

## REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

### Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

#### One-Stop Operator

**Application Period: May 15, 2016 – June 20, 2016**

#### **PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION**

##### **A. Purpose:**

The Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board (SEAWDB) serving Arkansas, Ashley, Bradley, Chicot, Cleveland, Desha, Drew, Grant, Jefferson, and Lincoln counties is soliciting qualifications for a One-Stop Operator and service provider of career services to eligible Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act participants for the period **July 1, 2016**, through **June 30, 2017**, with an option to renew two (2) additional, one-year terms or a portion thereof.

The Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board will distribute approximately \$1,500,000.00 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds to a qualified provider of **career services** and **youth services** for eligible participants. Career services include basic career services, individualized career services, and follow-up services. These services are to be provided with the flexibility necessary to target and provide the needed services for the SEAWDB's ten-county area. The three categories of career services are defined as follows:

**Basic Career Services:** Basic career services must be made available to all individuals seeking services in the one-stop delivery system and include: eligibility determinations to receive assistance from the adult and dislocated workers; outreach, intake, and orientation to information and other services available through the one-stop delivery system; initial assessment of skill levels/aptitudes; labor exchange services including career counseling, employment trends, job profiles, job search, and placement; training opportunities and program specifics; and a referral system for supportive services to assist with reaching career goals.

**Individualized Career Services:** Individualized career services are to be made available to all individuals seeking services and include: comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers are to be determined through diagnostic testing, 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 his or her employment goals; and accessibility to resources and opportunities to accomplish established career goals.

**Follow-up Services:** Follow-up services must be provided as appropriate for participants who are placed in unsubsidized employment for up to 12 months after the first day of employment. Counseling about the work place is an appropriate type of follow-up service. Follow-up services do not extend the date of exit in performance reporting.

**Youth services** will include programs that provide the following services for eligible youth: objective assessment of academic levels, skill levels, and service needs of each participant; developed service strategies for each participant that are directly linked to one or more of the indicators of performance described in section 116 (b) (2) (A) (ii) and that identify career pathways that include education and employment goals; activities leading to the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent or a recognized postsecondary credential; preparation for postsecondary educational and training opportunities; strong linkages between academic instruction (based on State academic content and student academic achievement standards established under section 1111 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 – 20 U.S.C. 6311) and occupational education that lead to the attainment of recognized postsecondary credentials; preparation for unsubsidized employment opportunities in appropriate cases; and effective connections to employers as outlined in the regulations.

Providers of defined services will be selected in free and open competition based upon their demonstrated qualifications and ability to develop a plan of service to ensure fiscal integrity, internal management systems, previous experience operating job training and employment programs, and on other factors described in the scoring process on page 6.

**B. Obtaining Application Packages:**

This application package contains the criteria/information, all requisite forms, and instructions. Criteria/information may be requested by contacting **Linda Rushing, One-Stop Committee Chairperson, Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board at 870-460-2001.**

SEAWDB is an "Equal Opportunity Employer" and "auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities."

**C. Proposal Goal:**

Select a responsible One-Stop Operator to provide the defined services needed to increase employment, retention, occupation skill levels, and earnings and to create a better-trained, more competitive workforce for Southeast Arkansas.

**D. Solicitation Objective:**

The objective of this solicitation process is to foster and promote free and open competition in the selection of a responsible One-Stop Operator and service provider of career services under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

**E. Specifications:**

A Service Provider must be capable of offering or contracting for the provision of the following components:

Career services as described in section 134(c)(2) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, career services as described in section 134 (c)(2) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and youth services as described in section 129(c)(1)(2),(3) to WIOA-eligible participants in the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Area.

## F. Program Operational Requirements:

Entities submitting proposals must possess the administrative and fiscal capacity to establish, manage, and control career services as described in section 134(d)(2) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and youth services as described in section 129(c)(1)(2),(3) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to WIOA-eligible participants in the ten counties of the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Area.

Respondents must also meet the following provisions:

- must not be debarred, suspended, or voluntarily or involuntarily excluded from participation in contracts involving federal funds.
- must agree that Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds received under this proposal will not be used for any type of lobbying activity.
- must agree to maintain a drug-free work place environment.
- must conform to program guidelines contained in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act implementing regulations contained at 20 CFR 652 et al., Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars A-102, A-128 and A-133, and other applicable law and regulatory provisions.
- must ensure that an adequate grievance and dispute process is established and maintained for all Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act participants.
- must have evidence of good management and fiscal operations practices (audit report).

## G. Proposal Submission Procedures:

1. **Format:** All responses must be developed using the specific elements to be scored as outlined in Part III B. Scoring Process on page 6 supplied in this package. Responses that do not adhere to the prescribed format or utilize the forms provided will not be considered for funding. Continuation pages may be used.

Responses must be complete when submitted and all requested information must be provided. All forms provided must be complete. Additions or changes to the contents of the original application packet will not be accepted, unless specifically requested by the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board. Oral presentations will not be permitted, unless specifically requested by the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board.

Responses are not to be bound, stapled, or placed in binders or covers of any kind. Application packages should be paper clipped, pressure clipped, or secured with rubber bands.

All responses should be typed or created with a word processing program in **11-point font**. Each response should bear the name of the respondent's organization or entity.

Responses must be **submitted in two original copies**, each of which bears the original signature of the duly authorized representative of the responding entity.

2. **Deadline for Submission:** Completed responses must be received in the mail or delivered **NO LATER THAN 4:30 p.m. on June 20, 2016. (Mailing address: Linda Rushing, One-Stop Chairman, Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board, 1326 Highway 52 West, Crossett, AR 71635.)** Responses received after this date/time will not be considered.

3. **Contact Point:** The Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board point of contact for technical questions concerning this RFQ is **Linda Rushing, One-Stop Committee Chairperson, at 870-460-2001 or James Wilson, SEAWDB Chairperson, at 870-550-5606.**
4. **Period of Performance:** The contract period for agreements resulting from this RFQ will be **July 1, 2016**, through **June 30, 2017**. Contracts may be automatically renewed at the end of the stated contract period for **two** additional years.

#### **H. Terms of Awarding:**

1. **Acceptance and Rejection:** The SEAWDB shall have the right to accept or reject all or any part of a proposal or any and all proposals, to waive minor technicalities, and to award the proposal to best serve the interest of the SEAWDB.
2. **Cancellation:** In the event the SEAWDB no longer needs the services specified for any reason (e.g., program changes; changes in laws, rules, or regulations; relocation of offices; lack of appropriated funding, etc.), the SEAWDB shall have the right to cancel the contract by giving the vendor written notice of such cancellation thirty (30) days prior to the date of cancellation.
3. **Reservation:** The SEAWDB shall not pay costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal.

### **PART II: PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS**

#### **A. Reporting Requirements:**

A Service Provider must submit any financial and/or participant reports required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act regulations and the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board.

#### **B. Monitoring, Oversight and Auditing Requirements:**

The Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board will monitor and oversee program content and performance. The service provider must maintain and produce sufficient records to enable and facilitate the conduct of an audit.

## **PART III: ASSURANCES**

### **NONDISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ASSURANCES**

As a condition to the award of financial assistance from the Department of Labor under Title I of WIOA, the grant application assures that it will comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws:

**Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014** WIOA, which prohibits discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States or participation in any WIOA Title I – financially assisted program or activity;

**Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin;

**Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**, as amended, which prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities;

**The Age Discrimination Act of 1975**, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; and

**Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972**, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs.

**Title VII – Sexual Harassment**, as defined in the Federal Guidelines (29 CFR CH XIV, Subsection 1604.11) Section 703 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, amended, and Arkansas Act 563 of 1985, which amends Subsection (8) of Section 1801 of Act 280 of 1975 in the Arkansas Criminal Code, is intolerable and unconscionable.

**Title VII – Religious Discrimination of 1964**, Section 1605.2 Reasonable Accommodation with undue hardship as required by Section 701 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

**The grant applicant also assures** that it will comply with 20 CFR Part 37 and all other regulations implementing the law as listed above. This assurance applies to the grant applicant's operation of the WIOA Title I – financially assisted program or activity and to all agreements the grant application makes to carry out the WIOA Title I – financially assisted program or activity. The grant applicant understands that the United States has the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance.

**The assurance** is considered incorporated by operation of law in the grant, cooperative agreement, contract or other arrangement whereby Federal financial assistance under Title I of the WIOA is made available, whether or not it is physically incorporated in such document and whether or not there is a written agreement between the Department and the recipient, between the Department and the Governor, between the Governor and the recipient, or between recipients. The assurance also may be incorporated by reference in such grants, cooperative agreements, contract, or continuing state programs.

## **PART IV: PROPOSAL REVIEW**

### **A. Review Process:**

The Review Committee of the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board, composed of the SEAWDB Officers and One Stop Committee members, will individually score each response received using an identical review instrument. The Review Committee will make recommendations to the full Board membership. The Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board will review the recommendations and make a final selection of the One-Stop Operator and service provider. A competitive environment will prevail throughout the process, and awards will be made based upon the respondent's responsiveness to the proposal specifications and its potential for providing the highest quality service to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act participants.

### **B. Scoring Process:**

A total score of 70 points is possible. The following specific elements will be scored:

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. <u>Experience</u>  | <u>25 Points Possible</u> |
| a. Experience with State and Federal Grant Compliance   | 5 Points Possible         |
| b. Experience Planning and Implementing Job Training Programs                                 | 5 Points Possible         |
| c. Experience with Financial Management of State and Federal Programs                         | 5 Points Possible         |
| d. Experience with Technology Based Information Systems                                       | 5 Points Possible         |
| e. Experience with Performance Based Participant Service Delivery System via One-Stop Centers | 5 Points Possible         |
| 2. <u>Performance</u>   | <u>30 Points Possible</u> |
| a. Capacity to deliver prescribed services  | 10 Points Possible        |
| b. Completing work within budget  | 10 Points Possible        |
| c. Quality of work  | 10 Points Possible        |
| 3. <u>Capacity</u>  | <u>15 Points Possible</u> |
| a. Staff to be assigned*  | 5 Points Possible         |
| b. Staff experience*  | 5 Points Possible         |
| c. Staff time allocated to program  | 5 Points Possible         |
- \*Resumes of all staff to be included with proposal

Sum of scores received for Experience, Performance, and Capacity - 70 Possible Points

### **C. Records and Documentation:**

Sufficient records will be maintained throughout the scoring process to ensure that all steps, aspects, elements, and decisions are appropriately documented.

**D. Notification of Respondents:**

Organizations and entities whose responses are selected for funding will receive written notification. Those responses not selected will also be notified by mail. Responses will not be returned to unsuccessful respondents unless specific written request is made to the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board. Responses received **after 4:30 p.m. on June 20, 2016, will not be considered.**

**E. Protest and Grievance Process:**

Respondents have the right to make written protest to Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board within 14 calendar days of notification of non-selection for funding under this RFQ process.

The full Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board membership will consider the protest, and their decision will be final. The petitioner may appear in person, if requested, before the membership to present his/her case.

**F. Contracting:**

The Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board may enter into written contracts with the successful respondents for the **one-year** Workforce Development Board funding cycle with an option to renew two (2) additional one-year terms or a portion thereof.