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Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

Independent Negotiator for MOU Contract for Professional Services

Purpose of the Request for Qualifications:

The Macon-DeWitt Workforce Investment Solutions is issuing a Request for Qualifications for a consultant to negotiate the budget development for the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with One-Stop Partners in local workforce area #19 (LWIA). Negotiations will include budget development for the PY 2019 MOU. LWIA 19 encompasses the counties of: Macon and DeWitt.

Background:

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is federal legislation that guides employment and training programs and was passed into law on July 22, 2014. WIOA provides the framework through which workforce areas and regions can leverage Federal, state, local and philanthropic resources to support businesses and job-seekers. The workforce vision for LWIA 19 and One-Stop partners is to create a responsive, integrated workforce development system that provides exceptional service to both job seekers and employers. Job seekers may access employment, education, training and support services to succeed in the labor market. Employers need skilled workers to compete in the global economy. Together with partners, WIOA programs provide a needed continuum of services to help support a high quality, integrated, and inclusive workforce system.

MOU Development - As part of WIOA, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into with One-Stop Partners to deliver workforce services in the local area. The Governor issues MOU guidance that defines the services and cost sharing requirements in order to be in compliance with WIOA. In 2015, the *Governor's Guidelines to State and Local Program Partners Negotiation of Costs and Services under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA)* was issued and in January 2018, *Supplemental Guidance* was released. The State of Illinois will be updating The Governor's Guidelines in November 2018. The November 2018 draft of the Governor's Guidelines has been shared with all LWIA's in the State of Illinois. Both policy and supplemental guidance provide direction for the MOU process each year.

The independent negotiator hired for this project will utilize up-to-date policy and supplement guidance issued by the State for negotiating costs with One-Stop Partners and will use all forms provided by the State. Cost projections for the PY 2019 MOU indicate that partner MOU amounts will be *under* the negotiated amount. Clarification has been provided, that MOU modifications are not needed under this scenario. The independent negotiator will work with One-Stop

Partners and Management staff for the sole purpose of negotiating MOU cost sharing and budget for PY 2019. It is the intent that the independent negotiator will be required to be present at as many One-Stop Partner meetings as deemed necessary in order to negotiate a fair and balanced budget.

Scope of Work: Under WIOA, local workforce areas are charged with achieving ambitious goals that integrate workforce service delivery. Carefully planned and coordinated services among all federally funded workforce development programs are necessary to achieve the level of integrated service delivery that WIOA envisions. Partner programs identified under WIOA must work collaboratively to optimize the quality of services provided to job seekers and businesses. Successful integration is directly related to coordinated and joint use of resources. WIOA requires each partner to contribute its proportionate share of costs for the operation of local one-stop delivery systems. The scope of work for this project includes:

1. Developing a schedule for negotiations of the one-stop operating budget and identify the information that will be needed to support negotiations.
2. Reviewing the budget information for infrastructure and systems costs and negotiating with One-Stop Partners either individually or in a group setting. It is anticipated that a MOU modification will not be needed as thresholds for line item variances and total budget will not exceed the requirements. The independent negotiator will work with LWIA 19 fiscal staff.
3. Working with partners to define the career services that will be provided at the One-Stop Center; developing referral methods for customers; calculating infrastructure costs and shared system costs and determine payment methods; complete the MOU document that shows goals have been achieved to integrate workforce services.
4. Completing all forms as required by the State according to the most recent Governor's Guidelines.

The MOU will meet WIOA guidelines and be submitted to the State of Illinois in a timely manner for approval. The consultant selected for this project will work closely with the One-Stop Partners, CEOs and LWIB to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) budget that meets WIOA federal and State requirements and will be expected to attend meetings with all parties involved. The timeline for MOU Budget submission is defined in the Governor's Policy letter on MOUs with reporting due dates and MOU submission dates prior to June 30, 2019. It is anticipated that the final report of outcomes and draft budgets are due to the individual designated by the Governor by April 15, 2019 unless otherwise notified.

Key deliverables:

- Lead and facilitate negotiations with One-Stop partners on all aspects required in the WIOA legislation pertaining to the Memorandum of Understanding including career services, referral methods, infrastructure costs and shared system costs.
- A complete Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) budget document and attachments are the primary deliverable that will be submitted to the State by the due date. A standard template will be utilized that includes:

- a) description of services that will be accessible through the local one-stop system,
- b) the location(s) at which services will be accessible,
- c) the method of delivery for each required partner providing services and
- Cost sharing decisions will be documented in an approved annual budget using a standard budget template. A portion of each required partner's shared infrastructure and local workforce development systems costs will be determined according to these guidelines.
- The LWIB, CEOs and required One-Stop Partners will be required to approve and sign the MOU.

Key skill sets include:

- Strong facilitator with a demonstrated ability to lead people and get results through others by establishing joint ownership and accountability;
- Technical skills in project management, strategic planning, consensus building, conflict resolution and group decision-making;
- Effective collaborator with strong relationship-building skills;
- Skilled writer with experience in grant/program development;
- Understanding of workforce development programs.

Time Frame: December/January 2018 - June 2019

Individuals interested in this project should:

1. Provide a letter of interest with the following information:
 - Description of experience/background specific to the Scope of Work and deliverables listed above,
 - Sample work related to MOU development,
 - Describe how you build consensus among partners and/or team building around a common goal,
 - Describe how you handle difficult situations/conflict in a group setting
 - Proposed timeline between December and June,
 - Proposed cost- Include a budget for costs associated with the project. The Macon DeWitt Workforce Investment Board has approved up to \$4,500 for an independent negotiator.
2. Submit information listed above by **close of business on Tuesday, November 19 2018** to:

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