



WEST CENTRAL JOB PARTNERSHIP

217 West State Street – Third Floor
Sharon, PA 16146
(724) 347-7855

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
FOR
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity
Act (WIOA)
PA CareerLink[®] Operator**

For the period July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022,
With an option to extend for additional periods based on performance

**ISSUE DATE:
January 19, 2021**

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS:
March 19, 2021**

The enclosed specifications may be modified as required by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, the United States Department of Labor, West Central Workforce Development Area Governing Board and/or the West Central Workforce Development Board without prior notice to proposers.

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) is a registered 501(c)(3) private non-profit organization chartered under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to administer job-training programs in the West Central Workforce Development Area (WDA), consisting of Lawrence and Mercer Counties. The elected or appointed Commissioners for both counties created and by joint resolution designated WCJP as the grant recipient and fiscal agent for all funds made available to the West Central WDA through:

- * The Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA),
- * The United States Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration (USDOL/ETA),
- * PA Labor and Industry (L&I),
- * The PA Department of Human Services (DHS),
- * Other Federal and State funding sources, and
- * Private foundations

Since 1986, the West Central Workforce Development Board (the Board) has been effective in providing oversight for workforce development and continues to provide and improve job training services, including job counseling, skills assessment, individual training accounts, and on the job training to residents of Lawrence and Mercer Counties.

1.1: Background Information

WIOA is the primary federal law governing the funding and provision of workforce development services to jobseekers, employers and other stakeholders in the United States, primarily administered by the USDOL. WIOA is designed to help jobseekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. All qualified parties interested in applying in response to this RFP must be familiar with the goals and requirements of WIOA and all its guidelines; the selected applicant must follow and comply with all rules and regulations therein.

The cornerstone of WIOA is a one-stop service delivery system that meets the needs of dual customers: the jobseeker and the employer. One-stop centers, also known as American Job Centers, include a collection of agencies responsible for providing seamless service delivery to jobseekers and employers. In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the one-stop system is referred to and branded under the name “PA CareerLink®”. Under WIOA, the PA CareerLink® system is measured by its effectiveness, accessibility, and continuous improvement as evidenced by the ability to achieve negotiated performance levels, integrate available services, and meet the workforce development and employment needs of local employers and jobseekers.

WIOA requires local workforce development boards to use a competitive process for the selection of a One-Stop Operator every four years at a minimum. USDOL TEGL 15-16 further defines that the basic role of the One-Stop Operator “...is to coordinate the service delivery of participating one-stop partners and service providers”. Through this RFP, WCJP intends on selecting a One-Stop Operator to provide functional management and general operation of PA CareerLink® centers, while facilitating collaboration and integration between all PA CareerLink® partners to

ensure accessible, seamless, customer-driven services to jobseekers, employers and other stakeholders.

1.2: Purpose of Solicitation

In conjunction with the County Commissioners of Lawrence and Mercer Counties, the West Central Workforce Development Board, is seeking a single organization to act as the one-stop operator, whose chief objectives are: to coordinate the required one-stop partners and service providers throughout the designated delivery area; provide functional supervision for the staff within the area's two comprehensive PA CareerLink® centers; arrange and implement cross information sessions to increase understanding amongst partners as to services available and eligibility awareness; increase employer outreach and job seeker access to expand utilization of one stop services; and raise community awareness of the one-stop system and centers among entities and groups within the jurisdiction. The selected organization will be responsible for: managing customer flow and reporting on center and service usage rates for the center as a whole culminating in the successful attainment of individual program goals as well as those established for the workforce area as a whole; making recommendations to the workforce board One-Stop Operations standing committee regarding remote access points as well as ways and means for continuous improvement regarding centers and system program delivery.

1.3: Overview of the Project

The West Central WDA has two comprehensive one-stop career centers offering the full range of services and seeking to ensure the vision of a prosperous region with a fully employed workforce possessing the tools needed to succeed. The two PA CareerLink® centers within the West Central WDA are located at:

- ≈ PA CareerLink® Lawrence County
 - 101 South Mercer Street, Suite 101, New Castle, PA 16101
 - Hours: 8:30 am - 4:30 pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday
10:00 am - 4:30 pm Thursday

- ≈ PA CareerLink® Mercer County
 - 217 West State Street, Sharon, PA 16146
 - Hours: 8:30 am - 4:30 pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday
10 am - 4:30 pm Wednesday

The PA CareerLink® centers unify numerous training, education, and employment programs into a single, customer-friendly system to serve two customers: job seekers/workers and the business community. The successful bidder will schedule, coordinate and functionally supervise the following workforce development program services offered to our job seeker customers:

1. Programs authorized under Title-I of WIOA
 - Adults
 - Dislocated Workers
 - Youth
 - Job Corps
 - YouthBuild
 - Native American programs
 - Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker

2. Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service Program authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by WIOA Title-III
3. Adult Education and Family Literacy Act authorized under Title-II of WIOA
4. Vocational Rehabilitation program authorized under Title-I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA Title-IV
5. Senior Community Service Employment Program authorized under Title-V of the Older Americans Act of 1965
6. Career and technical education programs at the post-secondary level authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Act of 1965
7. Trade Adjustment Assistance activities authorized under chapter 2 of Title-II of the Trade Act of 1974
8. Jobs for Veterans State Grants programs authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, U.S.C.
9. Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant
10. Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development
11. Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws (in accordance with applicable Federal law)
12. Programs authorized under sec. 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007
13. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) authorized under part A of Title-IV of the Social Security Act, unless exempted by the Governor of PA
14. Other special grant-funded programs/projects, as awarded

Note: The services provided to job seeker customers also serve to ensure that the needs of our business customers are met by aiding them with meeting their workforce and talent needs. The successful bidder will be responsible to schedule, coordinate and manage the activities of an internal Business Service Team comprised of staff from the various PA CareerLink[®] partners who work with the business customers in the local workforce development area.

It is the Bidder's responsibility to be familiar with all laws, statutes, rules, regulations, policies and procedures that are applicable to the above-referenced services. Further, proposals shall sufficiently articulate the Bidder's plan of action to coordinate and manage the career and training services offered by each of the partner program/agencies listed and demonstrate a successful performance track record of the mandated services outcomes.

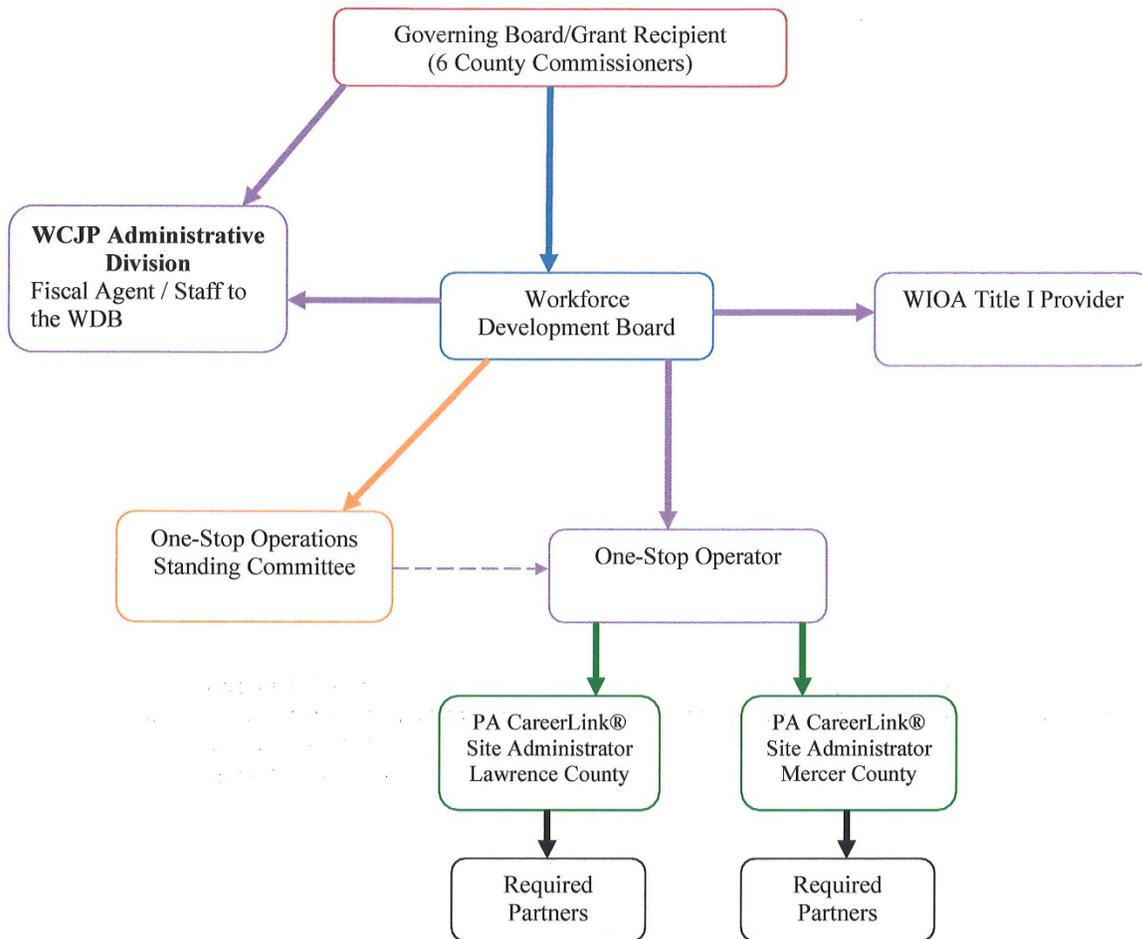
All responses to this RFP must coordinate and provide linkage to the following local goals of the PA CareerLink[®] centers:

- Universality – Efficient and timely access to a wide variety of job-seeking and employment services provided to any job seeker based on 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 are 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.

Operator Oversight – the successful bidder shall accept input from the One-Stop Operations Committee, a standing committee of partner agencies, and report directly to the Workforce Development Board. The chart below depicts the organizational flow of the local workforce development system:

West Central Workforce Development System Organizational Chart



Please note: Each PA CareerLink® center currently has a Site Administrator employed by West Central Job Partnership. The Site Administrators will be retained and will report to the Operator for functional supervision and direction regarding the overall functions of the PA CareerLink® centers. The Site Administrators are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the PA CareerLink® centers and the functional supervision of the partner agency staff. Therefore, it is not expected that the Operator will require full-time staffing to provide overall oversight of the PA CareerLink® centers.

Contract – WCJP expects to negotiate a contract that will outline the Operator’s roles, responsibilities and performance delivery outcomes. The expected performance delivery outcomes for the PA CareerLink® operator will be linked to the federal common measures, job placements, state performance criteria for all partner programs, quality assurance/monitoring results; customer engagement and follow-up; PA CareerLink® partner agency satisfaction surveys; compliance with the PA CareerLink® certification requirements; and other criteria as determined and negotiated between WCJP and the successful bidder.

Due to the nature of the PA CareerLink® partner agencies funding sources, potential changes in legislation and policies, and performance achieved, bidders are advised that any contract awarded under this RFP may be modified to incorporate such changes, adjustments in the delivery system, or any activities provided.

It is the intent of WCJP to award a single contract, not to exceed \$30,000 for a PA CareerLink® Operator to provide the services described herein to both PA CareerLink® centers in the local workforce development area. The initial contract resulting from this solicitation will be from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. The PA CareerLink® Operator will be subject to oversight compliance monitoring for program and outcome compliance. If the measurable outcomes are successfully achieved, WCJP (with the approval of the Chief Local Elected Officials and the Board), will have the option to renew the contract for up to three (3) additional one-year periods as follows:

- Optional Renewal One: July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023
- Optional Renewal Two: July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024
- Optional Renewal Three: July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025

Award Criteria – Proposals will be rated on various factors. The rating factor (# of points awarded to factors) are summarized in the Technical Evaluation found in **Appendix J** of this solicitation.

1.4: Procurement Timetable

DATE	EVENT/ACTIVITY
January 19, 2021	WCJP releases RFP to potential bidders; Q&A period opens - RFP becomes active - Bidders may submit inquiries for RFP clarification
February 01, 2021	Bidder Question period closes, 12:00 noon (for inquiries on RFP clarification) - No further inquiries for RFP clarification will be accepted
February 12, 2021	WCJP provides final vendor question & answer document on wcjp.org (estimated)
March 19, 2021	Deadline for bidders to submit proposals to WCJP, no later than 12:00 noon. - This is the proposal opening date, beginning the WCJP process of proposal review.
June 01, 2021	WCJP issues award notification letter (estimated)

	- Bidders that submitted proposals in response to this RFP will be sent letters stating whether their proposal was accepted for the award.
July 01, 2021	Contract start date – (estimated, following notification of all contractual and funding approvals)
June 30, 2022	Contract end date – All work must be satisfactorily completed by this date and approved by WCJP. Based on performance and availability of funding, contracts may be eligible for optional yearly extensions.

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.

1.5: 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 the [Procurement Timetable](#). To ask a question, potential bidders must prepare the question in writing and forward it to Cynthia Myers at cmyers@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 consider any information communicated by WCJP in the Final Q&A Document for the RFP.

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 Cynthia Myers at (724) 347-7855 Extension 308 for guidance.

Section 2: BIDDER EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

2.1: Bidders Information

Eligible Entities – The PA CareerLink® system operator providing direction to both PA CareerLink® centers must be a single entity (public, private for profit or non-profit).

The types of entity (or entities) that can be deemed eligible as a systems operator include:

- an institution of higher education;
- a community-based organization;
- a non-profit organization;

- a workforce intermediary;
- a government agency;
- a for-profit entity;
- a non-traditional public secondary school; and
- any interested organization that can carry out the duties of the one-stop operator, to include nontraditional entities such as a chamber of commerce, an economic development corporation, or a labor organization.

Restricted Entities – The following entities are currently not eligible to be one-stop operators.

- Elementary and secondary schools, except for a nontraditional public secondary school such as a night school, adult school, or an area career and technical education school.
- Commonwealth agencies, with specific regard to those entities responsible for administering the required programs and activities in the local area.
- The local board (as a whole), local board staff, the fiscal agent, and fiscal agent staff as they are prohibited from providing any workforce-related direct services and/or activities.

To be eligible, bidders must be properly organized in accordance with applicable federal, state or local laws and authorized by the appropriate agency to do business in the Commonwealth of PA. Bidders must have been in business for a minimum of five (5) years prior to the proposal submission. Minority and women-owned and operated businesses are encouraged to apply.

No entity may submit a proposal for this project if: (1) the entity has been debarred or suspended or otherwise determined to be ineligible to receive federal funds by an action of any governmental agency; (2) the entity's previous contract(s) with West Central Job Partnership have been terminated for cause; (3) the entity has not complied with an official order to repay disallowed costs incurred during its conduct of programs or services; or (4) the entity's name appears on the Commonwealth's Department of General Services website or on the Federal System for Award Management (SAM) website.

Bidders shall have a minimum of five (5) years direct experience with, and extensive knowledge of, the federal and local workforce development system and the services and programs associated therewith. Further, bidders shall document an in-depth knowledge of the fiscal, administrative and programmatic requirements of the multiple funding streams utilized by West Central Job Partnership (fiscal agent) and the partners in the PA CareerLink® centers.

2.2: Organizational Experience and Capabilities

In order to be considered for the contract expected to result from this RFP, the bidder must demonstrate significant expertise by assigning staff to the key leadership role for this project. The bidder must, at a minimum, identify by position and by name, the staff for this leadership role.

The bidder shall identify current and/or past experience, if any, as an operational partner in a one-stop center. Bidders should also identify current and/or past experience, if any, in providing direct Career Services as a required or optional partner (list funding stream(s) and direct career services provided). Please list a minimum of three references and include contact information for agencies and individuals who can confirm your past experience.

Bidders understand and agree that WCJP may request information from the references provided, the one-stop center partners and staff, appropriate Board staff, as well as the most recent quality assurance monitoring report to verify the stated Operator and/or direct career service experience.

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

Section 3: SCOPE OF WORK – PROGRAM OVERVIEW

3.1: Scope of Work

Below is a non-inclusive listing of responsibilities to be performed by the **One-Stop Operator**:

- Serve in a manner similar to that of an intermediary with all the one-stop partners;
- Provide a bridge to business services and resources;
- Provide functional supervision for current Site Administrators for coordination of the one-stop partner services at the Center;
- Ensure that customer service standards are met, and that actions are taken as needed to modify approaches at the center to meet standards, notifying the Board of any issues related to partners' adherence to the terms of the MOU or policies that need to be addressed at the Board level;
- Convene a quarterly meeting of the administrative leadership of the MOU partners to review progress and center performance, including discussion of changes in procedures in work assignments at the center as needed;
- Develop and maintain integrated partner relationship with key economic development organizations aligning with growth sectors in the Local Area and Keystone Edge Region. The Operator acts as an ambassador for the one-stop system to the community and region;
- Attend Board meetings and present center reports at each of its meetings regarding services, activities, and performance outcomes at the Centers – formatting of such reports will be approved by the Board prior to the first meeting after the start of the contract;
- Maintain relationships with human services and education organizations in the WDA beyond the partners of the MOU; recruit additional service partners and funding sources as needed in coordination with the Board; and
- Ensure completion of the responsibilities performed by the Site Administrators as listed below.

Below is a non-inclusive listing of responsibilities performed by the **Site Administrators**:

- Coordinate center services to customers via cross-agency teams defined by service functions;
- Hold regular cross-agency staff meetings of partner staff at the center to coordinate services within the structure of the multi-partner MOU between the Board and service partners including both onsite and off-site core partners and other partners essential to the job seeker and business success of the PA CareerLink® and the public workforce system;
- Create and implement a plan, as approved by the Board for marketing center services to the community and to employers;
- Maintain relationships with all training providers in the area on the Approved Eligible Training Provider (ETP) list;

- Continuously assess customer needs via customer feedback mechanisms at the centers and make recommendations to the Board for continuous improvement;
- Ensure that the facilities, activities and partners are implementing a strategy that ensures ongoing compliance with Program Policies and Procedures;
- Recommend, maintain, and retire technological tools and services necessary for the operation of the one-stop centers; and
- Ensure an effective partner referral mechanism is in place for the benefit of individuals and partners' performance. If necessary, recommend referral mechanism criteria to service delivery system stakeholders.

Below is a non-inclusive listing of responsibilities to be performed by **One-Stop Operators in conjunction with Site Administrators**:

- Know and understand the parameters under which the partners provide services and each of the partner's performance measurement goals;
- Track and implement the integrated services structure within the comprehensive PA CareerLink® Centers in Lawrence and Mercer Counties, as designed by the Board, approved by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and enabled via a MOU with all service partners operating at the site;
- Oversee the combined resources committed to the site via the cost sharing agreement of the One-Stop partners; review the budget for the center as approved by the Board;
- Provide participant reporting and data validation functions required by state and federal funding sources and as required by the Board and other partner agencies;
- Maintain a center business plan approved by the Board and report progress toward implementation of the plan as part of regular center reports presented to the Board;
- Provide or obtain training and technical assistance as needed for center staff for core functions;
- Attend and participate in other meetings requested by the Board. The One-Stop Operator must be knowledgeable regarding upcoming community events and assure all appropriate partners are informed and participate;
- Assure compliance with the Department's and local board's one-stop center certification criteria which is essential for receipt of infrastructure funding;
- Assure the Department's 'Non-discrimination Plan' are enacted and maintained, as well as ensuring that relevant equal opportunity and civil rights measures are enforced within the PA CareerLink® centers; and
- Ensure compliance with PA CareerLink® Certification including all Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations.

NOTE: While the Scope of Work and the responsibilities listed may seem daunting, bidders must realize that there is a Site Administrator in each PA CareerLink® center to manage and functionally supervise the day-to-day activities and services offered by the partner agencies' services.

3.2: Program Requirements

Populations Served and Resources

The Operator must make resources available for Lawrence and Mercer County residents who need help transitioning from unemployment and/or underemployment to gainful employment through partner agencies:

- Individual Assessments
- Case management
- Workshops: i.e., Resume Preparation
- Soft skills education: i.e., employer expectations
- Financial supports (eligibility information for specific programs)
- Referral to available resources
- Program participation documentation for individuals with mandated reporting requirements
- Labor Market Information

The successful applicant must demonstrate knowledge of best practices and describe the approach that will be taken for implementation locally in the following key focus areas:

Staff Experience and Capacity Building

Successful bidder must be willing to keep the current site administrators for each of the PA CareerLink® centers within the WDA. WCJP will continue to be the employer of record for these positions. Respondents must identify the individual by name and title that would be placed in the position of operator and the amount of the individuals' time that would be required to oversee both PA CareerLink® centers. Respondents must also commit to implementing a plan for continuous improvement that engages all partners operating at the site.

Delivery of Services in the One-Stop Center Environment

Bidders must demonstrate a working knowledge of the requirements of WIOA as it relates to delivery of service and describe the general approach that will be taken to a multi-partner environment for a customer flow that includes key elements of: welcoming/orienting new customers of the system; registration; eligibility determination; assessment; determining priority for services; determining types of services to be provided; creation of individualized service strategies for customers; creating integrated services strategies among partner organizations; use of technology to maximize efficiency and customer service; job placement; and follow-up services.

Partnerships for Promoting PA CareerLink® Center Services in the Community

Describe how you will develop an overall marketing plan. Include your ideas for marketing the PA CareerLink® delivery system and describe marketing techniques you have used in the past. How will you evaluate the effectiveness of marketing strategies? How will you assist the staff in developing a public image for the center(s) and improve public relations?

Employer Engagement

The Operator is responsible for leading and coordinating business services and utilizing center staff as appropriate. The Operator leads and coordinates the building of business relationships with individual employers, understands local business needs and communicates those needs to the center partners, for the eventual connecting of qualified WIOA participants to meaningful employment opportunities. Where business needs cannot be met by existing center candidates, the centers shall search for viable candidates utilizing a variety of tools, relationships and events

designed to recruit potential job candidates. The applicant should describe the planned approach for engaging employers within the WDA, how relationships will be maintained and how PA CareerLink® staff will be utilized and integrated into this plan.

Work-Based Learning Opportunities: Apprenticeships, On-the-Job Training, Paid Work Experience and Incumbent Worker Training

A strategy to grow work-based learning opportunities should be described in the proposal. Describe how the Business Service Team (BST), which includes all partner agencies, would be directed to promote work-based learning opportunities. Design a plan that will have the various BST members in the community promoting all work-based learning opportunities for all PA CareerLink® partner programs without duplicating services. Follow-up processes should be reviewed to ensure job seeker referrals and appropriate partner agency connections are completed.

Section 4: PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

4.1 Performance Measures

The Operator will be evaluated within the first six (6) months after the contract start date (for new Operator only), and then at least annually thereafter. The operator evaluation will be utilized by the staff to the Board to assess the operator's performance and keep the Board apprised of the performance. The assessment will consider, among other factors, contract provisions; primary indicators of performance of all WIOA core programs; participating partner surveys, and other performance measures. The evaluation will be consistent with the PA CareerLink® certification requirements.

In addition, performance will be tracked, monitored, and reported in the following ways, with final benchmarks to be determined:

- Counting and reporting of Foot Traffic, including a complete count and a breakdown by zip code.
- Tracking and summarizing of workshop registrations and feedback forms.
- Tracking of and reporting on mutual referrals and dual enrollments among service partner programs.
- Completion of a monthly performance report.
- A participating partner survey will be conducted by the local Board staff at least once a year. This is a document developed by the One-Stop Operations standing committee that allows each partner to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the operator and to identify areas of continuous improvement.
- Responsible for Performance Reports for all Partnering Agencies within the PA CareerLink® centers such as OVR, and PA Labor Exchange.

*Performance Measures and Levels are subject to change based on guidance from the US Department of Labor and the PA Department of Labor and Industry's Bureau of Workforce Development Administration.

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 Board, and/or One-Stop Operations Standing Committee, 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 the 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.

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 technical plan and financial plan 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 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 complete proposal must be separated into two parts, a TECHNICAL PLAN and a FINANCIAL PLAN. PLANS may be submitted in the same package as long as the FINANCIAL PLAN is submitted in a separate envelope that is glued, taped, stapled, or otherwise physically closed securely. The outside of the package must be clearly and prominently labeled indicating that it contains the TECHNICAL and/or 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 principal 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. Oversight monitoring will occur for the Operator, and each PA CareerLink® center at least annually.

5.8: Termination of Agreements

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 affected 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.

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 hard copy of the required attachments in Section IV of 6.2.1 needs to be submitted) **AND**

1 original paper copy **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].”**

Copies of plans on CD or flash drive must be in either PDF or Microsoft Office formats. Any other format will not be accepted.

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 20-02.

Bidder's total proposal submissions (both the Technical and Financial Plans and all required copies) must be received by WCJP complete no later than the time and 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: One-Stop Operator Procurement**

Bidders' original Technical Plan proposal and Financial Plan (proposed budget) must contain all the information and documents specified in Section 6.2. All copies (both paper and CD/flash drive) 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 or proposal due date, at a 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 in the proper formatting or to properly label them may, at WCJP's discretion, result in the rejection of the bidder from any consideration.

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 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 Timetable will not be included in any previous submissions and will not 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 contract negotiations with WCJP. An 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.

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 Proposal Narrative

Organization Summary

a. Describe Organization –

- indicate the form of organization under which you do business or conduct operations, i.e., 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.

b. Alignment with WIOA Program Goals – Briefly describe your organization's mission, vision or purpose and list the primary activities in which it routinely engages. How does the proposed program of work align with the economy and workforce needs of the WDA?

c. Experience - State the number of years your organization has been engaged in the performance of its' primary activities. Briefly describe the bidder's past experience with the One-Stop service delivery model under WIOA or similar projects or experience that demonstrates your organization ability successfully conduct or perform activities and services proposed. If the organization has previously delivered WIOA services, or has overseen delivery of WIOA service contracts, please provide performance data for the most recent two program year's available. Cite the page number for the attachment in this portion of the narrative.

d. References – 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.

- Populations Served by Partner Agencies and Resources Available
 - a. Address how the PA CareerLink® will serve individuals with disabilities, Limited English Proficiency, and prioritized populations (i.e. recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, veterans, individuals who are basic skills defiant).
 - b. Discuss resources that would be made available to individuals transitioning from unemployment and/or unemployment.
 - c. Discuss employer services that would be made available by partner agencies

- Program Elements/Requirements
 - a. Staff and Capacity Building - Describe steps to be taken to work with current PA CareerLink® Site Administrators to become familiar with current processes and procedure in the One-Stop Centers. Discuss ideas to implement a plan for continuous improvement that engages all partner agencies in the PA CareerLink®.
 - b. Delivery of Services in the One-Stop Center Environment - Discuss orientation techniques for the various PA CareerLink® and workforce development system services: How will individuals know about the services available; how will the services be coordinated with the partner agencies; etc. Discuss how you would direct the Site Administrators to manage referrals to appropriate partner agency for services.
 - c. Partnerships for Promoting PA CareerLink® Center Services in the Community – Describe the overall marketing plan to ensure services available at the PA CareerLink® will be promoted throughout the WDA including past marketing techniques. How will effectiveness of marketing strategies be evaluated? How will you assist the staff in developing a public image for the center(s) and improve public relations?
 - d. Employer Engagement – Describe how you will coordinate business services, build and maintain employer relationships and utilize center staff. How will you ensure coordination between employers and the PA CareerLink® centers in order to connect qualified participants to the appropriate partner agency? What type of events would be designed for potential job candidate recruitment for local businesses?
 - e. Work-Based Learning Opportunities – Describe how you will build work-based learning opportunities within the WDA. How would the BST be integrated into promoting work-based learning? Detail a plan for ensuring community promotions do not allow for the duplication of services. Explain the process for follow-up to ensure job seekers and businesses are referred to the appropriate partner agency.

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

Agency Information Form – complete and attach the "Prospective Contractor Survey" and "Company Relocation Review" if applicable found in **APPENDIX C1 and C2** of this RFP. Attach the same form(s) completed, signed, and dated by each subcontractor proposed.

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 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.**

Drug Free Workplace - Individuals or organizations submitting proposals to provide Federal- or State-funded activities or services must complete, and submit the "*Drug Free Workplace*" found in **APPENDIX F**.

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 G**.

6.2.2: Financial Plan Organization

APPENDIX H to this RFP contains 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 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. The persons charged with the responsibility for selecting a proposal are required to determine whether 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 Administrative Division and Board 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 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 can 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 understands 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 like 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 complies 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 I** 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 J**.
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 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 Board for final approval or disapproval.
6. At the direction of the local 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.**