RFP issued September 17, 2015
Intent to Apply Notice is due October 6, 2015
Proposals are due by November 3, 2015.

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
For
One-Stop Operator
&
Title I Career Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers

January 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017

Northern Illinois Workforce Alliance
303 North Main Street
Rockford, Illinois 61101

The entire RFP is located on The Workforce Connection’s website, www.theworkforceconnection.org. On The Workforce Connection’s home page, click on NIWA; then click on RFPs.
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SECTION I. INTRODUCTION AND KEY PROVISIONS

The Northern Illinois Workforce Alliance, the local workforce board serving Boone, Stephenson and Winnebago Counties, is seeking proposals from eligible organizations or a consortium of eligible entities to provide One-Stop Operator Services and WIOA Title I Career Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers. The service delivery area is Boone, Stephenson and Winnebago Counties. The Northern Illinois Workforce Alliance oversees three (3) service provision centers branded as The Workforce Connection. The comprehensive Center is located in Rockford, Illinois at 303 North Main Street. There are two (2) affiliate or satellite Centers – 27 West Stephenson; Freeport, Illinois and 998 Belvidere Road; Belvidere, Illinois.

The Northern Illinois Workforce Alliance (NIWA) is committed to a system that provides excellent customer services. NIWA desires a Service provider capable of providing a seamless system of services built on a “Service Integration” model that provides a variety of activities to better align, organize and optimize workforce service delivery and outcomes, creating one common customer path with a standardized process for a wide range of services.

A. One-Stop Operator Services Solicited Under this RFP:

The Northern Illinois Workforce Alliance is seeking an entity (public, private, or nonprofit) or consortium of entities (including a consortium of entities that, at a minimum, includes 3 or more of the one-stop partners) to provide and coordinate the following One-Stop Operator services and activities:

- Coordination of Universal and Resource Room services in The Workforce Connection Centers – Rockford, Belvidere, and Freeport.
- Coordination of Reception and initial registration services for all customers.
- Implement and fulfill cooperative agreements and memoranda of understanding (MOU) with partners.
- Coordinate one-stop partner services, with guidance from NIWA.
- Provide for effective allocation of staff among all The Workforce Connection Centers.
- Coordinate access to virtual resources at appropriate partner locations, libraries, and other points within the 3-County area.
- Develop processes to ensure that all customers receive appropriate, timely, and effective Career Services.
- Develop and implement a formal referral process for services within and outside of the Center(s); define minimum standards for referral, referral follow-up requirements, and documentation of referral outcomes.
- Provide reports as required to NIWA.
- Actively participate with the Core Partners to integrate services in the One-Stop System and Centers of Boone, Stephenson, and Winnebago Counties.
- Perform continuous improvement activities to achieve high level service quality and exceptional customer service.
• Develop and implement a coordinated staff development / training plan (customer service, cross training on partner and other services, community resources, etc.) for The Workforce Connection Center(s) staff and Partner program staff.
• Ensure implementation of the State and Local branding standards.
• Ensure compliance with all State and Local policies and procedures relative to the One-Stop System and One-Stop Centers.

The Workforce Connection Centers see over 25,000 Resource Room or Universal Service visitors on an annual basis – 24,583 in Rockford; 1,809 in Belvidere; and 135 in Freeport for calendar year 2014. Resource Room Services are expected to be available, with staff assistance, in all three locations Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Holidays recognized for closure are the Holidays recognized by the State of Illinois agencies (i.e. IDES; IL DHS; etc.). The Centers are expected to be staffed and opened all other days from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The Receptionist position in The Workforce Connection – Rockford will serve as the primary contact and receptionist for all three centers, transferring calls and taking messages as needed for staff in the three locations.

B. WIOA Title I Career and Training Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers Sought:

The Northern Illinois Workforce Alliance is seeking proposals from eligible organizations to provide WIOA Title I Basic and Individualized Career Services and facilitate Training Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers.

Funds shall be used to provide basic career services, which shall be available to individuals through the one-stop delivery system and shall, at a minimum, include-
• determinations of whether the individuals are eligible to receive assistance under this subtitle;
• outreach, intake (which may include worker profiling), and orientation to the information and other services available through the one-stop delivery system;
• initial assessment of skill levels (including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency), aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and supportive service needs;
• labor exchange services, including –
  o job search and placement assistance and, in appropriate cases, career counseling, including –
    ▪ provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and
    ▪ provision of information on nontraditional employment; and
  o job placement and job development services for job seekers;
• provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services with the one-stop delivery system, and, in appropriate cases, other workforce development programs;
• provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information;
• provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services;
• referrals to services and assistance; and
• assistance in establishing eligibility for program of financial aid assistance for training and education programs that are not funded under WIOA.

Individualized Career Services, if determined to be appropriate in order for an individual to obtain or retain employment are provided to eligible adults and dislocated workers and include –
• Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include
  o Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and
  o In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals
• Development of an individual employment plan, to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals, including providing information on eligible providers of training services, and career pathways to attain career objectives;
• Group counseling;
• Individual counseling;
• Career planning;
• Short-term prevocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct, to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training;
• Internships and work experiences that are linked to careers;
• On-the-Job Training (OJT);
• Workforce preparation activities;
• Financial literacy services;
• Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance; or
• English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs;
• Referrals to:
  o Adult Basic Education and High School Equivalency (HSE) preparation activities, as applicable
  o Bridge Programs
  o Occupational Training (Eligible Training Providers and Programs);
• On-going Case Management and Coaching;
• Unsubsidized Job Development and Placement Assistance—coordinated with The Workforce Connection’s Business Account Managers and Business Service Team;
• Management of records, including case notes;
• Management of data related to WIOA Performance Goals; and
• Follow-up services, including counseling regarding the workplace, for participants in workforce investment/development activities, placed in unsubsidized employment, for not less than 12 months after the first day of employment, as appropriate.

NOTE: Trade Act services are integrated with Dislocated Worker services. Almost 100% of Trade Act customers are co-enrolled into the Dislocated Worker services. The successful proposer will be expected to have background and experience with co-enrollment and Trade Act eligibility and requirements. In addition, the successful proposer will be expected to continue Workforce Investment Act (WIA) identified and WIOA identified services for adults and dislocated workers currently enrolled and in follow-up services, in accordance with guidance expected from the U.S. Department of Labor and IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. The successful proposer will also work closely with the IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to deliver Rapid Response services.

WIOA Title I services for adults and dislocated workers will be provided in all three locations by staff located on site full-time. Services will be available Monday through Friday 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM with the exception of the Illinois State government recognized Holidays.

C. Service Model: The provider(s) selected under this Request for Proposal will be expected to continue to develop and enhance our workforce development system by focusing on a fully coordinated and integrated customer service strategy, focused on a “single-point of contact” model that is market driven and offers value-added services to our job seeker and employer customers. The focus of services, Basic Career Services and specific program services, will be driven by four (4) key points –
• Providing exceptional customer service;
• Meeting the needs of business and workers;
• Program Integration to provide seamless access and increase service accessibility; and
• Accountability.
The Service Integration Model – The model for all services, One-Stop Operator and WIOA Title I Career Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers, is an integrated service model. This model requires integration of the Customer Pool – people coming in the doors are “our” shared customers. There is an integrated customer flow, a standardized common service flow for customers. There are integrated customer service teams that support the customer flow, with staff from different programs working together to complete the work of the team. Services and staff resources will not be separated and in siloes by funding stream or program. Functional teams of staff members from multiple organizations are expected to work as a “unit” with functional supervision.

1. One-Stop Operator –
   a. Integration of the Customer Pool: Integration will occur with all One-Stop partners. As customers enter the One-Stop System (The Workforce Connection system network) the customer’s individual situation will drive the referrals and access to the program or programs that best meet the individual’s needs.
   b. Integrated Customer Service Teams: Staff from different programs work together to complete the work of the team.
   c. Integrated System Branding and Identification: All naming and identification is under The Workforce Connection, an Illinois workNet partner and a partner in the American Job Center network.
   d. The One-Stop Operator will be expected to coordinate labor exchange services with the Wagner-Peyser Program (IDES).

2. WIOA Title I Career Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers –
   a. As a partner in the One-Stop system, offers career services as identified in WIOA Sec. 134(A)(i) – (xi) through Resource Rooms/Universal Services.
   b. Continue Integration of the Customer Pool: Seamless services will be provided to individuals enrolling into WIOA Title I adult and dislocated worker program services. Staff will be organized into functional teams, not organized by funding stream for the provision of services identified in WIOA Sec. 143(A)(xii) – (xiii).
   c. Integrated System Branding and Identification: All naming and identification is under The Workforce Connection, an Illinois workNet partner and a partner in the American Job Center network.
   d. Integrated Business Services: All the business services aspects of all programs are coordinated with The Workforce Connection Business Services Team, under the functional supervision of NIWA Business Account Managers.

D. Eligible Bidders: Organizations or entities (public, private, or nonprofit) or consortium of entities (including a consortium of entities that, at a minimum, includes 3 or more of the one-stop partners with demonstrated effectiveness, located in the local area, which may include:
   • An institution of higher education;
   • An employment service State agency established under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), on behalf of the local office of the agency;
   • A community-based organization, nonprofit organization, or intermediary;
   • A private for-profit entity;
   • A government agency; and
   • Another interested organization or entity, which may include a local chamber of commerce or other business organization, or a labor organization.

NOTE EXCEPTION: Elementary schools and secondary schools shall not be eligible for designation or certification as one-stop operators, except that nontraditional public secondary schools and area career and technical education schools may be eligible for such designation or certification.
E. **Letter of Intent to Propose:** By close of business on **Tuesday, October 6, 2015** potential bidders wishing to submit a proposal must submit a non-binding notification of intent to propose to the Northern Illinois Workforce Alliance at vjohnson@theworkforceconnection.org. This notification must include the organization’s primary contact with title and e-mail address. All organizations must be identified if applying as a consortium.

F. **Proposal Due Date:** Proposals are due to NIWA by 3:00 PM Central Standard Time on **Tuesday, November 3, 2015**.

G. **Funding Period /Period of Performance:** The funding period for contracts awarded under this solicitation will be from January 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017 provided performance remains acceptable during that period. Any contract awarded from this RFP will include an option to renew for up to two additional one year periods, contingent upon successful performance.

H. **Funding Available:** An estimated total of **$66,000** for the period of January – June 2016, and **$132,000** for July 2016 – June 2017 in WIOA Title I funding will be available for **One-Stop Operator services**. These funds will be used for staffing costs related to Coordination and Integration of all One-Stop Center services including Resource Room(s) and receptionist coverage in all three locations, any travel or mileage related to off-site coordination, basic office supplies for staff (not Resource Room supplies, as those will be provided through infrastructure costs shared by Partners). Additional staffing for Resource Room and universal Services will be provided by Partner Programs through the MOU. One-Stop Operator funds from WIOA Title I are estimated and may be changed based upon final MOU negotiations and issuance of additional guidance and final regulations.

An estimated total of **$750,000** ($300,000 for Adult and $450,000 for Dislocated Worker/TRADE) will be available for WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Career Services **January through June 2016**. Additional funds have already been budgeted for training activities as identified on the budget form for this period. Estimated funding for PY2016 for Career Services and Training Services is **$2,383,315** ($1,060,258 Adult and $1,323,057 Dislocated Worker). At least 45% ($1,072,492) of this funding must be designated for tuition, books, and fees for occupational and other related educational courses; and work-based learning activities such as work experience, internships, and On-the-Job training. The budget developed for PY2016 is a planning budget and will be modified when final allocations become known.

Administrative Costs, as identified in the Workforce Investment Act and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, apply to One-Stop Operator funds and services and are limited to 10% and must be clearly identified and defined in the Budget and Budget Narrative.

I. **Right to Cancel:** NIWA reserves the right to delay, amend, reissue, or cancel, all or any part of this RFP at any time without prior notice. NIWA also reserves the right to modify the RFP process and timeline as deemed necessary. Subject to guidance being issued by US Department of Labor and / or IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and the issuance of final regulations this RFP and/or any subsequent sub-awards will be modified to ensure compliance.

This RFP does not commit NIWA to accept any proposal, nor is NIWA responsible for any costs incurred by the respondent in the preparation of responses to this RFP. NIWA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to accept or reject any or all items in the proposal, and to award the contracts in whole or in part as is deemed to be in the best interest of NIWA. NIWA reserves the right to negotiate with any respondent after proposals are reviewed, if such action is deemed to be in the best interest of NIWA.

J. **Management and Financial Requirements and Separation of Duties:**
   1. Management. Proposers must be able to demonstrate the management and financial capability needed to effectively and efficiently deliver the program proposed. Management capability includes the ability to manage the delivery system effectively and efficiently, conduct self-monitoring for contract compliance, implement a continuous improvement model, achieve the contract objectives, provide quality service delivery, keep appropriate records in an auditable manner, and meet/exceed performance standards.
2. Financial requirements. This includes the ability to maintain fiscal controls, accounting procedures; financial reporting in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, demonstrates sound financial practices, and show evidence of continued financial stability.

The successful proposer will maintain separate accounting records for any contract resulting from this RFP to ensure accurate and appropriate reporting of contract expenditure, and ensure that costs are tracked in sufficient detail to determine compliance with contract requirements and ensure funds have not been unlawfully spent. All accounting records must be made available for review upon request for examination, audit, or for the making of excerpts or copies of such record for the purpose of determining compliance with all applicable rules and regulations, and the provisions of the contracts.

3. Separation of Duties. A separation of duties (administrative, fiscal, programs oversight and training services separated from direct program service delivery) is required to be identified to eliminate and avoid any conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest and provide the appropriate quality checks and balances.

K. Indirect Cost Rate: Indirect costs are allowed if the entity has an approved indirect cost rate. However, these rates are subject to negotiation but may not exceed the approved indirect cost rate.

L. Cost and Prices Analysis: All proposals will be evaluated on the basis of obtaining the most cost-effective price possible while achieving the highest quality service delivery. A cost price analysis will be conducted on the proposed costs during the proposal review process. Agencies are encouraged to submit their best offer for providing the services solicited and to thoroughly describe and justify the costs.

The cost and price analysis shall be conducted to ensure that the proposed costs are necessary, fair, and reasonable; to determine if the proposed costs are allowable and allocable; to determine if there is a duplication of costs with other programs; to ensure that the costs are directly associated with carrying out only the proposed services; and to ensure that the proposed costs will benefit the program.

M. Audit Requirements: The services delivered under this RFP are considered sub-recipient services and will require the selected proposer to comply with audit requirements for federal funds. All proposers must submit a copy of the most recent independent audit and financial statements. (Proposal Attachment 6)

N. Type of Contract: Proposed costs will be analyzed and a cost reimbursement contract will be negotiated with a demonstrated performance basis. Payment under a cost reimbursement contract will be based upon actual costs and performance delivery outcomes.

For the purposes of responding to this RFP, proposers will develop a line-item budget showing all expected costs associated with delivering the proposed services and a budget narrative explaining the costs.

O. Outreach, Public Relations, and Branding: Services offered through The Workforce Connection partnership (and funded by WIOA) shall be promoted under “The Workforce Connection” brand as an Illinois workNet site and the “federal identifier”, partner in the American Job Centers Network. In keeping with our vision of offering integrated services to both jobseekers and employers, promotional and outreach materials (including printed brochures, media releases, flyers, brochures, advertising, social media sites) must only include The Workforce Connection/Illinois workNet Center branding and the American Job Center identification. All promotional and outreach materials will be approved in advance by the NIWA Public Information Manager. The NIWA Public Information Manager will ensure all stationary, brochures, signage, business cards, and advertising meets the branding requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity under Illinois workNet guidelines.

NIWA/DOL/IDCEO will be identified as the funding entity on printed materials developed with WIOA funds and/or used for outreach or to promote WIOA-funded programs or services.
P. Questions: Any questions regarding this RFP should be addressed to Valerie Johnson, Planning and Quality Assurance Manager, at vjohnson@theworkforceconnection.org.

SECTION II. PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procurement Action</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issue RFP</td>
<td>September 17, 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposer’s Conference</td>
<td>September 28, 2015 10:00 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter of Intent to Propose Due</td>
<td>October 6, 2015 5:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposer’s Conference</td>
<td>October 8, 2015 1:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for Questions</td>
<td>October 14, 2015 5:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposals Due</td>
<td>November 3, 2015 3:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Reviews</td>
<td>November 4 – 13, 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible Proposal Presentations</td>
<td>November 17-19, 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board and Elected Official Action to Award Contract(s)</td>
<td>December 1, 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Award/Agreement Executed</td>
<td>January 1, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of Performance</td>
<td>January 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017</td>
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NIWA reserves the right to adjust the schedule when it is in the best interest of NIWA or to extend any published deadline in this RFP upon notification to those who have submitted a Letter of Intent to Propose by the date and time specified.

All potential respondents are strongly encouraged to attend the proposers’ conference, since this will the best opportunity for having technical or other concerns addressed.

The Letter of Intent to Propose must clearly identify the proposer or a consortium of proposers. This Letter of Intent does not commit a proposer to submitting a proposal.

The Letter of Intent to Propose and the proposal must be received at the NIWA Administrative office (303 North Main Street, Suite 200; Rockford, Illinois 61101) by the dates and times shown above. The prospective proposer is solely responsible for assuring that anything sent to NIWA arrives safely and on time.

SECTION III. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND WIOA REFERENCES

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) References:**

**SEC. 121. ESTABLISHMENT OF ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEMS.**

**(d) One-Stop Operators.**

**(1) LOCAL DESIGNATION AND CERTIFICATION.** Consistent with paragraphs (2) and (3), the local board, with the agreement of the chief elected official, is authorized to designate or certify one-stop operators and to terminate for cause the eligibility of such operators.

**(2) ELIGIBILITY.** To be eligible to receive funds made available under this subtitle to operate a one-stop center referred to in subsection (e), an entity (which may be a consortium of entities) –

(A) Shall be designated or certified as a one-stop operator through a competitive process; and

(B) Shall be an entity (public, private, or nonprofit) or consortium of entities (including a consortium of entities that, at a minimum, includes 3 or more of the one-stop partners

(C) described in subsection (b)(1), of demonstrated effectiveness, located in the local area, which may include-

(i) An institution of higher education;

(ii) An employment service State agency established under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), on behalf of the local office of the agency;

(iii) A community-based organization, nonprofit organization, or intermediary;

(iv) A private for-profit entity;
(v) A government agency; and
(vi) Another interested organization or entity, which may include a local chamber of commerce or other business organization, or a labor organization.

(3) EXCEPTION.-Elementary schools and secondary schools shall not be eligible for designation or certification as one-stop operators, except that nontraditional public secondary schools and area career and technical education schools may be eligible for such designation or certification.

(4) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.- The State and local boards shall ensure that in carrying out activities under this title, one-stop operators:

(A) disclose any potential conflicts of interest arising from the relationships of the operators with particular training service providers or other service providers;

(B) do not establish practices that create disincentives to providing services to individuals with barriers to employment who may require longer-term services, such as intensive employment, training, and education services; and

(C) comply with Federal regulations, and procurement policies, relating to the calculation and use of profits.

(e) Establishment of One-Stop Delivery System-

(1) IN GENERAL.- There shall be established in each local area in a State that receives an allotment under section 132(b) a one-stop delivery system, which shall:

(A) provide the career services described in section 134(c)(2);

(B) provide access to training services as described in section 134(c)(3), including serving as the point of access to training services for participants in accordance with section 134(c)(3)(G);

(C) provide access to the employment and training activities carried out under section 134(d), if any;

(D) provide access to programs and activities carried out by one-stop partners described in subsection (b);

and

(F) provide access to the data, information, and analysis described in section 15(a) of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 491-2(a)) and all job search, placement, recruitment, and other labor exchange services authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.).

SEC. 134 USE OF FUNDS FOR EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES. (c)(2) CAREER SERVICES:

(A) SERVICES PROVIDED. – Funds described in paragraph (1) shall be used to provide career services, which shall be available to individuals who are adults or dislocated workers through the one-stop delivery system and shall, at a minimum, include:

(i) determinations of whether the individuals are eligible to receive assistance under this subtitle;

(ii) outreach, intake (which may include worker profiling), and orientation to the information and other services available through the one-stop delivery system;

(iii) initial assessment of skill levels (including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency), aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and supportive service needs;

(iv) labor exchange services, including –

(I) job search and placement assistance and inappropriate cases, career counseling, including –

(aa) provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and

(bb) provision of information on nontraditional employment; and

(II) appropriate recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers, including small employers, in the local area, which services may include services described in this subsection, such as providing information and referral to specialized business services not traditionally offered through the one-stop delivery system;

(v) provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services with the one-stop delivery system, and, in appropriate cases, other workforce development programs;

(vi) provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including the provision of accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including:

(I) job vacancy listings in such labor market areas;

(II) information on job skills necessary to obtain the jobs described in subclause (I); and
(III) information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skill requirements and opportunities for advancement for such occupations; and:

(vii) provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services as described in section 122, provided by program, and eligible providers of youth workforce investment activities as described in section 123, providers of adult education described in title II, providers of career and technical education activities at the postsecondary level, and career and technical education activities available to school dropouts, under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.), and providers of vocational rehabilitation services described in title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.);

(viii) provision of information, in formats that are usable by and understandable to one-stop center customers, regarding how the local area is performing on the local performance accountability measures described in section 116(c) and any additional performance information with respect to the one-stop delivery system in the local area;

(ix) (I) provisions of information, in formats that are usable by and understandable to one-stop center customers relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance, including child care, child support, medical or child health assistance under title XIX or XXI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq. and 1397aa et seq.), benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), assistance through the earned income tax credit under section 32 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and assistance under a State program for temporary assistance for needy families funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) and other supportive services and transportation provided through funds made available under such part, available in the local area; and (II) referral to the services or assistance described in subclause (I), as appropriate;

(x) Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensations;

(xi) Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs that are not funded under this Act;

(xii) Services, if determined to be appropriate in order for an individual to obtain or retain employment that consist of –

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include
  - Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and
  - In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals
- Development of an individual employment plan, to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals, including providing information on eligible providers of training services pursuant to paragraph (3)(F)(ii), and career pathways to attain career objectives;
- Group counseling;
- Individual counseling;
- Career planning;
- Short-term prevocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct, to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training;
- Internships and work experiences that are linked to careers;
- Workforce preparation activities;
- Financial literacy services, such as the activities described in section 129(b)(2)(D);
- Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance; or
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs; and

(xiii) Follow-up services, including counseling regarding the workplace, for participants in workforce investment activities authorized under this subtitle who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for not less than 12 months after the first day of employment, as appropriate.
IV. SPECIFICATIONS

A. Expectations:
   The bidding organization(s) possess:
   - a mission statement that encompasses the designated services to be provided;
   - considerable experience working with individuals with barriers to employment;
   - a history of documented financial stability;
   - proven management expertise;
   - a Board of Directors (or comparable body) that will be free of conflicts and will exercise active oversight of--
     - program management, audits, and financial controls, and
     - program operation and outcomes;
   - a history of engaging in successful joint efforts with other organizations providing the same or similar services;
   - the capacity to integrate the service model/design into its overall operations;
   - an internal monitoring system that will effectively identify program, personnel, and fiscal issues and provide corrective action procedures;
   - the ability to meet the required hours of operation and State government holiday schedule; and
   - a continuous quality improvement process that includes quality assurance measures for all aspects of the services.

Note: If a consortium, as defined under Section I. D., is responding to this RFP, a lead organization must be identified as the sub-award entity for contracting purposes. WIOA discusses conflict of interest and separation of duties in the Proposed Rules §679.430. NIWA is interested in being very clear with a separation of duties to avoid conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest. Therefore, the lead entity is discouraged from performing any administrative, oversight, or training services (as an Eligible Training Provider or as a contract Vendor) functions for NIWA unless such entity can clearly identify separate reporting requirements and structures for One-Stop Operator and Career Services program staff, administrative staff, oversight staff and training staff.

B. Duration of Services/Services Levels

   Hours: The Workforce Connection offices in all three locations will be open during the day, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday, year-round and, as needed, evenings and weekends to accommodate special activities.

   Service Levels: The visitors to The Workforce Connection offices annually exceed 25,000. PY2015 Career Service levels for the WIOA Adult program is established at 385 and the Dislocated Worker program at 480. This sub-award will be issued for the remaining six month of PY2015 and PY2016. Service levels for PY2016 will be determined during the months of May and June 2016 when awards are being finalized for the full program year of 2016

C. Experience and Qualifications of the Bidder and of the Bidders’ Staff

   - The bidder’s organizational mission statement will encompass the designated services to be provided.
   - Bidders are expected to indicate if other sources of funding will also support the services.
   - The bidder, if successful, will employ qualified staff with the credentials, skills and knowledge to deliver the services identified in this RFP.
   - The bidder, if successful, will ensure that WIOA paid staff members are appropriately trained in areas including, but not limited to, Eligibility and Intake, Customer Service, Case Management, Career Planning, and Employment Planning.
   - All staff will provide services in a manner sensitive to the ethnic, racial, and linguistic characteristics; religious preferences; and sexual orientation of the customer.
D. **Scope of Services to be Provided**

**Vision for WIOA Programming:** The vision for a revitalized transformed workforce system under WIOA is provided in *Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 19-14* issued by U.S.DOL, Employment and Training Administration on February 19, 2015. The workforce system will be characterized by three hallmarks of excellence:

- The needs of business and workers drive workforce solutions;
- One-Stop Centers provide excellent customer service to job seekers and employers and focus on continuous improvement; and
- The workforce system supports strong regional economies and plays an active role in community and workforce development.

**Key operational principles include:**

- Alignment of programs and integrated services;
- High quality services;
- Accountability and transparency; and
- Data-driven decisions for informed customer choices.

To fully comply with the requirements of this RFP, the successful proposer will perform all of the following services. Provision of services must be coordinated throughout all three locations. Program services include WIOA adult and dislocated worker, TRADE Act, and other Federal and State grants to expand and enhance the public workforce system services.

It is the goal of this system that the delivery of services will be focused on fully integrating a consistent service delivery process, the core of which is a “Service Integration” model, providing exceptional customer service, quality career planning and case management, and effective job placement to impact the long-term success of all customers. The Service provider will also ensure that individuals are enrolled in appropriate training services to ensure that local workforce development area #3 meets the required 40% training expenditure.

The proposer contracted in response to this RFP must provide the services described in this RFP to the following customers, as appropriate and within funding/eligibility guidelines and requirements:

- Veterans
- Adult learners and workers with basic skills deficiency or lacking a high school credential
- TANF recipients
- Dislocated Workers
- The general public seeking career services
- Re-Entry / Returning citizens
- Individuals facing English language barriers

**One-Stop Operator Services**

1. **Program Facilities**
   
a. A full service, comprehensive One-Stop Center is currently operated at 303 North Main Street in Rockford, IL (The Workforce Connection – Rockford) and two (2) satellite centers are located in Belvidere and Freeport, Illinois. The successful proposer will be expected to maintain a fully functioning One-Stop Center at the current location and enhance the delivery of services at the satellite locations. Costs for use of the facilities should not be considered in the provider’s proposed budget. **NOTE:** Providers will be responsible for the costs of staff computer equipment, staff supplies, and any staff travel.

   b. The One-Stop Operator will seek and implement access points to make WIOA career services accessible to residents in community centers, libraries, and with community-based organizations. Access points will ensure accessibility to target populations.
c. Operate The Workforce Connection Centers as a functioning One-Stop Center that is professional and inviting in appearance with easy customer flow and courteous, professionally attired staff. Cooperate with NIWA relative to identifying accessibility needs, utilizing accessibility resources and assuring the Centers remain ADA accessible.

d. Maintain facilities and services to meet and exceed NIWA and State certification standards when identified.

e. Furnish and staff a resource area for use by the public, providing quality internet access and equipment for use by customers and partner staff of the One-Stop Center(s).

f. Provide for referral systems amongst various agencies and partners.

g. Offer Resource Room services, with staff assistance, in all three locations Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Holidays recognized for closure are the Holidays recognized by the State of Illinois agencies (i.e. IDES; IL DHS; etc.). The Centers are expected to be staffed and opened all other days from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

h. Utilize MPOWER as the registration system. (This may change as the State develops a State-wide system.)

2. Outreach and Recruitment
   a. The One-Stop Center Operator is responsible for aggressive marketing to job seekers and customers seeking career services including to such target groups identified above. All outreach and recruitment will be done utilizing NIWA guidelines and policy and branded under The Workforce Connection. No individual agency logos or webpages will be utilized.

   b. Collaborate with NIWA staff for all outreach efforts.

3. Services for Job Seeking Customers
   a. The One-Stop Centers will offer integrated services of partners in a seamless and streamlined fashion. Adaptations will be available for specialized populations such as those with language and cultural barriers including those with limited English proficiency, people with disabilities, as well as people with other challenges.

   b. Services available to the customer will include the following. Some of these services will require WIOA Title I and partner program enrollment.
      - Outreach, intake and orientation to The Workforce Connection services.
      - Initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, and need for supportive services.
      - Initial development of an employment plan.
      - Job search and employment assistance.
      - A resource room with self-service information to help customers in selecting careers, job search, job matching, placement, retention and advancement. The resource room should be designed for ease of customer use, and staffed with technologically expert professionals who can answer questions and assist in information searches, decisions, and connection to services.

The resource room provides access to:
   - Illinois workNet – a website used to research careers, develop a resume, complete assessment, and identify training options and local activities.
   - Illinois JobLink - the job matching website in Illinois. All participants are encouraged to register and post their resume.
   - Career Cruising – web-based program for career planning.
   - Labor market information, including job vacancy listing, job skill
requirements for job listing, and information on employment trends and career options, available training, and employment law.
  o Information on resume writing, interview techniques, and application completions.
  o Performance and cost information on eligible training providers and information on financial aid. (Eligible training provider information will be available in the near future.)
  o Performance information on the local One-Stop delivery system.
  o Information on One-Stop partner services.
• Information on supportive services including how to obtain them.
• Information regarding filing for Unemployment Compensation.
• Access to employability workshops, including workshops that develop “essential skills” such as effective communication, team work, problems solving, and personal presentation skills; and workshops on the use of technology for the job search.
• Follow-up with customers’ progress in achieving career goals to direct them to other career services, partner services or WIOA services.
• Provide accessibility for those customers with disabilities.
• Provide information and referral for out-of-school youth.

4. Customer Data Collection
Secure basic information as required by DOL and DCEO on job seeking customers using One-Stop Center Services. Track repeat customers and make appropriate referrals for necessary services to obtain employment.

5. Collaboration
  a. Collaborate with the One-Stop’s partners to bring integrated and additional services to the One-Stop Center(s).
  b. Improve customer access to One-Stop partner services through implementing a common intake, common application, common case management and referral process as required under WIOA and implemented by the State. Strive to streamline services and minimize duplication.

6. Continuous Improvement
  a. Meet or exceed all WIOA performance measures included in law and subsequent regulatory decisions.
  b. Provide reports to NIWA on services and performance.
  c. Ensure on-going improvement of One-Stop Center(s) services. Improvement should focus on but is not limited to program utilization, performance outcomes, customer satisfaction, and cost effectiveness. Report improvement in the report to NIWA.
  d. Establish a program of staff capacity building, within and across partners.

WIOA Services for Adult and Dislocated Workers

1. Outreach and Recruitment
  a. Implement an outreach strategy to enroll adults and dislocated workers in WIOA services and to meet performance standards. Manage enrollment of adult and dislocated workers into WIOA services to maximize funding allocations.

2. Rapid Response
  a. Participate with the State in the provision of Rapid Response services.
  b. Leverage and coordinate community and public resources for lay-offs, including linking to One-Stop partners and Trade Act programs and promote seamless delivery of services to affected businesses and employees.
  c. Implement a strategy for promoting Rapid Response so that everyone involved in dislocation events is aware and takes full advantage of the full range of available re-employment services.
d. Respond to all rapid response requests within the times and process designated by IL DCEO Rapid Response procedures and policy.

e. Provide services in locations and times convenient for affected workers.

3. WIOA Registration/Enrollment

a. In accordance with appropriate federal and state guidance, make eligibility determinations and enrollments into the appropriate program services. Collect and maintain documentation as required.
b. Obtain the services information and data elements to appropriately document and report activities.
c. With the customer jointly develop Employment Plans, identify service strategies from intake through job retention.
d. Document barriers to employment and clearly identify services provided to address individual circumstances.
e. Provide quality case management with complete case note documentation.
f. Provide follow-up services as appropriate for WIOA customers for up to 12 months after program exit.

4. Career Services

Develop and provide on-site access to all career services for customers:

a. Utilize resources, assessments and career exploration tools available in IL workNet and Career Cruising.
b. Designate, hire or establish an assessment specialist or team of assessment staff trained to conduct vocational interest assessments, WorkKeys employability assessments and other assessments to assist Career Planners and customers determine opportunities for job placement and training success.
c. Full development of individual employment plans, updating them as circumstances change and activities are completed. Individual employment plans should, at a minimum, include specific program services the customer will receive; job search assistance available; supportive services needed; income planning (while participating in program services and income needed to become self-sufficient at employment); and benchmarks to accomplish the employment goal.
d. Group Career counseling.
e. Individual career counseling and career planning.
f. Short-term pre-vocational services.
g. Short-term job search activities: career counseling, job search skills brush up, assisted job search, supportive services and workshops.
h. For customers entering employment, provide follow up services to support retention.
i. Assessment for suitability for vocational training. Administer a financial assessment to identify training funding options for eligible customers.
j. Case management for customers, contacting them regularly (a minimum of every thirty (30) days depending on need), reassessing them, and providing needed career services.
k. Reassessment and other services for customers having difficulty making progress on career goals, experiencing barriers preventing full participation in services, or difficulties on completion of planned activities.

5. Training Services

a. To obtain training services to attain employment, customers will complete an in-depth assessment, and as a result, the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) will document the need for training and that the customer has inadequate access to resources to cover the cost of training.
b. Training services will be available to customers who have demonstrated this inability to attain self-sufficiency and who are interested in and capable of obtaining training and employment in in-demand occupations identified by NIWA for the region.
c. Provide a streamlined process that will enable customers to access relevant training for approved training vendors.
d. Implement special training programs as identified with partner programs to address specific employment areas.

e. Make sure the customers have:
   - Been adequately informed about the current labor market;
   - Identified his/her skills and employability strengths and gaps;
   - Identified a job training program for their expressed vocational interest and skills needs;
   - Selected and agreed to enroll in training directly linked to a job that allows them to attain a self-sufficiency wage in a in-demand industry sector for this region;
   - The skills/qualifications to successfully complete the training and obtain a job;
   - Been determined to be a dislocated worker, or an adult as defined by WIOA regulations; and
   - Determined that there is no other grant assistance or insufficient grants to pay for all the costs for training delivered through an Eligible Training Provider.

f. Carry out the policies of NIWA regarding training (Individual Training Accounts; Pre-Vocational Services; Work-Based Learning options; Industry Sectors; Assessments; IEP).

g. Use eligible training vendors for Individual Training accounts (ITAs) to provide customers with suitable vocational and occupational skills training options. Refer all customers to training paid for with WIOA funds to vendors on the eligible training providers list, unless offered on-the-job training or customized training.

h. Provide access to the following Training Services:
   - On-the-Job Training – Training by an employer that is provided to a paid participant while engaged in productive work that:
     1. Provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job;
     2. Provides reimbursement to the employer of a percentage of the wage rate (generally 50%; however under NIWA policy, reimbursement can be higher dependent upon the size of the company employment) of the participant for the extraordinary costs of providing the training, and additional supervision related to the training.
     3. Is limited in duration as appropriate to the occupation for which the participant is being trained, taking into account the content of the training, prior work experience of the participant, and the service strategy of the participant, but not exceeding six months.
   - Customized Training – Training that is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer or group of employers; conducted with employer commitment to employ, or in the case of incumbent workers, continue to employ an individual upon successful completion of training, for which the employer(s) pays in accordance with NIWA policy based on the size of the company employment schedule.
   - Occupational Skills Training – Training by eligible training providers and supported all or in part by an Individual Training Account.

i. Monitor the progress of WIOA customers enrolled in training through contacts with training customers and training vendors. Document progress of WIOA training customers on an ongoing basis.

j. Obtain copies of credentials and training certificates customers receive as documentation of completion of training services.

k. Work with NIWA to collect information on the effectiveness of training programs.

l. Focus resources and customers on the industries and skills in which employers offer high demand, high skills, and high wage jobs for customers successfully graduating from the training program.

m. Propose pilot training programs to the NIWA to consider and test alternative approaches to training once concurrence is obtained in advance from NIWA.
6. Post-Employment Services
   a. Provide retention and re-employment services that ensure the ultimate retention and advancement of customers at a self-sufficient wage.
   b. Identify other barriers that could affect job retention and amend IEP by mapping out action steps to address potential pitfalls.
   c. Be knowledgeable about the impact of follow-up activities on performance and fulfill all follow-up requirements to secure results.

7. Tracking WIOA Customers and Reporting on Progress and Outcomes
   a. Complete all required WIOA customer paperwork and enter customer information into IWDS or any subsequent system provided upon receipt of service.
   b. Participate fully in training on WIOA data management, eligibility determination, and accurate and timely data entry.
   c. Establish procedures for accurate completion and review of WIOA paperwork and timely entry of data into IWDS. This includes:
      - Customer applications document of eligibility;
      - Documentation of ending “activity”;
      - Employment verifications;
      - Documentation of exiting customers; and
      - Documentation of customer follow-up.
   d. Accurately determine eligibility and suitability for WIOA services for program participants.
   e. Manage the timely documentation of progress and outcomes related to performance standards and contract requirements.
   f. Establish procedures for timely exiting of customers, following WIOA regulations, best practice and local policy.
   g. Provide monthly reports to NIWA and the CEOs.

8. Performance Standards
   Meet or exceed state and federal performance standards.

9. Maintenance of Case Records
   For each WIOA customer, maintain a case record that contains, at a minimum – until any specific changes or additions are required under WIOA regulatory guidelines or advisories:
   - The Individual Employment Plan and assessment results;
   - WIOA paperwork, including customer applications, eligibility documentation for career services;
   - Notes on customer contacts and progress (at a minimum every 30 days);
   - End of activity documentation;
   - Employment verifications;
   - Exit documentations; and
   - Documentation of customer follow-up for 12 months.

10. Connecting Job Seeker Services and Employer Services
    a. Employ Business Service Representatives/Job Placement staff.
    b. Business Service Representatives/Job Placement Staff will work under the functional supervision of NIWA Business Account Managers.
    c. Business Service staff will address the needs of local employers by identifying job seeking customers available for open positions.
    d. Business Service Representatives will serve as job placement staff, at times doing specific job development for job seeking customers.
    e. Business Service Representatives will participate in Job Fairs and other business recruitment events, representing The Workforce Connection.
    f. Business Service Representatives, through an integrated service approach with all partners, will
assist local Business customers with recruitment of talent; assessments of potential applicants and incumbent workers (may include WorkKeys assessments); connecting local Business to available resources such as tax credits and other incentives; and, as appropriate, incumbent worker training, OJT, and customized training opportunities.

g. Business Service Representatives will, in coordination with the team and under functional supervision of the Business Account Managers, implement a sector strategy approach to identify business needs, define solutions, and, as appropriate to the solution, provide qualified talent.

h. Provide Business Services meeting the performance measures established under WIOA; to increase business participation in the local workforce system; and establish a high level of satisfaction among business customers.

PY2015 Performance Measures

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Performance Measure</th>
<th>Adult Entered Employment Rate (AEER):</th>
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<td>Adult Employment Retention Rate (ARR):</td>
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<td>Adult Average Earnings Rate (AAE):</td>
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<td>Dislocated Worker</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DW Average Earnings Rate (AAE):</td>
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Credential Attainment goal to be determined.

SECTION V. PROPOSAL APPLICATION INFORMATION

A. The Northern Illinois Workforce Alliance must receive your proposal by **3:00 PM Central Standard Time on Tuesday, November 3, 2015.**

Place the following items in a sealed package:

1. Your original proposal and six copies (only one copy of Audit), and
2. Your entire proposal (except Audit) saved in Microsoft WORD on a labeled thumb drive. (The budget will be in EXCEL.)

Then submit the package to: Cathy Cornelius, Board Assistant
The Workforce Connection
303 North Main Street; 2nd Floor
Rockford, Illinois 61101

Make sure your organization’s name and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act – One-Stop Operator and Career Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers is on the exterior of your sealed proposal package. The date and time that NIWA received your proposal will be written on the outside of the sealed packet and recorded on the cover page of your original proposal.

Use a clamp to hold the proposal. Do not staple the pages or put the proposal in a binder. Incomplete proposals and proposals received after 3:00 PM, Tuesday, November 3, 2015 will not be evaluated.

If you have questions regarding this Request for Proposals or any WIOA or local NIWA policies or requirements, please contact Valerie Johnson (815-395-6676 or vjohnson@theworkforceconnection.org). Please e-mail Valerie to receive the Proposal Forms in WORD (EXCEL for Budget).
B. This RFP does not commit NIWA to award a grant, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal, or to procure or contract for services or supplies prior to issuance of a written agreement.

NIWA retains the right to:
- Accept or reject any or all proposals received. (NIWA may negotiate with all qualified sources, or cancel in part, or in entirety, proposals if it is in NIWA’s best interest to do so. NIWA may request that bidders participate in negotiations and rewrite their applications as agreed upon during the negotiations.)
- Discuss a proposed program with anyone potentially involved in the program.
- Review the bidders’ administrative and fiscal procedures relating to the potential award as part of the proposal review process.

Proprietary rights to all data, materials, and documentation originated and prepared for NIWA pursuant to a sub-award shall belong exclusively NIWA.

C. All proposals submitted will be subject to competitive review. The Proposal Evaluation Process is discussed in Section VII. Proposal funding decisions will be made by the Northern Illinois Workforce Alliance Board upon recommendation of the Proposal Review Sub-Committee.

D. The funding period for sub-awards under this solicitation will be from January 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017 provided performance remains acceptable during that period. Any contact awarded from this RFP will include an option to renew for up to two additional one year periods, contingent upon successful performance.

E. There will a public opening of the sealed proposal packages on Tuesday, November 3, 2015, 3:30 PM, second floor, The Workforce Connection, 303 North Main Street, Rockford. At that time staff will determine if the proposals submitted contain all required documents and components. Only complete proposals will be evaluated by the Review Team. Bidders will be notified of their proposal’s status after the public opening is completed.

F. Bidders’ right to appeal the decisions regarding the Awarding of Programs. See Section VIII. of this RFP.

SECTION VI. FORMAT AND CONTENTS OF THE PROPOSAL

Proposals must be submitted in the following format.
- One-inch margins
- Not less than 11-point font (i.e., font not less than the size of the font in this RFP)
- Single spacing, double spacing between paragraphs
- Sections and subsections labeled
- 25 pages maximum, excluding the cover page, table of contents, and requested attachments.
  (Include only requested attachments.)

Proposals not in the designated format will be rejected.

A. Cover Sheet for Proposal

Complete all items on the Cover Sheet (in Section VIII).

B. Table of Contents

After you have written the entire proposal, number the pages and fill in the numbers on the Table of Contents. Please note that the cover sheet is numbered -i-, and the Table of Contents is numbered -ii-. The Overview will be numbered page -1-. 
C. Program Proposal Narrative

Your Program Proposal will be a clear and concise narrative. Use bullet points, charts, etc. to enhance your presentation.

1. Overview of Services to be Provided (maximum of 2 pages)
Prepare an Overview of the One-Stop Operator and Career Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers your organization will conduct. The Overview will be a summary of the services your organization will provide. Be sure to emphasize integration with partner services, indicating the close coordination you will have with the WIOA Core Partner programs; and your organizations understanding and commitment to the vision for WIOA programming and key operational principles.

2. Experience and Qualifications, including Organizational Capacity/Profile (maximum of 15 points)
Bidders will be evaluated in this section on the extent to which the Organization or Consortium is experienced and qualified to meet and exceed the expectations outlined in the RFP:

- Clearly identify why your organization is qualified to be the One-Stop Operator and provide WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Career Services. Provide information on past performance and responsibilities with workforce development or employment programs.
  - NOTE: If a consortium of organizations/partners is submitting a proposal, identify the lead agency.

- Be sure to include statistics with the outcomes for your relevant programming for the past four program years.

- State your organization’s mission (mission statement) and demonstrate your capacity to integrate the Services conducted under this proposal into your organization’s overall operations. Attach as Proposal Attachment 1 an organizational chart. This chart will clearly identify where One-Stop Operator and WIOA Career Services functions will fall in your organization.
  - NOTE: If an organization proposing is currently providing any other functions related to NIWA or WIOA, clearly identify the separation of duties through staff reporting requirements and structures.

- Describe your financial stability for the past five years, detailing any difficulties regarding financial stability and how those difficulties have been (or are) being addressed.

- Submit, as Proposal Attachment 2, a detailed description of your organization’s fiscal procedures. (Lead Agency for a Consortium application)

- Attach to the end of only your original copy of this proposal a copy of the most recent financial audit of your organization conducted by a certified public accountant, indicating the period covered; or, if no audit has been performed, the most recent financial statement, indicating the period covered and an explanation of why no audited financial statement is available. Financial audits covering a period prior to calendar year 2011 will not be accepted. (Lead Agency for a Consortium application)

- Describe the relevant experience of your organization’s key staff who would be involved in planning the Services your organization will deliver. (At the end of your proposal’s Budget section, you will include a job description for each position funded in whole or in part in your organization’s proposed budget. Job descriptions must specifically indicate, in addition to position duties, the staff skills, knowledge, and training needed for the position.)
• Describe your organization’s internal monitoring system and demonstrate how it is effectively used to assure quality and identify program, personnel, and fiscal issues. Describe your organization’s corrective action procedures.

• Describe the quality improvement protocol that your organization would implement to ensure continuous improvement of services delivery and participant outcome achievement.

• Describe your organization’s Board of Directors (or comparable body, as applicable). Attach as Proposal Attachment 3 a list of your organization’s Board of Directors that includes at least their 1) board position, 2) business address and phone number, and 3) e-mail address.

• List at least three relevant funding references, including the name of funding organization and the name, title, e-mail address and telephone number of a contact person at the funding organization.

• Assure that all individuals, including volunteers, will provide services in manner sensitive to the ethnic, racial, and linguistic characteristics and sexual orientation of program participants.

• If applying as a consortium, include as Proposal Attachment 4 a Memorandum of Understanding amongst the consortium partners. The MOU will contain a chart or table indicating the partners in the consortium and management or service roles each partner will fulfill.

3. **One-Stop Operator Services** (maximum 25 points)
   In discussion of your service delivery, you will explain how you intend to provide the services described in Section IV. Specifications One-Stop Operator Services 1-6.
   • Identify and discuss the services to be provided as the One-Stop Operator. How will services be integrated, seamless and customer focused?
   • Discuss the data collection and flow of job seeking customers into The Workforce Connection.
   • Discuss services provided through the Resource Rooms and hours of Resource Room services in each location. How will customers be connected to program specific services? What workshops will be provided for customers?
   • Discuss the development of “cross-agency teams” to provide Basic Career Services with a common intake process and referral process. Discuss “functional supervision”.
   • Identify strategies to ensure continuous improvement.
   • Specifically identify how you will coordinate with the Core Partners – IDES, Adult Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation.
   • Identify staffing for all locations – Rockford, Belvidere, and Freeport.
   • Identify how access points or affiliate locations will be identified and secured.
   • Identify outreach and recruitment strategies, reiterating the requirement for The Workforce Connection, and Illinois workNet Center and Partner in the American Job Center Network as the only branding and logo to be used.

4. **WIOA Service for Adults and Dislocated Workers** (maximum of 40 points)
   In the discussion of your service delivery, you will explain how you intend to provide the services described in Section IV. Specifications WIOA Services for Adult and Dislocated Workers 1-10. Your description should support the Service Integration Model, Vision for Programming, and Key Operational Principles. Discuss each item below:
   a. Outreach and Recruitment
   b. Rapid Response
   c. WIOA Registration/Enrollment
   d. In depth Assessment
e. Individual Employment Planning  
f. Individualized Career Services  
g. Training Services  
h. Employment Services  
i. Supportive Services  
j. Post-Employment Services  
k. Tracking and Reporting Progress and Outcomes  
l. Performance  
m. Maintenance of Case Records  
n. Connecting Job Seeker Services and Employer Services  

Be sure to provide sufficient detail. Discuss service flow and the use of integrated, function driven teams. A strong case-management and career planning system will lay the foundation for customer engagement and reporting of outcomes. Discussion of assessment activities should include types of assessment and how the result will be used in career planning. Identify target populations to be served and innovative ways to engage target populations in the delivery of services. Address specific target populations of individuals with disabilities, ex-offenders, and individuals with cultural barriers. Discuss how you will ensure timely services to priority populations. Number of individuals on the caseloads for Career Planners is expected to be maintained at approximately 65 to 70 per caseload in active services.

Discuss coordination with the 16 partner programs.

Discuss and affirm commitment to timely data entry and case noting of progress and activities.

Discuss the utilization of pre-vocational and training services, and credential attainment for program participants. Include in your discuss if you will utilize “outside” sources for pre-vocational training or if you will offer those services directly.

Discuss job placement activities and utilization of work-based learning options. How will your organization ensure appropriate attention to job placement in quality, in-demand occupations.

Identify staffing levels and services for all three locations – Rockford, Belvidere and Freeport. Provide a “functional team” organizational chart, reflecting all locations, as Proposal Attachment 5.

**D. Budget and Related Information** (maximum of 20 points)  
You will be submitting two budgets, one budget for six months, January 1, 2016 – June 30, 2016, for One-Stop Operator Services and WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Services; and another budget for service July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017. Budgets may be re-negotiated during the performance period and amounts for PY16 are estimated and will be finalized prior to July 1, 2016.

Reimbursement will be through a line item sub-award agreement. Budget line items include:

- Staff Wages and Fringes  
- Staff training costs  
- Materials and Supplies needed for start-up  
- Equipment needed (costing over $100)  
- Facility Costs  
- Participant Stipends and Supportive Services  
- Lines of Credits for OJT, Transitional Jobs, Work Experience, ITAs, Customized Training, Incumbent Worker Training, and WorkKeys testing*

*Lines of Credit are funds budgeted for the activities as listed, but will not be included as reimbursable amounts in your sub-award. Your agency commits these funds through processes and procedures established with the Fiscal Agent, but the costs are paid directly by the Fiscal Agent, not reimbursed.*

22
To obtain reimbursement for program costs, you must document costs. If your proposal is funded, you will itemize all costs associated with the program on the reimbursement forms that will be included in your sub-award agreement. Monthly reimbursement requests must be submitted to the Fiscal Agent, by the 15th of the following month.

You must maintain accounting records showing WIOA-funded programs as a separate fund.

1. **Program Year 2015 (6-Month) Budget and Program Year 2016 Budget - Budget Forms 1 - 4**
   
   Submit two budgets: 1) budget for the last 6-months of PY15 and 2) budget for PY 2016.

   Complete **Budget Forms** in Section VIII. (Use the forms provided.) **In your budget, round all cents to the nearest dollar.** Be sure to place your organization’s name and program name on the budget.

   a. **Wages** (Budget Form 1 & 3)
      
      List all staff by job title. After the job title, put any information that explains how you arrived at the amount of dollars in the total column, e.g., Case Manager, $38,000/yr. for 12 months; Clerical Support Specialist, $14.00/hr. for 20 hours/week for 48 weeks.

   b. **Fringe Benefits** (Budget Form 1 & 3)
      
      List all fringe benefits in the same manner. Give all information needed for the evaluators to check the amounts in the training columns, e.g., *F.I.C.A. @ .062 on positions 5-8.*

   c. **Other Costs** (Budget Form 2 & 4)
      
      Fill in all items completely. Request funding only for items that are necessary and reasonable.

      If you will subcontract any portion of the services, include a _subcontracts_ line item under **Other Costs** in the Lead Agency Budget and complete a separate set of forms for each subcontract.

2. **Lines of Credit** (located at bottom of the Budget Form)

   **WIOA Work Experience:** List your total anticipated work experience costs. (Includes wages, FICA, and Workers’ Compensation cost.)

   **WIOA Transitional Jobs:** List your total anticipated transitional jobs cost. (Includes wages, FICA, and Workers’ Compensation costs)

   **WIOA Individual Training Account (ITA):** List the anticipated WIOA Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) costs. (Includes tuition, fees, books, and required supplies.)

   **WorkKeys Assessments:** List the anticipated cost of the WorkKeys Assessments. Cost should be established for three assessments (Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics, and Locating Information) per participant at $6.00 per assessment and a $5.50 cost for the National Career Readiness Certificate.

   **On-the-Job Training:** List the anticipated cost of OJT's planned.

   **Customized Training:** List any planned costs for customized training.

3. **Budget Explanation/Cost Allocation** (Place the Budget Explanation directly after the Budget.)

   Fully explain how you derived each cost listed on the budget. If an item is a direct cost only to this budget, please state this. If any costs are divided between two or more funding sources, explain how
these costs will be allocated, describing in detail the base to be used for each budgeted item.

Also explain how you reached the cost figures you gave in your Lines-of-Credit on Form 4. Label this section of your Budget Explanation Lines of Credit Explanation for PY2016. Lines of Credit are budgeted for the remained of PY2015, and budgeted amounts for the remained of PY2015 have been entered on Form 2.

4. **Job Descriptions and Resumes** Place the job descriptions after the budget explanation. Submit a description of the job responsibilities of each staff position listed on Budget Form 1. Also state the education/training (qualifications) required for the position. Make sure your organization’s name and the date the job description was developed is on each job description. Job descriptions must be in the official format used by your organization—and they may be marked *DRAFT*.

5. **Quarterly Budget Expenditure Plan** Present a quarterly budget expenditure plan, projecting the total amount of expenditures for the quarters ending March 31 and June 30 for the first 6-month budget period.

### PROGRAM PROPOSAL ATTACHMENTS

These *Proposal Attachments* are referenced in the directions for writing the *Program Proposal Narrative*.

- **Proposal Attachment 1** Organizational Chart
- **Proposal Attachment 2** Fiscal Procedures Explanation
- **Proposal Attachment 3** Organization’s Board of Directors (or similar body)
- **Proposal Attachment 4** Memorandum of Understanding between consortium partners
- **Proposal Attachment 5** Functional Organizational Chart
- **Proposal Attachment 6** Miscellaneous Information

**A. Audit and any Management Letters** (Submit only one copy of your audit.) Submit a copy of your organization’s most recent audit and any management letters. (Submit only one copy of the audit and any management letters. Submit these as a separate attachment to the original copy of your proposal.)

**B. Not-for-Profit Authorization/Certifications/Accreditations** (If this requested information does not apply to your organization, please submit a page with the appropriate heading and the words, “Not applicable to our organization.”)

If your organization is a not-for-profit organization, submit a copy of your not-for-profit authorization. If your organization is a certified/accredited institution, list the certifications or accreditations held and submit copies of the supporting letters/certificates awarding the certification/accreditation; if your organization is not a certified/accredited institution, provide a statement to that effect.

**C. Affirmative Action** Complete Affirmative Action Forms 1 and 2 (in Section VIII, Forms).

**D. Assurances** The person who is authorized to sign the Bidder’s agreements must review and sign the *Assurances* form (in Section VIII).

**E. Proof of Liability Insurance** Submit your organization’s current proof of liability insurance (*Certificate of Liability Insurance*).

**NOTE:** As additional guidance is issued and upon release of final regulations changes will be made to ensure full compliance with DCEO and DOL requirements.

**NO OTHER PROPOSAL ATTACHMENTS MAY BE SUBMITTED**
SECTION VII. PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCESS

Proposal Evaluators
Proposals will be evaluated by a team of NIWA Board members and community representatives who have no conflict of interest with any bidding organization.

Proposal Evaluation Reviews
- Staff will perform a technical review of each proposal prior to their being distributed to the review team.
- The technical review will determine if the proposal is complete and meets all the submission guidelines state in the Request for Proposals (RFP).
- Proposals that are incomplete or fail to meet all the submission guidelines stated in the RFP will be rejected.
- Bidders will be notified regarding the status of their proposal after the technical review.
- Bidders may appeal the technical review results. (NIWA will accept only appeals relating to the technical review of a proposal.)
  - NIWA staff will notify bidders via e-mail of the results of the technical review of their proposals. Bidders may then request a debriefing of their proposal’s technical review. The NIWA Executive Director must receive this request via e-mail within two working days of the day the Bidder was e-mailed notification of the technical review results of their proposal.
  - The debriefing will be held within three working days of the NIWA Executive Director’s receipt of the bidder’s request for a debriefing of their proposal’s technical review.
  - After the debriefing, the bidder will have three working days to present to the NIWA Executive Director a written appeal of any aspect of their proposal’s technical review.
  - The NIWA Board Chair or designee will review the written appeal and make the final decision regarding any NIWA action on the appeal.
  - The Bidder will be notified in writing within three working days of the NIWA Board Chair or designee’s decision regarding the appeal.
  - This will complete the Bidder’s appeal process at the local NIWA level.
- Proposals will be evaluated by the review team.
- Bidders may request, in writing, feedback on the proposal submitted after the funding awards are determined.

SECTION VIII. PROPOSAL FORMS

To obtain the proposal forms in WORD (budget forms in EXCEL), please e-mail Valerie Johnson, vjohnson@theworkforceconnection.org, and request that the forms for the WIOA One-Stop Operator and Title I Career Services for Adult and Dislocated Workers RFP be e-mailed to you.

PROPOSAL COVER SHEET (Next Page)
**PROPOSAL FOR ONE-STOP OPERATOR**  
&  
**WIOA TITLE I CAREER SERVICES FOR ADULTS AND DISLOCATED WORKERS**  
*January 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017*

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**Proposing Organization:**  

**FEIN:**

✓ **NOTE:** If Proposing as a Consortium- identify the lead agency on this Cover Sheer; attach a listing of Consortium Entities and Contacts

**Address:**

**City:**  
**State:**  
**Nine-digit ZIP:**

**Telephone:**  
**Fax:**  
**E-mail:**

**Website Address:**

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**Contact Person:**

**Title:**  
**Telephone:**

**E-Mail Address:**

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**Total Funding Amount Requested for January – June 2016 for One-Stop Operator:**

**Total Funding Amount Requested for January – June 2016 for Career Services:**

**Estimated Funding Amount Requested for July 2016 – June 2017 for One-Stop Operator:**

**Estimated Funding Amount Requested for July 2016 – June 2017 for One-Stop Operator:**

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**Proposing Organization Authorized Signature:**

**Name:**

**Title:**

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**Date Proposal Received by NIWA:**

(Completed by NIWA)

**Time:**

(Completed by NIWA)
ASSURANCES
Proposal Attachment 6, Item C

Affirmative Action Policy Statement

It is the policy of ________________________________ (organization) to provide equal opportunity to all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, handicap, political affiliation, or belief. Therefore, this organization will take Affirmative Action to ensure that we will:

1. Recruit, hire and promote in all job classifications regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, handicap, political affiliation or belief.

2. Make promotional decisions that are in accordance with principles of equal opportunity by imposing only valid requirements for promotional opportunities.

3. Incorporate our equal employment opportunity policy in all personnel actions such as compensation, benefits, transfers, layoffs, company sponsored training, education and tuition assistance, career development, and upward mobility.

4. Conduct social and recreational programs sponsored by this organization without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, handicap, sexual orientation, or political affiliation or belief.

The success of an Affirmative Action Program requires maximum cooperation between management and its employees.

To obtain this objective, ________________________________ will be the Equal Opportunity Representative for ________________________________ (organization).

This person will be responsible for working with the Human Resources Manager for the purpose of aiding this organization in establishing future Affirmative Action goals.

Signature: ________________________________

Title: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________
WORKFORCE DATA

Submit Workforce Data Information for the entire organization.

Organization: ___________________________ Period Ending: ___________________________

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W- White  B- Black  H- Hispanic  A- Asian or Pacific Islander  I- American Indian or Alaskan Native
Proposal Attachment 6, Item D

**ASSURANCES**

I recognize that I must give assurance for each item below. If I cannot, this proposal will automatically be rejected.

1. I am authorized by my Board of Directors, Trustees, other legally qualified officer, or as the owner of this agency or business to submit this proposal.

2. We are not currently on any Federal, State of Illinois, or local Debarment List.

3. We will provide records to show that we are fiscally solvent, if needed.

4. We have the fiscal control and accounting procedures needed to ensure that WIOA funds will be used as required by law and contract.

5. We have additional funding sources and will not be dependent on WIOA funds alone.

6. We will meet all applicable Federal, State, and local compliance requirements. These include, but are not limited to:
   - Maintaining records that accurately reflect actual performance.
   - Maintaining record confidentiality, as required.
   - Reporting financial, participant, and performance data, as required.
   - Complying with Federal and State non-discrimination provisions.
   - Meeting requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
   - Meeting all applicable labor laws, including the Child Labor Law standard.

We will not:

   - Attempt to place participant in any type of work experience that will displace a current employee.
   - Use WIOA money to assist, promote, or deter union organizing.
   - Use funds to employ or train persons in sectarian activities.
   - Use funds in the construction, operation, or maintenance of any part of a facility to be used for sectarian instruction or religious worship.

We also assure that we will comply with all Assurances and Certifications listed in Attachment II of this Request for Proposals.

I hereby assure that all of the above are true.

__________________________________  ____________________________________  
Authorized Signature     Date

__________________________________
Title
BUDGET DEFINITIONS & INSTRUCTIONS:

Complete the **Budget Forms** as provided. Your budget must be placed on the forms provided. Other forms will not be accepted.

Be sure to place your organization’s name on the budget. The form contains columns for **Adult** and **Dislocated Worker/Trade** planned expenditures which will add to the Total column. Costs will be allocated between the two funding streams. Cost allocation methodology will be reviewed as part of your Budget Narrative Explanation. When developing your budget, round all cents to the nearest dollar.

**Wages** – List all staff by job title. After the job title, put any information that explains how you arrived at the amount of dollars in the total column, e.g. Instructor @ $25/hour for 5 hours/week for 48 weeks. Allocate as appropriate between **Adult** and **Dislocated Worker/Trade**.

**Fringe Benefits** – List all fringe benefits in the same manner. Give all information needed for the evaluators to check the amounts in the columns. Allocate, as appropriate between **Adult** and **Dislocated Worker/Trade**.

**Other Costs** – Fill in all items complete. Request funding only for items that are necessary to provide the services requested for WIOA Title I Services for Adult and Dislocated Worker/TRADE participants. Allocate, as appropriate between Adult and Dislocated Worker/TRADE.

**Other Costs – Administration for One-Stop Operator** – Other administrative costs apply to One-Stop Operator. Administrative costs are defined in WIOA proposed rulemaking at 20 CFR 683.215, including, but not limited to the following functions: accounting, budgeting, financial and cash management, procurement, purchasing, property management, payroll, and audit.

**Work-Based Training** – Includes on-the-job training, customized training, incumbent worker training, work experience and transitional jobs as outlined in WIOA proposed rulemaking at 20 CFR 680-700 through 680.850.

Develop a **Budget Narrative Explanation** and place this complete narrative directly after the **Budget Forms** for submission. In the **Budget Narrative Explanation** fully explain how each cost listed on the **Budget Forms** is derived. For all costs allocated between funding streams (Adult, Dislocated Worker, One-Stop Operator) explain the allocation methodology. The **Budget Narrative Explanation** must include sufficient detail for reviewers to fully understand the costs to be charged to this sub-award, and to assure reviewers that as a sub-award recipient you agency understand cost allocations and allowable costs.

**NOTE:** Lines of Credit are already established for January through June 2016; however, these amounts are estimates and will change as funds are obligated for customers between now and contract negotiations.

As additional guidance is issued and upon release of final regulations changes will be made to ensure full compliance with DCEO and DOL requirements.