

# **Economic Growth Region 2**

## **Request for Proposals**

**For**

**Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Funding  
To Support the Staffing and Delivery of WorkOne  
Services in Northern Indiana**

**RFP Issue Date: April 28, 2009**  
**Proposal Due Date: May 26, 2009**

*Serving the following Northern Indiana counties: Elkhart, Fulton, Kosciusko,  
Marshall, and St. Joseph*

**Partners for Workforce Solutions**  
300 E. Main Street, Suite 100  
Fort Wayne, IN 46802  
260-459-1400

## Section I: Background and General RFP Information

- A. The Northern Indiana Regional Workforce Board (RWB) and Partners for Workforce Solutions – the Regional Operator (RO) for Economic Growth Region 2 (EGR-2) - are issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to procure a service provider that will provide staff and service delivery support to WorkOne Centers in the region. These staff will deliver workforce development services to both job seeker customers and employer customers as required. Bidders should note that the following are fundamental principles of the EGR-2 WorkOne system:
- **Integrated Service Delivery:** The Region 2 WorkOne system will deliver workforce development services through an integrated service delivery model. Included in this integration model will be staff who deliver state funded services through Wagner-Peyser, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Veterans Services, and Unemployment Insurance programs. The purpose of this RFP is to identify an organization that can provide staffing and service delivery support through Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding in the context of this integrated environment.
  - **Functional Supervision:** In the Region 2 integrated model, functional supervision will play a key role within WorkOne operations. To implement this supervisory approach, the Regional Operator will employ Center Managers who are directly responsible for day-to-day operational activities in the five WorkOne Centers in the region. These Center Managers will make operational decisions concerning customer flow, deploy staff as necessary to manage the customer flow, and will be responsible for the overall quality and effectiveness of WorkOne services. The Region 2 functional supervision model will certainly recognize that service provider organizations have internal human resource functions that must be managed within their organization. Such functions would include final hiring and firing decisions, benefits administration, and time and attendance reporting. However, it should be noted, that even in these critical human resource areas Center Managers will have input and the opportunity to influence decisions. Through this RFP, the goal is to identify a service provider who can provide staffing and service delivery support to ensure that WorkOne operations function as desired.
  - **Team-Based Staff Deployment:** In the Region 2 integrated service delivery model, staff will be deployed in functional teams that work together to meet the needs of job seeker and business customers. The specific functional teams that will operate in each Northern Indiana WorkOne Center include the Welcome Team, the Skills Team, and the Employment Team. As part of regional WorkOne operations, there will also be a regional Business Services Team to coordinate employer services and a Workshop Team to deliver in-house training activities across the five counties of the region. Through this RFP, the RO is seeking an organization that can staff each of these functional teams with professional staff who can deliver high quality services to customers.
- B. As the integration model is fully implemented in Region 2 WorkOne operations, the role of the service provider and their scope of work will evolve. This evolution is driven in part by state policy which requires Regional Operators to operate and manage the WorkOne system. However, the service provider's evolving role and

scope of work is also being driven by the changing landscape of the workforce system itself, including a dramatic increase in demand for WorkOne services and the need to rapidly adjust operations to meet this growing demand. Within the context of this changing landscape, the RO has identified the following key functions of staff that work in the Northern Indiana WorkOne system:

- Interview job seekers to identify barriers to employment and identify WorkOne services that will help address these barriers.
- Deliver a variety of skill development and job seeking services for customers addressing their needs in the areas of education and employment. These services are delivered primarily through group settings; however, services can also be delivered in one-on-one settings as appropriate.
- Facilitate and deliver workshops and group sessions instructing customers on various skills, including basic skills development, customer service, computer skills, and job search skills.
- Assessing customer readiness for training and committing financial resources to support customers with tuition, books, and other training-related expenses.
- Meet with customers to assist them on their job search effort (resumes, interviews, internet job search, and other topics). Assist job seekers in locating appropriate job openings and refer these individuals to these jobs.
- Maintain documentation of customer activities in the WorkOne management information system.

It should also be noted that the RO could require the successful bidding organization to provide team leaders to assist in the management of WorkOne staff and service delivery activities. Team leaders will assist Center Managers in the management of WorkOne operations and will be selected based upon their experience, skills, and leadership abilities.

- C. Region 2 consists of Elkhart, Fulton, Kosciusko, Marshall, and St. Joseph counties. There are full-service WorkOne Centers in Elkhart and St. Joseph counties. There are WorkOne Express Sites in Fulton, Kosciusko, and Marshall counties. Interested organizations should understand that the RO is looking for a service provider that can ensure staffing and service delivery support in all five of these counties.
- D. The RWB and the RO are committed to aligning WorkOne operations and activities with the demand occupations and industries in Region 2. This will ensure that WorkOne customers are developing the skill sets required by employers and that they are being prepared for jobs projected to be in-demand in the region. Over the past several years, there have been significant efforts to identify target industries and specific occupations that will be the focus of these alignment efforts. These regional efforts have identified a number of high-growth occupations that are to be targeted:

⇒ **Manufacturing, Industrial, and Commercial Occupations**

CAD Drafters and Designers	Welders
CNC Mill and Machine Operators	Computer Repair and Installation
Die Setters	Electronic Technicians
Heating and Air Technicians	Industrial Maintenance and Repair
Machine Operators	Over the Road/Route Truck Drivers

Quality Assurance Technicians

Tool and Die Makers/Mold Makers

⇒ **Health Care Occupations**

Dental Hygienists and Technicians  
Medical Assistant  
Pharmacy Technicians  
Radiology Technicians  
Respiratory Therapists

Emergency Medical Technicians  
Medical Lab Technicians  
Phlebotomists  
Registered Nurses  
Physical Therapists

⇒ **Business and Other Occupations**

Accountants and Auditors  
Computer Support Specialists  
Data/Systems Managers  
Graphic Designers  
Law Enforcement/Safety/Security  
Paralegal/Legal Assistants  
Web Designers

Computer Programmers/Analysts  
Culinary/Food Preparation Services  
Childhood Development Specialists  
Human Resource Specialists  
Network Administrators  
Teachers/Teachers Aides

The RWB and RO are seeking proposals from organizations that understand the relationship between workforce and economic development and that can assist in aligning Region 2 WorkOne operations with these targeted occupations.

- E. The RO is seeking interested organizations that demonstrate the four critical characteristics listed below.
- Competent and cooperative management with a vision for staffing and supporting the Northern Indiana WorkOne system
  - A commitment and ability to ensure that customer service oriented staff are available to serve thousands of Region 2 job seekers and employers
  - A willingness to integrate resources and activities with other organizations
  - Flexibility in deploying human resources and an ability to adapt to change as economic conditions and operational needs evolve
- F. The RO intends to be as inclusive as possible in this solicitation. The goal is to receive several high quality proposals that articulate clear and aggressive strategies for staffing WorkOne centers and ensuring the delivery of workforce services to customers. The resulting contract with the successful bidder will be for a one-year period which can begin any time after contract negotiations are completed. Based on performance, the RO may elect to renew the contract for up to two additional years.
- G. The Regional Operator is looking for an organization that can provide staff to deliver WorkOne services at all WorkOne Centers located in the region. However, by submitting a proposal the bidder is assuring the RO that it will provide additional staff to deliver workforce services whenever additional grant funding is secured.

- H. This Request for Proposals is not in itself an offer of work nor does it commit the RO to fund any proposals submitted. The RO is not liable for any costs incurred in the preparation or research of proposals. The RO reserves the right to make an award to any bidder or to make no awards, if that is deemed to serve the best interests of Region 2. In addition, the RO reserves the right to: 1) amend or withdraw this RFP at any time, 2) reject any and all proposals, and 3) re-issue this RFP. Successful bidders must negotiate the proposal before the RO will make any final commitment. All commitments made by the RO are contingent upon the availability of funds.
- I. Bidding organizations should note that under the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the contents of your proposal or other information submitted to the RO is subject to public release upon request, except those items specifically exempt from disclosure. The bidder shall mark as "proprietary" those parts of its proposal that it deems proprietary. However, the bidder is alerted that this marking is advisory only and not binding on the RO. If there is a request from the public under FOIA to inspect any part of the proposal so marked, the RO will advise the bidder and request further justification in support of the "proprietary" marking. If the RO determines, after receipt of the justification, that the material is releasable, the bidder will be notified immediately. Under no circumstances will a proposal or any part of a proposal be released prior to the contract award decision.
- J. The specifications in this RFP may change based on issuance of State or Federal policy or WIA re-authorization. By submitting a proposal, the bidder agrees to work cooperatively with the RO to comply with subsequent changes.
- K. The successful bidder will be required to maintain a local management office within Region 2 to work with the RO in resolving functional supervision issues and any other staffing or personnel issues as required. The successful bidder will also need to identify a single point of contact who will work with the RO on all such issues.
- L. In the event of a transition to a new service provider, the successful bidder will be required to offer consideration to all staff who currently work in the Northern Indiana WorkOne system. In the event of a transition, the RO will work with the successful bidder to make this transition as quick and efficient as possible.
- M. To ensure a fair and open process for all interested bidders, the following time table will be used with this RFP process:

RFP Issued	April 28, 2009
Questions & Answers Deadline	May 19, 2009
Proposals Due	May 26, 2009
Proposal Review Completed	May 29, 2009
Regional Workforce Board Approval	June 5, 2009
Contract Negotiations Completed	June 12, 2009
Contractor Begins Delivering Services	July 1, 2009

The RO may require selected bidders to attend oral interviews, participate in negotiations and rewrite their statements of work as agreed upon during the negotiations.

## Section II: Proposal Requirements

- A. Proposals must be received by noon EST, May 26, 2009 in person or by mail at the address indicated. Proposals received after that time and date will be rejected. Please note that proposals must be received not postmarked by noon May 26, 2009. Proposals shall not be submitted electronically or by FAX.
- B. To be complete, your proposal must include:
- Attachments completed with requested information and executed properly
  - One copy of the proposal with original signatures clearly labeled "ORIGINAL."
  - Five copies of the proposal clearly labeled "COPY."
  - An electronic copy of the proposal must also be submitted via email and sent to the attention of Beth Suman, CFO and COO at [Bsuman@partnersforworkforce.org](mailto:Bsuman@partnersforworkforce.org)
  - All pages must be numbered
  - Proposal is limited to 15 single-sided pages
  - Proposals that fail to follow instructions and do not include all applicable information and forms may not be considered.
- C. Attachment A Non-Collusion Affidavit must be signed and submitted.
- D. Attachment B Assurances and Certifications must be signed and submitted.
- E. Your response to the narrative section of the proposal is limited to no more than 15 pages. This page limitation is imposed for the sake of the reviewers of your proposal. This limitation does not include other sections of your proposal such as Attachments A and B, your audit or annual financial reports, and other attachments such as resumes and organizational charts.
- F. Proposals may be hand delivered or mailed to the following address:
- Beth Suman, Regional Operator  
Partners for Workforce Solutions  
300 E. Main Street, Suite 100  
Fort Wayne, IN 46802
- G. Questions regarding this RFP may be submitted in writing to Beth Suman, CFO and COO, via email to [BSuman@partnersforworkforce.org](mailto:BSuman@partnersforworkforce.org) or fax at 260-436-5973. Questions will be addressed until May 19, 2009.
- H. Bidders have the right to appeal any action or decision related to this RFP. Appeals must be submitted to the Northern Indiana Workforce Board, Inc and will be reviewed and investigated by the Board. The decision of the Workforce Board in such situations shall be final. Bidders wishing to make a formal appeal should do so in writing to Paul Marsh, Northern Indiana Workforce Board Chair, 300 East Main Street, Suite 100, Fort Wayne, IN, 46802.

- I. Use this as a checklist to ensure that you have included all items required in this RFP. Failure to include all required information could result in rejection of your proposal.
- Cover Letter with original signatures
  - Proposal Statement of Work
  - Proposed Budget Plan
  - Attachment A (Non-Collusion Affidavit) with original signatures
  - Attachment B (Assurances and Certifications) with original signatures
  - Organizational chart including management structure
  - Resume for proposed single point of contact
  - Copy of personnel policies or handbook
  - Copy of most recent audit report or year-end financial statement
- J. Unless specifically requested by the RO, changes and/or amendments to the originally submitted proposal will not be considered. In addition, the RO reserves the right to: (1) amend or withdraw this RFP at any time, (2) reject any and all proposals, and (3) re-issue this RFP if necessary.

## Section III: Proposal Statement of Work

Interested organizations should adhere to the following outline in responding to this RFP. This will make your proposal more reviewable and will allow reviewers of your proposal to make more informed decisions.

### **A. Experience of bidding organization (20% of overall rating)**

The following questions will provide your organization with the opportunity to highlight and review your experiences, strengths, and overall state of readiness to staff Region 2 WorkOne Centers and ensure the delivery of workforce services to job seeker and business customers.

1. Provide an overall description of your organization. What is your organization's mission and vision, governance structure, and legal status? Please include an organizational chart for your management structure that highlights key management personnel and their proposed roles with this project. **(2% of overall rating)**
2. Describe your organization's experience in providing staff to another organization to achieve a specific business purpose. Be specific in your description by detailing the staffing services that were provided as well as the specific services that your assigned staff delivered. Also, please highlight any significant business results or benefits that were achieved from the deployment of your staff to deliver the requested services. **(10% of overall rating)**
3. Please identify your single point of contact for the Region 2 WorkOne system. What experience does your single point of contact have at supporting the staffing and business needs of other customers? Please provide a resume of your proposed single point of contact to highlight the skills they will bring to this role. **(5% of overall rating)**
4. Provide three references and contact information for individuals outside your organization that are familiar with the quality of services your organization is capable of providing. Detail the specific services you provided to these organizations and any results that were achieved. Letters of support are not required and will not be considered in the overall evaluation of bidding organizations **(3% of overall rating)**

### **B. Staffing an Integrated WorkOne System (40% of overall rating)**

The foundation of the Region 2 integrated service delivery model is the assignment of staff to one of five functional teams. The following questions will provide your organization with the opportunity to demonstrate how you will staff and support these teams so that they can deliver high quality workforce services.

1. Describe in specific terms how your organization would staff and support the following WorkOne teams. **(5% of overall rating)**

- The Welcome Team – the Welcome team greets visitors, conducts initial assessments, completes WorkOne enrollment activities, and makes referral decisions based on information obtained in the process
  - The Skills Team – the Skills Team works with job seeker customers on a variety of skill development issues including basic skills, technology skills, soft skills, occupational-specific skills, and others.
  - The Employment Team – the Employment Team works with job seeker customers on a variety of job finding activities, including resume development, interview preparation, job referrals, and others.
  - The Business Services Team – the Business Services Team works with employer customers to develop applicant recruitment and assessment plans, customized training activities, on-the-job training programs, and others.
  - The Workshop Team – the Workshop Team develops, schedules, and delivers a wide range of in-house skill development and job finding workshops.
2. The Regional Operator (based upon current budget estimates) has identified the potential for 43 full time positions to be funded through this contract. Initial staffing needs are projected as follows:
- St. Joseph County: 18 total positions
  - Elkhart County: 9 total positions
  - Kosciusko County: 5 total positions
  - Marshall County: 2 total positions
  - Fulton County: 2 total positions
  - Business Services Team: 4 positions across the five county region
  - Workshop Team: 3 positions across the five county region

Additional positions could be added or subtracted from this projected staffing level based upon additions or reductions in funding and/or special grants and projects. Please detail how your organization will ensure that **full time staff** are in these positions and ready to provide services to customers. **(6% of overall rating)**

3. Describe the specific process that your organization will use to ensure that job openings are quickly filled with skilled professionals. What specific assessments, activities, and reviews are involved in your hiring process? What is the estimated length of time that your organization needs to fill a vacancy? What strategies will your organization use to ensure that positions are filled within this time frame? **(10% of overall rating)**
4. Detail how your organization will operate in an environment where functional supervision and WorkOne Center operations are managed by the Regional Operator. Describe how your organization will interact with and support Center Managers in their role as functional supervisors of staff. **(8% of overall rating)**
5. Please provide detail on your approach to managing your human resources. How do you determine the rate of pay for staff? What are key personnel policies that you maintain? What kind of payroll process do you utilize? What are the specific benefits that you offer staff? Please be as specific as possible in this section to ensure that the RO has a full and complete understanding of your specific

approaches to managing human resources and supporting staff. Also, please attach a copy of any personnel policy or handbook that establishes the guidelines for how your organization will manage human resources. **(8% of overall rating)**

6. In the Region 2 integrated service delivery model, there is an expectation that job seeking and business customers accessing services in the more rural locations of the region will be able to access the same high quality services as customers in larger cities and counties. Describe your organization's ability to provide staffing and service delivery support in the more rural locations of Region 2. **(3% of overall rating)**

**C. Financial Management and Budget (40% of overall rating)**

The bidder should provide information on budgets as follows:

1. Bidders must maintain a financial management system that is auditable and in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles. Financial records must be available for audit and monitoring purposes. Bidders should provide a brief description of the financial accountability of the organization in this section. Bidders should also provide one copy of their most recent independent annual audit or, if your organization is not formally audited, your most recent independent year-end financial report. **(7% of overall rating)**
2. Has your organization had any financial or compliance findings in the last three years? If so, describe what issues were identified and provide a detailed description of how these issues were resolved. If your organization has operated a WIA Program before, please include as attachments the past two years of monitoring reports. **(5% of overall rating)**
3. As noted earlier in this RFP, the RO is projecting that funding exists to support 43 full time staff positions. Based on this level of staff, please detail your organization's budget to support these 43 positions using the following budget categories **(28% of overall rating)**:
  - Salaries for 43 staff positions
  - Benefits for 43 staff positions (please provide your proposed benefits rate within this budget category)
  - Management or organizational fees charged by the bidding organization
  - Any other costs to be charged by the bidding organization

Please include a brief narrative statement for each of these four categories that describes the specific items included in these budget categories. For example, within the benefits category, briefly describe the benefits that will be available to staff working in your organization.

In addition, please complete a formal budget plan using the Excel format provided by the RO. Instructions for completing a Budget Plan are located in the first tab of the file. Questions regarding this budget plan may be submitted in writing to Beth Suman via email to [BSuman@partnersforworkforce.org](mailto:BSuman@partnersforworkforce.org) or fax at 260-436-5973. Budget questions will be addressed until May 19, 2009.

Attachment A

**Non-Collusion Affidavit**

State of Indiana

County of \_\_\_\_\_

The respondent is hereby giving oath that it has not, in any way, directly or indirectly, entered into any arrangement or agreement with any other respondent or with any officer or employee of the Economic Growth Region 2 Regional Workforce Board & Regional Operator whereby it has paid or will pay to such other respondent or officer or employee any sum of money or anything of real value whatever; and has not, directly or indirectly, entered into any arrangement or agreement with any other respondent or respondents which tends to or does lessen or destroy free competition in the letting of the agreement sought for by the attached response; that no inducement of any form or character other than that which appears on the face of the response will be suggested, offered, paid, or delivered to any person whomsoever to influence the acceptance of the said response or awarding of the agreement, nor has this respondent any agreement or understanding of any kind whatsoever, with any person whomsoever, to pay, deliver to, or share with any other person in any way or manner any of the proceeds of the agreement sought by this response.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Authorized Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print or Type Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Assurances and Certifications**

The respondent assures and certifies to each of the following items:

1. The bidding organization agrees to comply with all applicable State and Federal laws and regulations governing the Workforce Investment Act, Workforce Investment Board, Regional Workforce Board & Regional Operator and any other applicable laws and regulations.
2. The bidding organization has not been debarred or suspended or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in federally funded programs.
3. The bidding organization possesses legal authority to offer the attached proposal.
4. A drug free workplace will be maintained in accordance with State of Indiana requirements.
5. By submitting a proposal the bidder certifies to his/her knowledge and belief that there is no conflict of interest (real or apparent) inherent in the bid or in delivering the plan of work if the RO awards a contract. A conflict of interest would arise if any individual involved in the preparation of this RFP, proposal review and rating or award decisions has a financial or other interest in or represents the bidding organization and would be likely to gain financially or personally from the award of a contract. The same would hold true for any member of the individual's family, partner, or an organization employing or about to employ any of the above as a direct result of the successful award of a contract under the RFP. The RO reserves the right to disqualify a bid should a conflict of interest be discovered during the solicitation process.
6. The bidding organization assures that if awarded a contract by the RO, it will comply with Regional, State and Federal program and financial monitoring requirements. This means the bidder will make available required information (both program and financial) as is required to satisfy local, state, and federal monitoring expectations.
7. The bidding organization assures that it will comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws: Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended. The RO also assures that it will comply with 29 CFR Part 37 and all other regulations implementing the laws listed above. This assurance applies to the WIA Title I financially assisted program or activity, and to all agreements that the RO makes to carry out the WIA Title I financially assisted program or activity. This WIA Title I funded program is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services will be made available upon request for individuals with disabilities. By submitting a bid all bidders are providing an assurance that they will comply with the above nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Authorized Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print or Type Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date