engages.
- State the number of years your organization has been engaged in the performance of its primary activities.
- State the total number of persons regularly employed, both hourly and salaried, by your organization.
- Attach an organizational chart that outlines and identifies the management structure of your organization.
- If applicable, list all current licenses, permits, certifications, or accreditations that relate to your organization's purpose and activities.

Section IV - Required Attachments: Only ONE copy of the required attachments in this section need to be included with the original document.

Financial Statement - Submit one complete copy of the most recent certified audit of your financial statements.

~ OR ~

If your financial statements have not been audited, attach a written statement, dated and signed by a certified public accountant, attesting that your internal financial control structure has been examined and noting matters involving the internal control structure, if any, that might reasonably be considered as material weaknesses.

Signatory Authority - If an individual has been authorized to enter into contracts on behalf of a corporation and he or she is not the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, or Assistant Treasurer of the corporation; attach:

(1) A copy of the corporate resolution or by-laws that authorizes the individual to sign on behalf of the corporation **or**

(2) A notarized statement, presented on the organization's letterhead and signed by the President or Vice-President **and** the Secretary or Treasurer of the corporation, authorizing that individual to sign all documents relative to this proposal and all contract agreements and amendments on behalf of the bidder.

** If an individual has been authorized to enter into contracts on behalf of a partnership, attach:

(1) A copy of the minutes of partners' meeting at which the individual was formally authorized to sign on behalf of the partnership **or**

(2) A notarized statement presented on the organization's letterhead authorizing that individual to sign all documents relative to this proposal and all contract agreements and amendments on behalf of the bidder. The statement must indicate if the individual authorized to sign is a general or limited partner and must be signed by all partners

Prospective Contractor Survey – complete and attach the "*Prospective Contractor Survey*" found in **APPENDIX C** of this RFP. Attach the same form completed, signed, and dated by each subcontractor proposed. If applicable, include Pre-Award Review Form **APPENDIX C2**.

If you or any subcontractor are unable to certify to any of the listed conditions attach a detailed explanation of the circumstances which prevent you or your subcontractor from doing so.

Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Eligibility - Attach written certification that your organization is not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, or declared ineligible from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency. Use the "*Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Eligibility*" found in **APPENDIX D**. Attach separate certifications signed by each subcontractor proposed.

Lobbying Certification Form - Attach written certification that no federal appropriated funds have or will be paid for the purpose of lobbying and disclose any and all lobbying activities pursuant to the awarding of this contract. If you have not been involved in any lobbying activities, the "*Lobbying Certification Form*" found in **APPENDIX E1** should be signed, dated, and submitted. **~OR~** If you have been involved in any lobbying activities, complete and submit the "*Lobbying Disclosure Form SF-LLL*" found in **APPENDIX E2**. Attach separate certifications signed by each subcontractor proposed. **Only one certification should be submitted with the proposal.**

Equal Opportunity Assurance - Individuals or organizations submitting proposals to provide Federal- or State-funded activities or services must execute, and submit the "*EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ASSURANCE*" document found in **APPENDIX F**.

6.2.2 Financial Plan Organization

APPENDIX G to this RFP contains a fill in form that must be followed to complete the FINANCIAL PLAN part of the proposal. If there will be no charge to a specific category no amount is required to be entered on that line. For Salaries and Wages, attach additional sheets showing the breakdown for each job position including the percentage being charged to the project.

Costs shown in the Budget Summary must reflect the total actual cost of the proposed project, including both programmatic and administrative costs. Program costs include those expenditures incurred in the performance of services which involve or are of direct benefit to participants in the project.

Administrative costs are those expenditures incurred as a result of managing project resources and which cannot be charged directly to the performance of services to project participants.

There is no prohibition against a for-profit business earning a profit or a not-for-profit organization obtaining program income as a direct result of providing the services requested in this RFP; however, the amount of profit or program income must be clearly identified in the Budget Summary as part of the total project cost. The persons charged with the responsibility for selecting a proposal are required to determine whether or not the amount of profit or program income is reasonable in relation to the overall cost of the project.

The Budget Summary must show the amount of funds to be contributed, in cash or in-kind, by the bidder and/or other entities to pay the total cost of the project, as well as the amount of funds requested from the issuing agency.

The Budget Detail must be completed in its entirety. Even though payment per participant may be negotiated and finalized after a proposal is selected, the persons charged with the responsibility for selecting a proposal are required to determine whether or not the overall price is reasonable. To make this determination, they must have the cost detail showing how the price was determined.

Budget items and the costs thereof are subject to negotiation and modification prior to final award of a contract.

Once a contract between the bidder and WCJP has been executed, the bidder may not incur any project expense which is out of compliance with the approved FINANCIAL PLAN, or any subsequent bilateral modification thereto, without prior approval by the issuing agency. Misappropriation of project funds is grounds for termination of the contract and the return of those funds to WCJP.

Section 7 CRITERIA FOR PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND SELECTION

WCJP will contract with a bidder that best demonstrates the ability to meet requirements as specified in this RFP. Bidders submitting a response will be evaluated based on the capacity and experience demonstrated in the Technical Proposal and Proposal Budget. All proposals will be reviewed and scored by a Proposal Review Team comprised of staff from WCJP and other Steering Committee members. Bidders should not assume that the Proposal Review Team members are familiar with any current or past work projects with WCJP. Proposals containing assumptions, lack of sufficient detail, poor organization, lack of proofreading, and unnecessary use of self-promotional claims will be evaluated accordingly.

Any proposals not meeting the stated requirements within this RFP will not be scored or may be held pending receipt of required clarifications. The Proposal Review Team reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part, received in response to this request. The Proposal Review Team may waive minor defects that are not material when no prejudice will result to the rights of any bidder or to the public.

7.1 General Factors Affecting the Selection of a Contractor

The issuing agency desires to make awards only to an organization or an individual that has the ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of a proposed contract. For this reason, demonstrated performance is the primary consideration in selecting a contractor.

The issuing agency considers the following factors in making written determinations of demonstrated performance:

1. The bidder has an understanding of the needs that the proposal seeks to satisfy and a familiarity with various methods or means for meeting those needs.
2. The bidder's proposal contains defined objectives which relate to meeting identified needs and against which the bidder's performance can be measured and verified.
3. The activities or services proposed by the bidder flow directly from the stated needs and objectives and demonstrate the bidder's capability to meet the project design framework requirements, achieve the project outcomes, and implement the project elements specified in **Section 3.1** of this RFP.
4. The bidder has sufficient staff to perform the required service satisfactorily, and the assigned staff members possess the requisite technical skills needed to perform the work in a satisfactory manner.
5. The bidder, during the life of the project, has control of physical facilities that are appropriate and adequate for the satisfactory performance of the proposed project.
6. The bidder has a past record of conducting or performing similar activities or services successfully.
7. The bidder is a legal entity authorized to conduct business under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and established for the purpose of conducting activities or performing services similar to those requested and is located, staffed, and structured to provide adequate management oversight.
8. The bidder has an accounting and property management system adequate to manage and safeguard the funds, property, and other assets associated with the proposed project.
9. The bidder is in compliance or has provided assurances of compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, orders, and rulings relative to or applicable in the administration and operation of the proposed project.
10. The bidder's proposed cost or price for the conduct of the project is reasonable.

7.2 The Selection Process

1. Upon receipt, each proposal received will undergo an initial review and evaluation by the WCJP staff.

The initial evaluation criteria outlined in **APPENDIX H** will be applied to each proposal received. Proposals not meeting any one of the initial evaluation criteria may be rejected without further review and evaluation.

2. The **TECHNICAL PLAN** from each proposal that meets the initial evaluation criteria will be forwarded to the proposal review team, consisting of members or authorized representatives of the local Workforce Development Board, for review and evaluation using the technical evaluation questions in **APPENDIX I**.

3. To ensure that performance of the provider and not the price or cost of the proposal in the primary consideration in the selection process, the FINANCIAL PLAN from each proposal that meets all of the initial evaluation criteria will be forwarded to WCJP's fiscal staff for separate review and evaluation.
4. WCJP's fiscal staff will reveal their comments and recommendations concerning the FINANCIAL PLAN to the proposal review team after the TECHNICAL PLAN has been reviewed and evaluated.
5. Upon completion of its evaluations and after reviewing the comments and recommendations of the fiscal staff regarding the project cost or price, the proposal review team will determine and present its recommendations regarding the selection of a contractor or contractors to the local Workforce Development Board for final approval or disapproval.
6. At the direction of the local Workforce Development Board, and prior to final award of a contract, issuing agency staff may work with potential contractors to amend or clarify project activities and budgets.

****NOTE: WCJP is under no obligation to issue a contract as a result of this solicitation if, in the opinion of WCJP and the proposal review team, none of the proposals are responsive to the objectives and needs of the agency. WCJP reserves the right to not select any bidder should WCJP decide not to proceed.**

Acronyms

DHS – PA Department of Human Services

EARN – Employment And Retention Network

RFP – Request For Proposal

USDOL/ETA – US Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration

WCJP – West Central Job Partnership, Inc

WDA – Workforce Development Area

WIA – Workforce Investment Act of 1998

WIOA – Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act