



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
RFQ #22-512
March 2022

Introduction

Southwestern Oregon Workforce Investment Board (SOWIB) serves Coos, Curry, and Douglas counties creating and engaging in job training, skill upgrades, internships and outreach services focusing on employment that benefits individuals and our regional business community. SOWIB has federal and other governmental funding available to expand our services within Coos, Curry, and Douglas counties. We are looking for Partners interested in providing Career Readiness workshops to Youth.

Background

SOWIB is a non-profit organization serving as the local workforce development board for Coos, Curry, and Douglas counties. Its mission is to develop, oversee and implement the area's strategic plan for workforce development and allocate federal and other resources to program activities and services, including for Youth between the ages of 16-24, as prescribed in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

The intent of this solicitation is to identify an individual or organization with specific expertise in working with youth on career and personal goals to develop and implement a weeklong Work Readiness program.

Need Statement

The problem of youth disengaged from the workforce has hit our communities hard. Exposed to a tremendous number of risks and negative environmental factors, their passage to adult success is often impeded.

For many youth, simply understanding and being made aware of the opportunities that exist in their communities, along with dispelling prior myths about what it takes to work in certain sectors, is enough to help them on their way to finding employment and fulfilling careers. For many others, however, there are additional – very difficult to define or quantify -issues that hinder their development. Whether it stems from poor performance in school leading to negative self-thoughts, growing up in a household where parents or other adult role models worked sparingly or not at all, or having experienced other types of childhood trauma, there is little doubt that something is amiss.

The workforce development system has tried (and continues to try) to address these issues through various methods that aim to help young people learn to develop so-called “soft skills” with varying levels of success. Yet it remains in large part a very underdeveloped aspect of implementing a successful plan to bridge the widening gap between those who are unable to find and maintain employment and businesses in dire need of additional workers to fill critical openings.

SOWIB will be launching the first full Summer Youth Employment project in a number of years. Youth will be given the opportunity to participate in up to 240 hours of paid work experience in an array of sectors. Work experience placements and activities will be provided by our current Youth Title 1B Provider. Referrals for Career Readiness participants be provided from our Provider.

Prior to beginning their work experience placement, youth will receive pay for participation in a Career Readiness class. This thirty (30) hour class will include, at a minimum: OSHA 10 training and CPR/BLS, it may also include Food Handlers certification. In addition, youth will begin an employment portfolio, create a resume, engage in career exploration activities and gain understanding as to what it means to be “ready” for work each day.

Scope of Work

Through this solicitation, SOWIB is seeking to enter into a contract with an individual or entity to serve as a Career Readiness Provider.

In addition, to address the issues of youth engagement, the program should incorporate a service delivery model that focuses on motivation, empowerment, improving self-esteem, and overcoming internal or psycho-social barriers to work and economic mobility.

Specific duties for the role should include, but are not limited to:

- Helping youth learn about various jobs and careers currently available in the community
- Conducting career aptitude and interest evaluations to help youth identify appropriate career paths
- Assisting with online completion of OSHA 10, CPR/BLS and Food Handler certification.
- Referring youth to programs/services in the community that can help address other identified barriers (i.e. housing, food, etc.)

Up to a total five (5) classes will be provided throughout the service delivery area of Coos, Curry and Douglas counties for fifty (50) youth. The specifics days, times, and locations of

where services will be delivered will be finalized during the contract negotiation period with the selected entity/individual.

Budget and Contract Cycle

Through this solicitation, SOWIB intends to enter into a contract in an amount not to exceed \$30,000. The planned start date for the project begins in mid-June so as to initiate services in time for Summer Work Experience placements beginning July 2022.

As additional resources potentially become available to support the project, the contract may be modified to expand the scope of work, increase the number of youth being served, or both.

Deliverables & Performance Criteria

Deliverables under this contract will be:

- Completion of a monthly report to SOWIB that provides updates to staff and the board on the number of youth actively participating in the program, along with progress on development of the model
- Completion of a final report/program evaluation at the end of the contract period that outlines both the successes/strengths of the program, as well as shortcomings/weaknesses

Program performance for the contract that results from this solicitation will be measured using the following criteria:

- The total number of youth participating in the program, as indicated by attendance in all sessions with the Career Navigator (target: 50)

Additional deliverables may be added during the contract negotiation phase.

Submission Criteria/Instructions

Interested applicants must submit a program narrative, no longer than three (3) pages in length, that provides responses to the following questions:

1. Please describe the overall program design and indicate any prior experience the individual/organization may have in the area(s) of career counseling, workforce development, and coordinating work experience or career exploration opportunities for youth.
2. Please describe the model that will be used to address any underlying internal or psycho-social barriers that may be related to low motivation or self-esteem, generational or culture of poverty, or the general lack of other “soft” skills.

3. Please describe any partnerships or relationships that the individual or entity has with other providers of youth services and how they intend to leverage those resources.

Proposals will be evaluated using the following scoring rubric:

CATEGORY	MAX POINTS
<i>Overall Program Description/Prior Experience</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Innovative Approaches</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Linkages to Partners</i>	<i>5</i>
TOTAL	50

Additionally, please provide a cover page/cover letter that includes the following:

- Name of responding individual or organization
- Name of individual who will serve in the Career Navigator role
- Contact information, including phone number and email
- Total proposed cost and outline of work to be performed

Proposals must be received by **no later than 5:00 PM on April 15, 2022**. Proposals received after that day and time will not be considered.

Proposals can be emailed to invoices@sowib.org or mailed to the SOWIB office at:

PO Box 415
Coos Bay OR 97420

For proposals delivered via traditional mail, it is the responsibility of the individual or entity submitting to ensure the required materials are received by the deadline. Upon receipt, each proposal will be stamped to document that they have been delivered on time.

Evaluation

Responses will be evaluated based on the criteria outlined above by an evaluation team comprised of SOWIB staff. Successful response to this RFP does not entitle responders to paid work by SOWIB. All responders will be notified of the outcome of their response.