

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE EXTENDED TO
TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2022 4:00 PM**

THE NORTHWEST REGIONAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD, INC.

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR A MODIFICATION TO

LOCAL STRATEGIC PLAN

BACKGROUND

The Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board, Inc. (NRWIB) is a private, non-profit corporation serving the employment and training needs of residents and firms in the 41 cities and towns which comprise the Northwest corner of Connecticut. The Board works with a wide range of business leaders, local officials and other stakeholders to develop and update a workforce development plan in which the area's employment needs and interests are identified and addressed.

The NRWIB is requesting professional qualifications from consultants and research firms experienced in workforce development, labor market demographic /economic research and planning who are interested in performing an update of the organization's Local Strategic Plan in response to U.S DOL's Employment and Training Administration's Training and Employment Guidance Letter: 4-21.

The goals of the Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board include:

- enhancing the region's workforce service delivery system with coordinated decision making and programming,
- providing relevant labor market information for determining future education and training activities,
- increasing business participation and support of education and training initiatives for careers in high-growth industries and
- preparing the supply of skilled workers to support the core industries of the region.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic planning is a management tool that helps an organization assess and adjust the organization's direction in response to a changing environment. The resulting modification to the plan will identify structural shifts within labor market

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and workforce needs that have been affected by both the economic and health crises.

The Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board's Strategic Plan shall support its mission and promote its corresponding goals and will encompass the following elements:

- Promote on-going regional assessment to fully map the areas assets and identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and risks based on those assets.
- Identify inequities within communities served by the board
- Build a strategy and corresponding implementation plan that identifies specific goals and tasks and provides a blueprint for how to address these inequities through cross partner relationships allowing for the full realization of opportunities, innovations and equitable prosperity for the regions job seekers.
- Enable the NRWIB Board of Directors to thrive as a leadership group that represents and promotes the major assets of the region and provides a forum for regional economic and workforce decision-making.

SCOPE OF WORK

NRWIB is seeking a qualified vendor to prepare, collect, analyze, write and present an update to the Strategic Plan. The vendor will be responsible for all aspects of examination and analysis and will do so in a cost effective and efficient fashion.

The consultant will provide the following services as indicated below:

1. Conduct an analysis from existing data, perform independent research and utilize Connecticut Department of Labor and Federal Bureau of Labor statistics information to elicit **current economic and workforce conditions**.
2. Draft an update to the NRWIB Strategic Plan with **recommended strategies** to sustain the economic viability of the region.

The consultant will be required to submit a draft Strategic Plan for review and comment before submitting the final document. An electronic copy of the final document is required.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE PLAN

1. Demand by Industry Group and Occupational Classification

- Confirm targeted high-growth areas, industry trends and job openings.

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- Identify the occupations and the competencies needed for these industries. Consider projected employment opportunities, wages and job growth, as well as skills required.
- Comment on the anticipated need for green jobs, scientific / high tech occupations, manufacturing positions and healthcare openings in particular.

2. WIOA Planning Priorities

- Conduct a reassessment of economic and labor market information (LMI) to adjust strategies for what may now be a different set of growing and declining industries, occupations, and skills, thereby ensuring the plan modification reflects changes in the labor market and economic conditions and other factors affecting implementation of the plan as required by section 102(c)(3)(A) of WIOA.
- Analyze data to assess disparities in labor market outcomes among various populations and focus on how best to adapt and adjust workforce goals and strategic focus for those communities with disproportionately higher unemployment rates and lower earnings- particularly among underserved population groups or individuals facing barriers to employment.
- Examination of how well current systems and operations across the WIOA AJC partner programs, including Unemployment Insurance, can work more seamlessly together to positively affect the shared goal of reemployment, particularly for individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities.
- Identify which population groups, particularly those identified in the LMI analysis as having higher unemployment and lower earnings than the overall population, experience inequities in access to and participation in public workforce programs that lead to quality jobs. Develop strategies to ensure equity in service delivery and educational programming.
- Strategies to enhance current supportive service offerings such as referrals for physical and mental health assistance, housing assistance, child and dependent care assistance, etc.
- Host a region-wide stakeholder collaborative session to contribute to the plan.

3. Supply of Human Capital

- Provide an assessment of the potential of the region's human capital to meet the demands of the region.

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- Assess the size and skills of specific populations including low wage workers, out of school youth, immigrants, individuals with disabilities, mature workers and long term unemployed including Unemployment Insurance exhaustees.

4. Resource Inventory / Discrepancy Analysis

- Assess the capacity of the current workforce development system to meet the anticipated demands of the region. Confirm consumers and verify program adequacy. The consultant shall conduct at least one focus group to inform the planning process.

4. Recommendations for the Workforce Development System

- Identify challenges and opportunities emerging from the analysis. This is the primary focus of the solicitation. It is anticipated that the consultant will devote significant resources to the design and development of specific strategies to address particular labor market situations. Mere identification of issues will not meet the needs of the NRWIB. The consultant is expected to develop specific recommendations incorporating Objectives, Strategies, Performance Measures and Requisite Actions for each opportunity identified.

**PLEASE SEE FULL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE LETTER FOR
COMPLETE SCOPE OF SERVICES:**

https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL/TEGL_04-21.pdf

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

- Identify research activities and methods.
- Provide specifics and price required for your organization to complete this project.
- Provide a proposed schedule for completion of this project, listing general dates for activities.
- Describe any previous consulting experience relevant to this project, your qualifications and education.
- Provide the names, education and work experience of the key personnel that will be assigned to this project.
- Include your mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail with this submission.

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TIME FRAME

The projected implementation date is **January 21, 2022 (REVISED TO REFLECT SUBMISSION DEADLINE EXTENSION)**. The final product should be completed no later than March 4, 2022. Subsequent to awarding the project, specific approaches, requirements and due dates will be negotiated and included in the contract with the selected consultant.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Each proposer will be evaluated against the following criteria to determine their capabilities of meeting the requirements of this proposal, in a manner most useful to the needs of the NRWIB, price and other factors considered.

- Overall quality and clarity of the proposal including adherence to specifications. (50 points)
- Proposer's ability to meet the requirements including time frames and specifications of this proposal. (15 points)
- Proposer's qualifications and prior experience, including three references from similar projects. (15 points)
- Cost of the project. (20 points)

A Bidders' Conference will be held on Thursday, January 6th, 2022 at 2:30 PM virtually using [this link](#). To register for the Bidders Conference, contact Ana Goncalves by calling (203) 574-6971 ext. 448 or via email: ana.goncalves@nrwib.org

Delivery Conditions – Submissions will be accepted electronically only. Please submit a word version of the proposal to genny.fonseca@nrwib.org. Submission deadline **HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2022 4:00 PM.**

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

All proposals must be submitted to:

Subject Line: STRATEGIC PLAN MODIFICATION PROPOSAL

To Genny Fonseca via email at: genny.fonseca@nrwib.org

This RFQ does not commit the Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board Inc. to award a contract. Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board Inc. will not pay any costs incurred by the proposer in the preparation of this proposal. Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board Inc. may accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this RFP, or cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP

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if it is in the best interest of Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board Inc. to do so.

The NRWIB, Inc. may request additional information or a personal interview in support of the written proposals.

The NRWIB, Inc. may award a contract under this RFP without discussion with the proposer. Therefore, proposals should be submitted on the most favorable terms from both the technical and cost standpoint.

The NRWIB, Inc. reserves the right not to fund the proposer with either the lowest cost or the highest score on the proposal.

The NRWIB, Inc. may require the selected proposer to participate in negotiations and submit price, technical or other revisions to the proposal as a result of the negotiations.

The contract award is subject to the availability of Federal or State funds and the execution of a contract acceptable to both the selected proposer and The NRWIB, Inc.

The NRWIB, Inc. reserves the right to reject the proposal of any proposer based on any misrepresentation.

All proposals must be signed by the authorized consultant submitting the proposal.