

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) Workforce Development Training (WDT) Program

Work Readiness Training (WRT)

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NYSDOL

Division of Employment and Workforce Solutions
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Building 12, Room 440
Albany NY, 12226

Submission Deadline:
4:00 PM New York State Time on October 25, 2024

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I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Purpose

The purpose of this Work Readiness Training (WRT) Request for Proposals (RFP) is to provide funding to eligible organizations to conduct work readiness training, the development of skills and behaviors necessary for any job, and the skills employers seek from their employees and job candidates. Work readiness skills are transferable skills that can help an individual adapt and perform in different work settings or careers. These skills are often referred to as soft skills or job readiness skills. Common work readiness skills include, but are not limited to, specific social/interpersonal skills such as communication, problem solving, and conflict resolution; independent living skills such as time management, securing or using public transportation, and using appropriate workplace behavior; and other non-technical skills such as financial literacy, job-seeking skills, and understanding employer expectations.

An effective work readiness training contains the key competencies of professional skill development and workplace culture and etiquette, while also including competencies such as career exploration and planning, resume writing, the job application process, interview preparation, financial literacy, digital literacy, networking, mentorship, and the importance of continuous learning and adaptability. These competencies are essential in fostering a career path, job retention and success in modern workplaces. Additionally, these skills prepare individuals to enter the workforce, enroll in an occupational skills training program, or attend an institution of higher education.

B. Background

In March 2021, the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) and The Business Council of New York State partnered to conduct a comprehensive workforce development survey of New York State (NYS) businesses. As a follow-up to that survey, NYSDOL launched a statewide Job Seeker survey in June 2021, and has continued to issue both of these surveys annually. During the four years of issuing these surveys, the business survey has received 10,700 responses and the job seeker survey has received 30,600 responses.

The results of these surveys continue to shape workforce development practices and policy from the P-12 system to higher education and among training providers across NYS. In Spring 2024, statewide results showed job seekers indicated some of the barriers to employment they faced were a lack of experience in the field, a lack of a specific degree, certificate, or credential, a lack of a large professional network, discrimination due to their age, insufficient education or training, a lack of modern/digital skills, gaps in their employment, the inability to practice for potential job interview questions, a lack of knowledge on creating cover letters and resumes, and the inaccessibility to reliable transportation.

In addition, businesses identified both technical and non-technical skills lacking among job applicants and new employees. Some of the non-technical, or work readiness, skills the business identified were self-motivation, communication, problem-solving/critical thinking, timeliness/attendance, the ability to take criticism, time management, personal awareness, and conflict management. The ability of organizations to offer WRT using these funds will help overcome some of these skills gaps and barriers job seekers are facing.

II. Award Information

A. Funding

Under NYSDOL's three (3) Workforce Development Training (WDT) programs, a total of \$25M in federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding is being made available to fund occupational and/or work readiness skills training courses commensurate with regional priorities. Of the total \$25M in available funding, \$5M is dedicated to the WRT program and the remaining \$20M is available for the Employee Retention and Advancement Training (ERAT) and Reemployment Training Grant (RTG) programs on a first-come, first-serve basis.

The WRT Program will provide funding for organizations to provide training to participants for work readiness skills. Additional funding may be made available at a later date, depending on program need and the continued availability of funding. Any potential amendments to this RFP, including additional funding being made available, will be posted on NYSDOL's website and in the NYS Contract Reporter.

WRT awards may not exceed \$350,000 per Bidder. Proposals that request more than \$350,000 will be reviewed and scored by NYSDOL. If the proposal is awardable, NYSDOL will proportionately reduce the project funding at the time of award to fit within the maximum funding amount. Proposals unable to remain viable with the reduced funding will not proceed to contract execution. Therefore, it is highly recommended that Bidders keep the cost and scope of proposals within the maximum award amount.

If the Bidder reduces the number of individuals to be trained at any time prior to or after an award is issued, the requested level of funding will be proportionately reduced by NYSDOL.

All awards are subject to funding availability.

B. Use of Funds

The WRT Program is intended to fund work readiness skills training to individuals with barriers to employment. Funded training will create opportunities for employment, self-sufficiency, and economic mobility.

Funds may be used to enlist the services of a training provider to deliver work readiness skills training to participants. Tuition and other fees may not be charged to the individuals served under this WRT funding opportunity. Participants cannot contribute to the cost of the training(s), which includes a prohibition against the procurement of student loans.

For Applicants applying for RTG and/or ERAT funding in addition to WRT funds, please note funds cannot be combined for use on the same trainees. Each group of trainees must remain separate and distinct and be trained solely under one (1) NYSDOL program.

Note: An exception to the above rule is permitted if a trainee completes a WDT WRT program first and is then enrolled in a WDT RTG occupational skills training program. However, if a trainee completes a WDT RTG program first, they cannot then be enrolled in a WDT WRT program.

Trainings may take place outside of NYS; however, travel costs must be paid by the Bidder using non-WRT funds. The Bidder must also provide adequate justification for any training that takes place outside of NYS. Training can also be a distance learning course, but the trainee must be a NYS resident.

All proposed expenditures must be reasonable, necessary, and clearly related to the purposes and activities of the proposed training program as described in the Program Design Section ([V.B.2.](#)) of this RFP. NYSDOL reserves the right to ask for justification of proposed expenditures and cost per trainee, both prior to award and during contract development.

1. Allowable Costs under the WRT program

Bidders must be prepared to provide eligible individuals, residing in NYS, with work readiness skills. To receive funding, a Bidder must propose services that include the basic work readiness skills competencies, with a recommendation that the training program also include at least 100 hours of training.

At a minimum, all Bidders **must** include the following competencies in their work readiness training program:

- Professional Skill Development (e.g., communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and time management); and
- Workplace Culture and Etiquette (e.g., professional communication and behavioral expectations, dress code, punctuality, respect, accountability, and universal values in workplace settings).

Other allowable work readiness training program competencies can include:

- Career Exploration and Planning (e.g., Initial Assessment and ongoing assessment, and career pathways exploration such as job shadowing, field trips with planned career pathway and occupational education, and career informational fairs);
- Resume Writing and Job Application Process (e.g., effective resume and cover letter writing, tailoring resumes and cover letters to specific job listings, job search, locating suitable job openings, understanding the various stages of a job application, and email etiquette);
- Interview Preparation (e.g., learning to articulate experiences, skills, and achievements to align with an employer's needs, mastering non-verbal communication such as eye contact and posture, and mock interviews with feedback);
- Financial Literacy (e.g., creating a budget, initiating bank accounts, managing spending, understanding credit investing, understanding identity theft, evaluating personal lifestyle, and planning for self-sufficiency);
- Digital Literacy (e.g., digital literacy assessments, basic computer skills, internet basics, email, typing, essential software skills (Microsoft Office Suite, Google Docs, etc.), digital footprint, information literacy, career search skills, and social media);
- Networking and mentorship (e.g., building professional relationships; professional online presence; engaging in industry events; and mentorships with individuals that provide career guidance, feedback, and support);
- Continuous Learning and Adaptability (e.g., adapting to new challenges and technologies, importance of training to stay current with industry trends, enhancing skills, and self-directed training); and
- Communication Skills (e.g., workplace communication, multigenerational communication, verbal and nonverbal communication, and English as a Second Language (ESL) training).

In conjunction with the above work readiness competencies, allowable costs to be budgeted using the provided electronic grant contract line-item cost budget forms (Salaries, Fringe Benefits, Space, Other, etc.) include:

- Using multiple budget line items, the costs of providing work readiness skills training course(s); and
- Using the Other budget line item:
 - Textbooks or training materials directly associated with the training, including electronic devices required for training (i.e., tablets or laptops) with an acquisition cost of up to \$999 per electronic device, provided that:
 - These types of electronic devices have a useful life longer than one (1) year. Bidders and awarded Contractors must document the long-term need for the item to demonstrate their benefit to WIOA programs, including, but not limited to:
 - Training longer than six (6) months; and
 - The continued need for the device post-training for job search and work purposes, once hired.
 - The number of devices charged to the contract cannot exceed the number of enrolled participants confirmed with completed Trainee Information Forms (TIFs) and attendance records;
 - Electronic devices must be provided to participants at the start of training and services rather than at the end as a completion award;
 - Documentation of participant receipt of the devices must be submitted prior to reimbursement. As part of this documentation, participants must attest that they do not already own the requested electronic devices, or that they only possess old inadequate electronic devices and do not have sufficient personal funds to purchase these items;
 - The Bidder/Contractor must follow their own purchase policy for the electronic devices in compliance with [Uniform Guidance](#). The Bidder/Contractor must also perform a cost comparison analysis to ensure the cost is reasonable;
 - The cost of a single electronic device cannot exceed \$999, even if part of the cost is covered under a funding source outside of this RFP;
 - Temporary loaning of such items to participants is also recommended, when appropriate, so that multiple participants can benefit from one (1) purchase;
 - The Bidder/Contractor can emulate and adapt other State agency and public-school loan policies as well as loan agreements that address things such as who periodically services the electronic device(s) and participant responsibilities for proper care. Examples include, but are not limited to; and
 - [Guilderland Central School District Chromebook Handbook and User Guide](#);
 - https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/equipment_loan.asp; and
 - <https://qhsls.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/QHSLs-Equipment-Loan-Agreement.pdf>.
 - Due to potential drop-out rates, the Bidder/Contractor must have a policy to address recovery of electronic device(s) upon a participant's early withdrawal from training or services. Reasonable efforts to recover such items must be documented.
 - Software required to deliver the program of training, even if over \$1,000;

- Distance learning fees (i.e., the fee for the training slot and software required to deliver the training program);
- Supportive services payments for participants who are **not** receiving Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits;
- Incentives: Encouragement for participants that meet training benchmarks while participating in the program. Documentation of trainee receipt of the incentive must be submitted prior to reimbursement; and
- Stipends or remuneration that address the needs of prospective trainees for services such as childcare, transportation, and housing.

2. Restrictions on Types of Trainings

WRT funding will only pay for the eligible costs identified in the Use of Funds Section ([II.B.](#)) of this RFP. The following types of trainings do not constitute work readiness training(s) for this RFP and are not allowed:

- Trainings which begin or occur prior to the contract start date. For additional details regarding the start date of trainings, please see [Section VI.B.](#) (Payment);
- Occupational skills training, such as that allowable under the ERAT and RTG programs. This program is to enhance work readiness skills participants need before they are placed in employment opportunities that match their existing skill sets. Many of these employment opportunities will be entry level occupations and do not require the completion of occupational training as a prerequisite;
- Cohorts of WRT training that include less than five (5) participants;
- Human Resources training; Basic Safety training; Sexual Harassment training; Diversity training; or Orientation training (the provision of these types of training is a normal cost of doing business);
- General Equivalency Development (GED) test preparation; and
- Any other trainings deemed inappropriate by NYSDOL and that do not meet the intent of the RFP.

If a Bidder is unsure about restricted trainings, it should consider asking specific questions before the Questions deadline identified in [Section IV.A.](#) of this RFP and listed in the RFP Timetable ([Section IV.F.](#)).

3. Restrictions on the Use of Funds

WRT funding will only pay for the costs directly related to providing training. It will not pay for any of the following items:

- Training of undocumented workers;
- Participant wages or payments made in place of wages for work or for wage subsidies;
- Supportive services or incentive payments for participants who are receiving UI benefits;
- The purchase of any equipment, defined as an item having a useful life of more than one (1) year and an acquisition cost of \$1,000 or more per unit;

- The purchase of operational software not directly associated with the training (the determination of being directly associated with the training is at NYSDOL's discretion);
- Start-up costs, curriculum development, and assessment costs on the part of the Bidder; or
- Any other costs deemed inappropriate by NYSDOL and that do not meet the intent of the RFP.

C. Leveraged Funding

Although leveraged funds from the Bidder are not required, additional points will be awarded during the scoring process based on the percentage of leveraged funds being used. Leveraged funds cannot include student loans or other NYSDOL funding.

D. Contracts

The contract start date for all contracts resulting from this solicitation may be no earlier than the date of the award letter issued by NYSDOL and no later than six (6) months after the date of the award letter. Any training that begins or is paid for prior to the contract start date will fall outside the contract period and will be ineligible for reimbursement. Additionally, any training provided after the contract end date will also fall outside the contract period and will be ineligible for reimbursement.

After NYSDOL issues an award letter, the award must go through a contract development and contract execution process and ends with the final execution of the contract. Therefore, if a Bidder chooses a contract start date that begins prior to contract execution, the Bidder will be operating at risk for any activities performed prior to the date of final execution of the contract.

Initial contracts resulting from this solicitation will be awarded for a period of up to one (1) year. Bidders must include only the training opportunities that can be reasonably accomplished within a one-year time period. All activities funded by the contract must end on or before the end date of the contract and any activities that occur after the contract end date are not eligible for reimbursement under the contract.

Once a contract is developed and formally executed, the successful Bidder will be considered a NYSDOL Contractor. Funds will be released to the Contractor on a cost reimbursable basis. This means that a Contractor must first pay the expenses and then submit a voucher to NYSDOL for reimbursement. Vouchers must be submitted to NYSDOL on the prescribed forms before payment is made. For cost reimbursements to be approved, certain records must be kept, and specific documents submitted at intervals specified by NYSDOL. Additional details on reimbursements and payments are outlined in the Payment Section ([VI.B](#)) of this RFP.

Contracts may be renewed for one (1) additional one-year period at the discretion of NYSDOL. This renewal must be for a different cohort of trainees than the initial 12-month contract period. Near the end of the initial 12-month contract period, Contractors will be contacted by NYSDOL and asked to submit a budget for year two (2) of their program, if they plan on requesting a one-year renewal.

Please note that NYSDOL must adhere to NYS Prompt Contracting Law timeframes for executing contracts awarded to not-for-profit (NFP) entities. One of the provisions of the law allows for interest payments when contract payments are late due to untimely processing of contracts. However, if there are delays in the contract process on the part of the Contractor, Suspension of Prompt Contracting timeframe letters may be issued to render the Contractor ineligible for interest for the number of days of delay.

In addition, the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) or NYSDOL may conduct an independent evaluation of the outcomes and benefits of WRT funding. By accepting an WRT Program award under this RFP, the Bidder agrees to participate in any such evaluation.

E. Contracting Process

In January 2024, NYS transitioned all grantmaking activities from Grants Gateway to the Statewide Financial System (SFS). Bidders are required to register in this system in order to enter into a contract with NYS. To register an organization, Bidders must send a complete [Grants Management Registration Form for Statewide Financial System \(SFS\) Vendors](#) and accompanying documentation where required by email to grantsreform@its.ny.gov.

NFP organizations must take the additional step of prequalifying by completing a basic profile and storing organizational documents. **Both registration and prequalification must be completed by NFP organizations prior to submitting a proposal.** Failure to do so will mean that their proposals will not be reviewed. NFP organizations will be able to submit their responses online, and once reviewed and approved by a NYS agency prequalification specialist, the NFP organization will be able to submit a proposal. All information is stored in a virtual, secured vault. NFP organizations must keep their information current, including uploading annual documents (e.g., 990, etc.).

For additional information on registration and prequalification, please log into SFS and visit the SFS Coach location for prequalification information.

For additional technical assistance with the SFS Grants Management website, please note:

- Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. NYS Time;
- Phone Number: (518) 457-7717 or (855) 233-8363 (toll free);
- Email: helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov and
- Grants Management Website: <https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/>.

F. NYSDOL's Responsibilities

NYSDOL will oversee implementation of the contract(s) resulting from this RFP, including regular monitoring of implementation and performance of the contract(s).

Funding for the activities outlined in this RFP will come from funds available under WIOA and is subject to State and/or Federal legislative appropriation. NYSDOL staff will ensure accurate and timely reporting of program outcomes as well as Federal evaluation documentation as required by the USDOL.

G. Bidder Requirements

By submission of a proposal in response to this solicitation, Bidders agree with the Minimum Threshold Requirements section ([V.B.1](#)) of this RFP and all of the terms and conditions set forth in the attachments to this RFP.

Bidders must comply with the Combined Terms and Conditions ([CTC](#)), which will be incorporated into the Master Contract ([MC](#)) of successful Bidders. These terms and conditions are included with no

sections to be filled in. The process of downloading and uploading the CTC document confirms for NYSDOL that the Bidder has received, reviewed, and accepts the content of the document.

The Bidder shall be responsible for any costs incurred by the Bidder in the proposal preparation, or in activities related to the review of this proposal.

H. Participation Requirements

1. Business Participation Opportunities for Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs)

Pursuant to NYS Executive Law Article 15-A and Parts 140-145 of Title 5 of the New York Codes, Rules, and Regulations (NYCRR), NYSDOL is required to promote opportunities for maximum feasible participation of NYS certified Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises (“MWBEs”) and the employment of minority group members and women in the performance of the NYSDOL contracts.

For purposes of this solicitation, NYSDOL has determined that the Contract does not offer sufficient opportunities to set specific goals for participation by MWBEs as subcontractors, service providers, and suppliers to Bidder. NYSDOL hereby establishes an overall goal of 0% for MWBE participation, 0% for NYS certified minority-owned business enterprises (“MBE”) participation and 0% for NYS certified women-owned business enterprises (“WBE”) participation (based on the current availability of MBEs and WBEs). Nevertheless, Bidders are encouraged to make good faith efforts to promote and assist in the participation of MWBEs on Contracts. The directory of NYS Certified MWBEs can be viewed at <https://ny.newnycontracts.com/>.

Bidders are encouraged to contact the NYSDOL MWBE Administrator at 518-474-2678 or labor.sm.MWBEAdmin@labor.ny.gov to discuss methods of maximizing participation by MWBEs on contracts.

2. Equal Employment Opportunity Requirements (EEO100)

A Bidder will be required to submit EEO 100 (MWBE-2) with its application as evidence of compliance with the foregoing.

By submission of an application in response to this solicitation, the Bidder agrees with all of the terms and conditions of the Master Contract (MC) and the Combined Terms and Conditions (CTC), specifically Section VI.J. Contractors are required to ensure that it and any subcontractors awarded a subcontract for the construction, demolition, replacement, major repair, renovation, planning or design of real property and improvements thereon (the “Work”), except where the Work is for the beneficial use of the contractor, undertake or continue programs to ensure that minority group members and women are afforded equal employment opportunities without discrimination because of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, disability or marital status. For these purposes, equal opportunity shall apply in the areas of recruitment, employment, job assignment, promotion, upgrading, demotion, transfer, layoff, termination, and rates of pay or other forms of compensation. This requirement does not apply to: (i) work, goods, or services unrelated to the contract; or (ii) employment outside NYS.

The Bidder will be required to submit a Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises and Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement (MWBE-1) to NYSDOL with its proposal.

If awarded a contract, Bidders shall submit a Workforce Utilization Report (EEO 101, MWBE-3) and shall require each of its subcontractors to submit a Workforce Utilization Report, in such format as shall be required by NYSDOL on a quarterly basis during the term of the contract.

Pursuant to Executive Order #6, which continues former Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's Executive Order #162 issued on January 9, 2017, Contractors and subcontractors will also be required to report the gross wages to each of their employees for the work performed by such employees on the contract utilizing the EEO 101 (MWBE-3) form on a quarterly basis.

Further, pursuant to Article 15 of the Executive Law (the "Human Rights Law"), all other NYS and Federal statutory and constitutional non-discrimination provisions, the Contractor and subcontractors will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, creed (religion), color, sex, gender identity or gender expression, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, age, disability, predisposing genetic characteristic, marital status or domestic violence victim status, and shall also follow the requirements of the NYS Human Rights Law with regard to non-discrimination on the basis of prior criminal conviction and prior arrest.

Note: Failure to comply with the foregoing requirements may result in a finding of non-responsiveness, non-responsibility and/or a breach of the contract, leading to the withholding of funds, suspension or termination of the contract or such other actions or enforcement proceedings as allowed by the contract.

3. Participation Opportunities for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses (SDVOBs)

Veteran's Services Law article 3 of the NYS Executive Law provides for more meaningful participation in public procurement by certified Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses ("SDVOBs"), thereby further integrating such businesses into NYS's economy. NYSDOL recognizes the need to promote the employment of service-disabled veterans and to ensure that certified service-disabled veteran-owned businesses have opportunities for maximum feasible participation in the performance of NYSDOL contracts.

In recognition of the service and sacrifices made by service-disabled veterans and in recognition of their economic activity in doing business in NYS, Bidders/Contractors are strongly encouraged and expected to consider SDVOBs in the fulfillment of the requirements of the Contract. Such participation may be as subcontractors or suppliers, as protégés, or in other partnering or supporting roles.

For purposes of this solicitation, NYSDOL determined that the Contract does not offer sufficient opportunities to set specific goals for participation by SDVOBs as subcontractors, service providers, and suppliers to Bidder. Nevertheless, Bidders are encouraged to make good faith efforts to promote and assist in the participation of SDVOBs on the Contract for the provision of services and materials. The directory of NYS Certified SDVOBs can be viewed at <https://online.ogs.ny.gov/SDVOB/search>.

Bidders are encouraged to contact the Office of General Services' Division of Service-Disabled Veteran's Business Development at 518-474-2015 or VeteransDevelopment@ogs.ny.gov to discuss methods of maximizing participation by SDVOBs on the Contract.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Bidder Eligibility

Eligible Bidders for WRT funding include for-profit entities, such as corporations, LLCs, and LLPs; NFP entities; municipalities; and educational institutions, including colleges and universities which:

- Have two (2) or more full-time employees or the equivalent of two (2) full-time employees throughout the duration of the contract. Principals of corporations and owners of businesses such as sole proprietors or partners, are not considered to be employees for this eligibility requirement. Cooperative owner employees who do not serve on the board of directors are considered to be employees for this eligibility requirement. A Bidder is not eligible to apply if it has no employees or if the workers are independent contractors, subcontractors, or contract employees. However, if a Bidder leases its employees for payroll and tax reporting purposes, and has authority over the hiring, firing, and scheduling of workers, it is eligible for funding consideration; and
- Are in good standing with regard to the laws, rules, and regulations for UI, Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN), Public Work, Labor Standards, Safety and Health, NYS Department of State Division of Corporations, Workers Compensation Insurance, and Disability Insurance.

Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) have the authority to enter into contracts with institutions of higher education, such as community colleges, or other eligible training providers, to facilitate the training. LWDBs may not deliver training directly with these WIOA funds. Unincorporated LWDBs applying for funds pursuant to this RFP, must designate the local area's WIOA grant recipient or fiscal agent as the official Bidder for any proposal under this RFP.

WRT funds are separate from any other workforce development funding a Bidder may have received from NYSDOL. Bidders with existing or pending contracts with NYSDOL remain eligible to apply for funding under this WRT RFP, but the proposal must not propose the same services to the same individuals as the existing or pending NYSDOL contract(s). In addition, the payments requested from awarded contracts under this RFP cannot duplicate reimbursement that is requested or received from other sources of funding.

Note: A trainee that first completes a WDT RTG occupational skills training program cannot then be enrolled in a WDT WRT program. However, if a trainee first completes a WDT WRT program, they can then be enrolled in a WDT RTG program.

Consultants, trade organizations and other third-party entities are not eligible to apply for WRT Program funds on behalf of other organizations.

The use of a grant writer is acceptable if the Bidder, and not the grant writer, commits to implementing the proposed training program if the proposal is successful.

Eligible Bidders must attest to the Minimum Requirements as outlined in the Evaluation Criteria Section [\(V.B.\)](#) of this RFP.

Separate operations or locations of an eligible Bidder may apply separately if they have different Federal Employer Identification Numbers (FEINs). However, NYSDOL will also have to confirm that all such

branches, locations, and companies are not part of a greater whole. The Research Foundations of the State University of New York (SUNY) and the City University of New York (CUNY), if they are submitting proposals on behalf of more than one college, are exempt from this requirement.

B. Participant Eligibility

Participants must be individuals residing in NYS, who are 16 years of age and older and out of school, and who are seeking work readiness skills to overcome barriers to employment.

Please note that this solicitation is federally funded, therefore all individuals assigned male at birth born on or after January 1, 1960, who will be served under this RFP, must be registered with Selective Service.

If a participant assigned male at birth is between the ages of 18 and 26, they may register online at <https://www.sss.gov/register/> and provide their registration number on the TIF. If a participant assigned male at birth is not registered and is 26 years of age or older, they must sign an Attestation stating that their failure to register was not willful. The TIF and the Attestation Form will be provided to each Bidder after an award is made.

A list of those who are required by law to register with Selective Service may be found online at <https://www.sss.gov/faq/#who-needs-to-register>.

C. Partnering for Coordination of Services

Career Centers in NYS offer a variety of employment and reemployment services to job seekers and workers. These services include, but are not limited to, an initial assessment, job search strategies and assistance, cover letter and resume assistance, interview skills, mock interviews, JobZone access, referrals for eligible social services, programs for individuals involved in the justice system, immigrant worker programs, assistance to persons with disabilities, and other supports. Services such as comprehensive assessment, career guidance, job search, job matching, career counseling, and supportive services may also be provided when designed to help participants and to ensure long-term employment. Recently, the Career Centers also began offering training opportunities through Coursera, which provides access to nearly 4,000 courses across high-growth industries, and NorthStar Digital Literacy, which provides digital literacy assessments and training on Essential Computer Skills, Essential Software Skills, and Using Technology in Daily Life. Bidders may choose to partner with the local Career Center(s) to offer these services to participants as a supplement to the proposed work readiness training program.

Bidders may also form partnerships with other funded career development programs offered in Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs), which can further be used to supplement the services already provided by local Career Centers.

While a formal partnership agreement is not required, partnering with one (1) or more of the Career Center partners or LWDAs may complement the services provided by Bidders and enhance benefits available to participants under this RFP. In addition, Bidders providing evidence of partnership with Career Center partners and/or LWDAs will receive extra points in scoring. Please refer to [Section VII](#) for the full list of local Career Center partners.

The Career Center may refer interested and eligible worker(s) to Bidders who receive an award under this RFP. However, Bidders are fully responsible for the identification of eligible participants for the awarded training program.

Note: Any services delivered by partnering local Career Centers or LWDA's should not be included in your proposed program's funding request. The funds requested should be used to meet other competencies not being delivered by the above.

D. Program Services

1. Work Readiness Training and Career Development Services

The proposed training program must provide work readiness training in the two (2) required key competencies of Professional Career Development and Workplace Culture and Etiquette and may also include the additional competencies described in [Section I.B.1](#) of this RFP. It is recommended that the program be at least 100 hours.

Bidders will be required to describe their strategies to offer the required key competencies and can also include strategies for providing additional career development services such as resume writing, the job application process, interview preparation, financial literacy, and digital literacy.

Note: As detailed in [Section III.C.](#) of this RFP, Bidders can partner with local Career Centers or LWDA's to supplement these types of trainings. ~~but should establish a formal agreement for providing such services.~~

Applicants will also be awarded extra points for evidence of partnership with Career Center partners or other local organizations.

Work readiness skills training and career development services are defined in [Section VII.](#)

2. Supportive Services

Strategies for providing supportive services may include, but are not limited to:

- Implementing individual or group mentoring strategies, which may include utilizing program graduates and business representatives in training delivery and support groups;
- Providing robust monetary and non-monetary incentives for retention, and strategies related to concrete benchmarks as participants move through the course(s) (if providing these incentives, include detail on the benchmarks and amount to be paid per benchmark);
- Providing services such as stipends or remuneration that address the needs of prospective participants for services such as childcare, transportation, and housing (if providing these services, include detail on the services provided). Bidders may consider using the Employability Profile at JobZone – <https://dol.ny.gov/jobzone>;
- Establishing a strong and meaningful referral system with partner agencies to ensure supportive services are available to participants and follow up with agencies and participants takes place regularly;
- Providing case management of participants with regular contact (weekly) at the onset of training and employment (in person, phone, social media) and gradually reducing this contact as new hires are acclimated to the job; or
- Maintaining regular contact with business(es) after hires are made to assist with any difficulties that may arise during the participants' transition to the position.

3. Reporting Requirements

The Contractor must submit individual participant level data to NYSDOL. NYSDOL staff will record this data in the One-Stop Operating System (OSOS).

OSOS is NYSDOL's case management system and is used to record basic participant information, as well as to track the provision of required services. OSOS is a web-based job matching, case management, and reporting system that allows workforce professionals to effectively manage workforce development programs.

Contractors will be required to document participant information specifically on TIFs. The personal information collected on the TIF is required for reporting purposes for federally funded grants, as well as by the State, and will be data entered into OSOS to report obtained employment. Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is securely stored on NYS servers, where only authorized individuals can access the necessary information and where data is protected by high-level security settings administered by the NYS Office of Information Technology Systems (ITS). Monthly reports and voucher reimbursement requests must be provided to NYSDOL within 15 days following the end of the month.

NYSDOL may also require quarterly reports on program updates, progress, and success. This may include information beyond the available data in OSOS.

IV. Process for Proposal Submission

A. Questions Concerning this RFP

Bidders may submit questions via electronic mail to CFA@labor.ny.gov. Questions regarding the RFP will be accepted on an ongoing basis, but no later than October 2, 2024. No telephone inquiries will be accepted. All inquiries should include the following reference in the Subject line: "WRT Question." Answers to all questions will be posted on the NYSDOL [Funding Opportunities](#) website on an ongoing basis, but no later than October 11, 2024.

B. Proposal Due Date

The completed proposal with all required attachments must be within SFS no later than 4:00 pm NYS Time on **October 25, 2024**. Any proposals or unsolicited amendments to proposals received after the due date and time will not be considered in the review process. No mailed, faxed, or emailed documents will be accepted. NYSDOL takes no responsibility for any third-party error in the delivery of proposals (e.g., computer failure, power outages, etc.).

C. Proposal Submission Instructions and Format

Interested parties must apply online via the SFS website at:
https://esupplier.sfs.ny.gov/psc/fscm/SUPPLIER/ERP/c/NUI_FRAMEWORK.PT_LANDINGPAGE.GBL?&

Completed proposals must be submitted through SFS by the designated date and time. To apply, Bidders must be registered and logged in to the SFS as detailed in [Section II.E](#).

For a proposal to be considered, the Bidder must meet the eligibility criteria outlined in [Section III.A.](#), complete all required parts, and upload all the documents or information requested in the forthcoming sections in the SFS system prior to or by the submission due date.

Required proposal attachments and the requested submission format are listed below:

- 1) Key Contacts ([KC](#)) – Excel format;
- 2) Vendor Responsibility – Bidder Questionnaire ([VRAQ](#)) – Signed and in PDF format;
- 3) NYS Executive Order 177 Certification ([EO](#)) – Signed and in PDF format;
- 4) NYS Executive Order 16 Certification ([EO 16](#)) – Signed and in PDF format;
- 5) MWBE and EEO Policy Statement ([MWBE-1](#)) – Signed and in PDF format;
- 6) EEO Staffing Plan ([MWBE-2](#)) – Signed and in PDF format; and
- 7) Application for Competitively Bid Contracts ([ACBC](#)) – Signed and in PDF format.

The required attachments can be found in SFS in the WDT WRT Program under Event Comments and Attachments and must be attached to the corresponding question in the event.

In addition, the following informational attachments can be found in the WDT WRT Program event in SFS under Event Comments and Attachments:

- 1) Appendix – SFS Prequalification Requirement;
- 2) Appendix – WIOA Partner Contact Information;
- 3) Appendix – Determining Priority Populations;
- 4) Appendix – Combined Terms and Conditions;
- 5) Appendix – General Information for Successful Bidders/Applicants;
- 6) Appendix – Master Contract;
- 7) Appendix – WIOA References;
- 8) Appendix – Standard Clauses for all NYS Contracts.

D. SFS Registration and Prequalification Status

As indicated in [Section II.E.](#) of this RFP, all interested Bidders must be registered in SFS prior to proposal submission and all non-governmental NFP Bidders must also be designated as prequalified prior to proposal submission. NFP Bidders cannot submit grant proposals unless their status is prequalified. NFP Bidders whose status is not prequalified prior to proposal submission will receive an error message if they try to submit grant proposals.

If awarded, a prequalified NFP Contractor must maintain prequalification status during the contract period. The organization will be given an opportunity to submit documents and information to Grants Management in order to maintain or regain prequalification status.

For more information about SFS and Prequalification, please visit the Grants Management website <http://grantsmanagement.ny.gov> or contact the Grants Management Team at: grantsreform@its.ny.gov. The Grants Management help desk/hotline can be reached at (518) 457-7717 or (855) 233-8363 (toll free).

NYSDOL will consider any proposal not meeting the registration or non-governmental NFP Bidder prequalification requirements prior to proposal submission to be non-responsive.

E. RFP Timetable

- RFP Release Date – September 4, 2024
- Deadline Date for Questions – Ongoing, no later than October 2, 2024
- Deadline Date for Responses to Questions – Ongoing, no later than October 11, 2024
- Proposal Due Date – 4:00 PM NYS Time on October 25, 2024
- Projected Notification of Awards – Winter 2024-2025

V. Proposal Review and Selection

A. Evaluation of Proposals

A complete proposal, including all required attachments, must be submitted via SFS so that NYSDOL can conduct a full and proper evaluation. Failure to answer all questions in the proposal will jeopardize the Bidder's potential for funding. NYSDOL will make an initial eligibility determination on each proposal received. Proposals that do not meet NYSDOL's minimum eligibility requirements will be disqualified. Proposals deemed eligible will be scored based on further review and evaluation. Proposal scores will consist of 70% for Program Design, 10% for Work Plan, and 20% for Program Cost. Scoring of technical merit will award points based on a "criteria met" or "criteria not met" scale. NYSDOL reserves the right to make no awards.

Proposals must first meet all Minimum Eligibility Requirements. Upon receipt of all required proposal documents and confirmation of Minimum Eligibility Requirement attainment, WRT proposals will be evaluated by NYSDOL staff. NYSDOL staff score proposals based on the Program Design, Work Plan, and Program Cost described in the Evaluation Criteria Section ([V.B.](#)) of this RFP.

Program outcomes based on past performance related to retention of employees after the completion of training and potential wage increases are considered in award determination.

B. Evaluation Criteria

The Evaluation Criteria has four (4) parts: Minimum Requirements, Program Design, Work Plan, and Program Cost. The evaluation of the proposal will consist of a review of each part independently. Each is described below.

Proposals deemed eligible will be scored based on further review and evaluation. Proposal scores will consist of 80% on Technical Merit (70% on Program Design and 10% on Work Plan) and 20% on Program Cost.

1. Minimum Requirements

Failure to attest to and document Minimum Requirements will result in an automatic rejection of the proposal and scoring will not proceed. No points will be awarded for Minimum Requirements. Bidders must attest to each of the following:

- 1) Bidder is a for-profit entity, including a corporation, LLC, or LLP; not-for-profit (NFP) entity; municipality; or a college or university;
- 2) Bidder is in good standing with regard to the laws, rules, and regulations for Unemployment Insurance (UI), Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN), Public Work, Labor Standards, Safety and Health, NYS Department of State Division of Corporations, Workers Compensation Insurance, and Disability Insurance;
- 3) Bidder has two (2) or more full-time employees or the equivalent of two (2) full-time employees throughout the duration of the contract (these equivalent employees may work part-time as long as it is a permanent, year-round position whose work performance is integral to the service or product provided by the business and who is economically dependent on the business);
- 4) The proposal was developed by the Bidder and all language therein is presented at the request of the Bidder. The use of a grant writer is acceptable, only if the Bidder and not the grant writer, commits to implementing the training listed in the proposal, if the proposal is successful;
- 5) Bidder agrees to submit reports to NYSDOL on an as needed basis for the purposes of meeting federal and NYS reporting requirements and understands such reporting may include personally identifiable information related to both the Bidder and the participant;
- 6) Bidder is responsible for recruiting eligible trainees as defined in the RFP;
- 7) Bidder will not charge or expect any trainee served under this proposed training program to pay any tuition charges or other fees;
- 8) Bidder understands that all Bidders must register in the SFS system (<https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov>) before proposal submission;
- 9) Bidder understands that all non-governmental NFP organizations must prequalify before proposal submission and must be in an acceptable pre-qualification status in the SFS system (<https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov>);
- 10) It is the intention of the Bidder that the participants will obtain full-time or part-time employment in NYS, obtain a higher level of employment in NYS, or receive additional occupational skills training upon completion of the WRT training.

Applicants must complete and upload each of the following required application [attachments](#) as listed below:

- 1) Key Contacts (KC) – Excel format;
- 2) Vendor Responsibility – Applicant Questionnaire (VRAQ) – Signed and in PDF format;
- 3) NYS Executive Order 177 Certification (EO) – Signed and in PDF format;
- 4) NYS Executive Order 16 Certification (EO 16) – Signed and in PDF format;
- 5) MWBE and EEO Policy Statement (MWBE-1) – Signed and in PDF format;
- 6) EEO Staffing Plan (MWBE-2) – Signed and in PDF format; and
- 7) Application for Competitively Bid Contract (ACBC) – Signed and in PDF format.

These required attachments are listed as questions in the Eligibility Review section. To respond to each attachment question, Applicants will go to the Events Comments and Attachments section in the event to find the corresponding attachment needed to be completed. Once completed, the Applicant will upload the attachment in response to the actual question.

2. Program Design – 70 Points

A total of 70 points are available in scoring the Program Design part of the proposal. Bidders must fully answer each part of the elements provided in SFS and submit applicable attachments.

Organizational Need (15 points)

- 1) Enter your Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN). (0 points)
- 2) Indicate the exact number of participants who will be trained under this proposal. (1 point)
- 3) Describe the compelling need for the proposed training(s) and why existing resources and programs are not sufficient to meet this need. (6 points)
- 4) Has your organization provided similar work readiness skills training program(s) in the past and do you have the capacity to expand services? (If the Bidder did not provide a similar work readiness skills training program in the past, Bidder will mark Not Applicable to this question). (2 points)
- 5) Is your organization currently providing this type of training? If it is providing this type of training what is the justification for asking for additional funding for this training? (If Bidder is not providing this type of training. Bidder will mark Not Applicable to this question). (2 points)
- 6) Describe how you will leverage existing resources and how these additional funds will add to your program. (4 points)

Population (5 points)

- 7) Describe the population that will be served in your program and your experience working with this population. (1 point)
- 8) Describe your plan to recruit, engage, and retain participants. (4 points)

Work Readiness Training Course(s) (28 points)

- 9) Describe your program and the proposed work readiness competencies, including a detailed training design. (5 points)
- 10) Provide a brief summary of each work readiness skills training course, including:
 - a) The name of each course;
 - b) The educational strategy for each course (e.g., classroom training, distance learning, etc.);
 - c) The materials to be used for each course (e.g., textbooks, presentations, guest speakers, etc.);
 - d) The duration for each course (e.g., the number of weeks and total number of hours for each course); and
 - e) A detailed description of the work readiness skills the participants will acquire (10 points).
- 11) If the duration of the course(s) in question 10d does not meet the recommended 100 hours, please provide a justification on how the program will meet the required competencies described above. (4 points)

- 12) Provide a detailed description of how the Bidder will assess the attainment of the participants' work readiness skills during the training course (e.g., quizzes, tests, presentations; etc.). (3 points)
- 13) Identify the strategies the Bidder will use to offer supportive services to ensure participants remain in the work readiness skills training. Strategies should include but are not limited to strategies as identified in [Section III.B.](#) of this RFP. (3 points – No supportive services offered = 0 points; one (1) supportive service offered = 1 point; two (2) supportive services offered = 2 points; three (3) or more supportive services offered = 3 points)
- 14) If partnering with a Career Center or Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA), please describe how the partnership will support the proposed work readiness training program. (3 points)

Outcomes (8 points)

- 15) If the Bidder has provided similar work readiness skills training program in the past, provide the percentage of participants that have become employed after participating in the program. (If the Applicant did not provide a similar work readiness skills training program in the past, Applicant will mark Not Applicable to this question) (No previous program = 0 points; Percentages of 1 – 25% = 1 point; Percentages of 25.01 – 50% = 2 points; Percentages of 50.01% or more = 3 points)
- 16) Describe how the organization will track participant attainment during the course/program and how outcomes will be reported to NYSDOL. (5 points)

Leveraged Funding (4 points)

- 17) Identify the amount of leveraged funding, if any, the Bidder will provide to support the work readiness training program. For more information about leveraged funding, please refer to Section II.C. in this RFP. (Leveraged percentages of 0% to 25%; 25.01% to 50%; 50.01% to 75%; 75.01% and up). (4 points)

Organizational Capacity/Experience (10 points)

- 18) How many years has the Bidder offered similar work readiness skills training or service? (Less than 1 year = 0 points; 1 to 2 years = 1 point; 3 or more years = 2 points).
- 19) Identify the strategies the Bidder will use to refer participants to employment opportunities, including apprenticeships; occupational skills training; or higher education upon the conclusion of the work readiness training. (If Bidder provides no strategies = 0 points; if Bidder provides one (1) strategy = 1 point; if Bidder provides 2 strategies= 2 points; if Bidder provides three (3) or more strategies = 3 points)
- 20) Describe the key knowledge, skills, and abilities possessed by your staff for your program to be successful. (5 points)

3. Work Plan – 10 points

A total of 10 points are available in scoring the Work Plan/outcome timetable part of the proposal. Utilizing SFS, Bidders will define the objectives, tasks, and performance measures that will detail the proposed plan to ensure training and service activities as identified in the Program Design. Bidders can

include a total of 30 objectives, tasks, and performance measures. The Work Plan must include the following:

- The objectives are realistic and align with activities as proposed in the Program Design;
- The tasks as described align with the associated objective and upon completion will attain the objective (Bidder should include critical tasks to be performed for attaining the relevant objectives and performance measures);
- The performance measures, as proposed, will measure the successful completion of the task and attainment of the relevant associated objective; and
- The performance will evaluate project effectiveness. The performance measures must be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-oriented (who will do what, how it will be counted, how often, and when the tasks and objectives will be evaluated).

Performance measures may include, but are not limited to, the number of participants obtaining employment after training; the number of participants continuing on in occupational skills training courses; participant satisfaction; the increase in participant wages; training assessment outcomes; and participant enrollment in advanced education. The Work Plan should only include objectives, tasks, and performance measures specific to the WRT-funded training program.

4. Program Cost – 20 Points

A total of 20 points are available in scoring the Program Cost of the proposal. Requested funding must be directly related to the proposed training program. All proposed expenditures must be allowable, reasonable, necessary, and clearly related to the purposes and activities of the services.

Cost Score

For program cost scoring purposes, proposals will be subdivided into two (2) groups according to what NYS region the Bidder is headquartered in: (1) for Bidders headquartered in New York City; and (2) for Bidders headquartered in the rest of NYS.

First, the cost per participant of each proposal will be calculated by dividing the total program cost requested in the Budget by the total number of anticipated participants to be served as indicated in question 2 of the Program Design section of the RFP. Bidders must fully complete the budget in SFS so an accurate cost per participant for the program can be calculated by NYSDOL. Bidders who fail to answer question 2 in the Program Design section of the proposal and/or fully complete the budget may be given a cost score of 0.

After the cost per participant for each proposal is calculated, program cost scores within each group will be calculated using the following formula: The lowest cost per participant of the proposals within the applicable group will be divided by the cost per participant of the proposal being scored. The result will be multiplied by the highest possible program cost score of 20 points to determine the proposal's program cost score.

During the cost review process, NYSDOL will not remove any disallowed costs included in the proposal. However, during the award process and contract negotiations, if it is determined unallowable costs were included in the proposal, those costs will not be included in the contract. NYSDOL reserves the right to request additional information from Bidders during the program cost scoring process if the budget information provided is not clear.

Budget

In the various expenditure budget forms located in SFS (Personal Services, which includes Salary and Fringe; and Non-Personal Services, which includes Contractual, Travel, Operating Expenses, and Other), Bidders will account for how the funding will be allocated. Please consult [Section II.A.1](#) in this RFP for eligible expenses.

Only categories in which the proposed program will be allocating funding need to be filled in. To avoid errors, do not enter any information in categories where grant funding will not be used. Use the following as a guide in completing the budget:

Personal Services

- **Salaries:** List the annual salaries of the staff that will be working on the project and the corresponding percentages of their time spent. Describe briefly, in the Budget Narrative, the roles of the staff titles listed. Provide an explanation of any anticipated changes or exceptions in staffing patterns and/or annual salary costs during the contract period; and
- **Fringe:** Briefly explain the calculation of fringe benefits, including a breakdown of the fringe benefit structure. Fringe benefits include social security, workers' compensation, UI, disability insurance and any insurance programs the Bidder organization provides. If budgeted fringe benefits represent an exception to standard policy, please explain the basis.

Non-Personal Services

- **Contractual:** This category includes institutions, individuals, or organizations external to the Contractor which have entered into an agreement with the Contractor to provide any services outlined in or associated with the contract, and whose services are to be funded under the contract. All such agreements are to be by bona fide written contract and a copy of each must be attached. If details are not known, include a brief narrative of each contracted service to be provided, indicating the organization/individual selected, anticipated outcomes and projected budget.
- **Travel:** Staff travel costs should be budgeted in line with standard agency travel policy or Office of State Comptroller (OSC) guidelines. Travel costs are reimbursed at NYS rates. Only travel costs for personnel listed under Staff Salaries are acceptable. Consultant or sub-contractor's travel expenses should be included in Contracted Services. Use the Budget Narrative to indicate how Staff Travel costs were calculated (e.g., number of miles, mileage rate). Any exceptional staff travel costs must be justified in the Budget Narrative. No out-of-state travel costs are allowed unless specifically detailed and approved. All non-local destinations for travel must have prior NYSDOL approval.
- **Space/Property & Utilities:** This section is used to itemize costs associated with Property-related costs for space that is rented or owned. Use the respective Budget Narratives to indicate how the expense related to the training purposes funded by this grant and how the proportion of costs were determined.
- **Operating Expenses:** List operating expenses, such as supplies, postage, printing, photocopying, rent, and telephones. Use the Budget Narrative to indicate how operating expenses were calculated. Any type of expense outside of the categories listed above and any exceptional dollar amounts must be explained in the budget narrative.

- Other: List other items not included under any other category. Any type of expense outside of the categories listed above and any exceptional dollar amounts must be explained in the Budget Narrative. Indirect Costs, if applicable, should be listed in this category and are described as:
 - Costs that are not directly accountable to a particular grant award, contract, program function, or activity, but are necessary for the general operation of the organization. Indirect costs may be either fixed or variable and may include administration, personnel, and security costs. Some indirect costs may be overhead. Indirect costs for this funding opportunity will be the approved federally recognized indirect cost rate negotiated between the applicant and the Federal government; if no such rate exists, then 10% of the modified total direct cost of the proposed budget.

C. Method of Selection

Proposals must first meet all minimum eligibility requirements outlined in the Minimum Requirements Section ([V.B.1.](#)) of this RFP.

Proposals that meet all minimum eligibility requirements will proceed to the review phase, where the proposal will be scored for Technical Merit (worth up to 80% of the total) by NYSDOL's Program Staff, and Program Cost (worth up to 20% of the total) by NYSDOL's Finance Bureau. A complete response to each question is crucial to ensure full points are awarded. Scores for each portion of the evaluation will be combined and result in the proposal Final Score. Proposals will be awarded in rank order beginning with the proposal(s) with the highest total points until the funding allocated to the program is exhausted. NYSDOL has established a minimum score of 65 points to be eligible for award, to ensure that high quality proposals are awarded.

If a proposal achieves a score that would be awarded, but the costs are not reasonable to NYSDOL or the skills are not transferable, NYSDOL reserves the right to reject the proposal.

In the case of tied scores, preference will be given to proposals with the highest Program Design evaluation score. If the Program Design evaluation scores are also tied, the award will be decided by NYSDOL's Deputy Commissioner for Workforce Development.

NYSDOL may award a contract for any or all parts of a proposal and may negotiate contract terms and conditions to meet agency program requirements consistent with the RFP.

It is important to note that:

- Ineligible Bidders will be disqualified before completing a review;
- Incomplete proposals will be disqualified;
- All Bidders that are determined not to be responsive or responsible will be disqualified after completing a review;
- Proposals that fail to meet requirements will be disqualified; and
- NYSDOL reviews will result in a final score.

All Bidders will receive a letter informing them of the decision on their proposal and successful Bidders will be contacted by NYSDOL's contract development staff.

VI. Award Administration and Information

A. Award Notices

All Bidders selected for an award will receive a letter informing them of the decision on their proposal and successful Bidders will be contacted by NYSDOL's contract development staff. If awarded, the Bidder will also be notified of the maximum amount it has been awarded.

Bidders who receive an award must be prepared to enter into contract negotiations immediately and begin trainings no later than six (6) months from the date of the award letter. NYSDOL reserves the right to rescind the award of any Bidder that is unable or unwilling to promptly engage in the contracting process or to begin conducting its trainings in accordance with the terms of the contract.

Bidders not awarded are entitled to request a debriefing from NYSDOL, which may include the reason(s) for the non-award and general guidance on the part(s) of the evaluation criteria that were not met. Such debriefing shall be requested within 15 calendar days of the notice of non-award. NYSDOL will respond to the debriefing request within a reasonable amount of time.

B. Payment

Once a contract has been developed and formally executed, funds will be released on a cost reimbursement basis. A Contractor must first pay for incurred expenses and then submit a voucher to NYSDOL for reimbursement. Vouchers must be submitted to NYSDOL on the prescribed forms before payment is made. For cost reimbursements to be approved, certain records must be kept, and specific documents submitted. Contractors must provide documentation that the service was provided. This will include attendance records for each training session to document attendance or certificates of completion showing the participant completed all required elements of the training. Attendance sheets must include the Course Name, Training Provider, Name of the Participant, Signature of the Participant, Signature of the Trainer, and Date and Hours of Training. Attendance verification is still required for remote courses, and will also need to include Course Name, Training Provider, Name of Participants, Date and Hours of Training, and attestation of accuracy by the trainer.

Please be advised that trainings may not begin until after an award is made. This includes the completion of proposal reviews, due diligence being confirmed, awardees determined, and award letters being issued. The start date for all contracts resulting from this solicitation may be no earlier than the date of the award letter issued by NYSDOL. Any training that begins or is paid for prior to the contract start date will fall outside the contract period and be ineligible for reimbursement. Further, all activities funded by the contract must end on or before the end date of the contract and any activities that occur after the end date of the contract will not be eligible for reimbursement.

NFP organizations and municipalities funded under the WRT Program are eligible for a cash advance of their award, up to 25% of total contract value, at the sole discretion of NYSDOL and subject to the availability of funds appropriated and available for contracts entered into pursuant to this solicitation. Any award must be expended on program activities in NYS.

Electronic Payments – Payment for invoices submitted by the Contractor shall only be rendered electronically unless payment by paper check is expressly authorized by the Commissioner, in the Commissioner's sole discretion, due to extenuating circumstances. Such electronic payment shall be made in accordance with ordinary NYS procedures and practices. The Contractor shall comply with the

NYS Comptroller's procedures to authorize electronic payments. Authorization forms are available at the NYS Comptroller's website at www.osc.state.ny.us/epay/index.htm, by email at helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov, or by telephone at 855-233-8363. The Contractor acknowledges that it will not receive payment on any invoices submitted under this Contract if it does not comply with the NYS Comptroller's electronic payment procedures, except where the Commissioner has expressly authorized payment by paper check as set forth above.

C. General Requirements

All proposals and accompanying documentation will become the property of NYS and will not be returned. The content of each Bidder's proposal will be held in strict confidence during the evaluation process, and no details of the proposal will be discussed outside of the evaluation process. The successful Bidder's proposal and portions of the RFP deemed applicable by NYSDOL will be made part of the contract. Therefore, an official authorized to commit the company to a contract must sign the proposal.

D. Buy American Requirements

Bidders should be aware of the requirements of WIOA, section 502 which provides that none of the funds made available under Title I or II of WIOA or under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) may be expended by an entity unless the entity agrees that in expending the funds the entity will comply with the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. sections 8301 through 8303). It is the sense of Congress that entities receiving assistance should, in expending the assistance, purchase only American-made equipment and products. See WIOA, section 502 – Buy American Requirements included in the WIOA References ([WIOA](#)) attachment of this RFP.

E. Federal and NYS Executive Orders

Please note that the Federal WIOA funds supporting this initiative are subject to the following federal and NYS Executive Orders:

- Executive Order 13513 (issued on October 1, 2009) – Sec. 4. Text Messaging While Driving by Government Contractors, Subcontractors, and Recipients and Sub-recipients. Contractors, subcontractors, and recipients and sub-recipients are encouraged to adopt and enforce policies that ban text messaging while driving a vehicle when performing official Government business or work on behalf of the Government, and to conduct initiatives of the type described in section 3(a) of the Executive Order.
- Executive Order 12928 (issued on September 16, 1994) – The recipients are strongly encouraged to provide contracting/subcontracting opportunities to Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other Minority Institutions such as Hispanic-Serving Institutions and Tribal Colleges and Universities; and to Small Business Owned and Controlled by Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individuals.
- Executive Order 13043 (issued on April 16, 1997) – Recipients are encouraged to adopt and enforce on-the-job seat belt policies and programs for their employees when operating company-owned, rented, or personally owned vehicles.
- Executive Order 13166 (issued on August 11, 2000) – Recipients must take reasonable steps to ensure that persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access to programs in accordance with USDOL's Policy Guidance on the Prohibition of National Origin Discrimination

as it Affects Persons with LEP Volume 68, Number 103, Page 32289-32305. Meaningful access may entail providing language assistance services, including oral and written translation, where necessary.

- Executive Order 14005 (issued on January 25, 2021) – Recipients agree to comply with all Applicable Made in America Laws (as defined in the Executive Order), including the Buy American Act at 41 USC sections 8301-8305. The recipient is required to maximize the use of goods, products, and materials produced in, and services offered in the United States, in accordance with the Made in America Laws.
- NYS Executive Order 177 (issued on February 3, 2018) – see [Section VIII](#) for further information.
- NYS Executive Order 16 (issued on March 17, 2022) – see [Section VIII](#) for further information.

F. Reservation Clauses

NYS DOL, in order to serve the best interests of NYS, reserves the right to:

1. Make no award;
2. Postpone or cancel this RFP upon notification to all Bidders;
3. Amend the specifications after their release with appropriate notice to all Bidders;
4. Remove proposals with unreasonable costs from award consideration;
5. Request Bidders to present supplemental information clarifying their proposal, either in writing or in formal presentation. Bidders failing to respond to these requests during the time allotted may be eliminated from funding consideration;
6. Waive or modify minor irregularities in proposals received after prior notification to the Bidder. This will in no way modify the RFP documents or excuse the Bidder from full compliance with the RFP terms and conditions;
7. Correct any arithmetic errors in any proposal;
8. Reject any and all proposals received in response to this RFP;
9. Contact a Bidders' references as a check on qualifications;
10. Award contracts to more than one (1) Bidder;
11. Negotiate with selected Bidder(s) prior to contract award;
12. Rescind the award of any Bidder unable or unwilling to begin conducting its training activities immediately following contract execution. No Bidder will have any rights against NYS DOL arising from such negotiations;
13. Make any payment contingent upon the submission of specific deliverables; and
14. Require that all offers are held open for a period of 120 days unless otherwise expressly provided for in writing.

VII. Definitions

1. Career Center System Required Partners (AKA Career Center Partners)

NYS's Career Center System is funded by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and is made up of 33 LWDBs that oversee their respective Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) and 95 Career Centers. The System includes:

Core Program Partners:

- NYS Department of Labor – Responsible for delivering services under WIOA Titles I (Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth) and III (Wagner-Peyser);
- NYS Education Department – Responsible for delivering services under WIOA Titles II (Adult Education and Literacy) and IV (Vocational Rehabilitation); and
- NYS Office of Children and Family Services/NYS Commission for the Blind – Responsible for delivering services under WIOA Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation).

Other Career Center Partners:

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF);
- Career & Technical Education;
- Title V Older Americans Act;
- Job Corps;
- Native American Programs;
- National Farmworkers Job Programs/Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Programs;
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants (Chapter 4 of Title 38);
- YouthBuild;
- Trade Adjustment Assistance activities under the Trade Act of 1974, as amended;
- Community Service Block Grant Employment and Training activities;
- Housing and Urban Development Employment and Training activities;
- Unemployment Compensation; and
- Second Chance Act Reentry Employment Opportunity (REO) programs.

The Career Center System may also include strategic partners from education, economic development, and industry. For a list of local Career Centers please visit the following website: <https://dol.ny.gov/career-centers>.

2. Career Development Services

Include services provided to trainees to develop their:

- Job search and attainment skills – Increase job placement potential by honing resume, cover letter, references development, mock interviews, networking, job search skills etc.;
- Career awareness, exploration, and enhancement skills – Career awareness begins the process of developing knowledge of careers and occupations available, their skill requirements, working conditions and training prerequisites, and job opportunities across a wide range of industry sectors. Career exploration increases trainees' ability to explore career pathways and understand how their personal attributes (interests, skills, values, motivations, aptitudes, and abilities) affect their potential success and satisfaction with different

career options and work environments. Career counseling or guidance provides advice and support in making decisions about what career paths to take; and

- Work readiness, employability, and job retention skills – Increase job retention with a variety of services provided to an individual to have the necessary competencies, capabilities, and readiness to acquire or maintain an appropriate job. Such services could include teaching workplace professionalism (i.e., basic computer skills, time management, workplace behavior, team building, mindfulness, and communication).

These services can be provided in a variety of ways such as individual, peer or group mentoring; presentations; career assessments and exploration, using JobZone (<https://dol.ny.gov/jobzone>); hands-on-activities; field trips; demonstrations; group exercises, career informational fairs, etc.

- 3. Distance Learning:** A method of classroom instruction wherein the participant receives lessons remotely such as over the internet, via email or by mail.
- 4. Incentives:** Encouragement for participants to meet certain benchmarks during the work readiness skills training program. The Contractor must have an incentive policy in place that complies with the requirements of this solicitation, subject to NYSDOL review. Participants must be aware of the existence of such incentive policy and understand the terms and standards of its award to improve the likelihood of success and lead to a successful outcome or achievement of the grant. Incentives payments must be tied to the goals of the grant program. The Contractor must obtain signed incentive receipts from the participants for each incentive they are provided.
- 5. Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs):** A board, established in each local area of NYS and certified by the Governor, made up of members from business; workforce; entities administering education and training activities; representatives of governmental, economic, and community development entities; and other individuals or representatives the chief elected official in the local area deems appropriate, tasked with creating a local plan, analyzing local labor market information and workforce development activities, engaging local business to develop linkages, developing career pathways, establishing best practices, and ensuring the appropriate use and management of funds in the local area.
- 6. One-on-One Training:** A training provided in-house that consists of only one participant and one trainer.
- 7. Stand Alone Ineligible Training:** Training is considered “stand alone” when it is not part of a larger skills training. This type of training is not allowable under the program. Examples of stand-alone training include:
 - Basic safety training;
 - Sexual harassment training; or
 - HR training.
- 8. Stipend:** A stipend is an allowable payment for participation in activities such as work experience or classroom activities, including work readiness or employability skills training. To qualify as a stipend under this solicitation, the contractor must have a stipend policy in place that complies with the requirements of this solicitation, subject to NYSDOL review and approval. Participants must be aware of the existence of such stipend policy and understand the terms and standards of its payment. Contractor must obtain signed stipend receipts from the participants for each stipend they are provided.
- 9. Supportive Services:** Assistance in removing barriers, faced by unemployed/underemployed workers, to participation in the program and entering employment or upgrading to a higher level of employment. Such services are monetary or non-monetary and could include transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, linkages to partner agencies, peer/group/individual mentoring strategies. Under the program, these services may also include miscellaneous participant expenses or robust incentives for meeting certain benchmarks during the course of the workforce readiness skills training or stipends to assist with remaining in the program. These services must be necessary to enable an individual to participate in the training.

- 10. Training Provider:** An entity that provides a training program with one (1) or more courses or classes, or a structured regimen that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential, secondary school diploma or its equivalent, employment, or measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment.
- 11. Work Readiness Skills:** A set of skills and behaviors that are necessary for any job and are commonly sought after by employers. Sometimes referred to as soft skills, job readiness, and employability skills.
- 12. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA):** WIOA was signed into law in July 2014, taking effect in July 2015, and replaced the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). WIOA is intended to help job seekers and workers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market, and match businesses with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. For more information, please visit the website at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/wioa>.

VIII. Attachments and Appendices

Acronym	Document Title	Required for submission?
ACBC	Application for Competitively Bid Contract	Yes, PDF format with original signatures
KC	Key Contacts	Yes, Excel format
VRAQ	Vendor Responsibility Bidder Questionnaire	Yes, PDF format with original signatures
EO 177	Executive Order (EO) 177 Certifications	Yes, PDF format with original signatures
EO 16	Executive Order (EO) 16 Certifications	Yes, PDF with original signatures
DPP	Determining Priority Populations	No
SFSPR	Appendix - SFS Prequalification Requirement	No
WIOAPC	Appendix – WIOA Partners Contact Information	No
SCNYS	Appendix – Standard Clauses for NYS Contracts	No
CTC	Appendix - Combined Terms and Conditions	No
GISBA	Appendix - General Information for Successful Bidders	No
MC	Appendix - Master Contract for Grants	No
WIOA	Appendix - WIOA References	No
MWBE-1	MWBE and EEO Policy Statement	Yes, PDF format with original signatures
MWBE-2	EEO 100 – EEO Staffing Plan	Yes, PDF format with original signatures

The three (3) NYSDOL programs are: Employee Retention and Advancement Training (ERAT), Reemployment Training Grant (RTG), and Work Readiness Training (WRT). The Programs are funded by a federal grant of \$248.7 million, which constitutes 100% of the budget. 0%, or \$0 is funded by state or non-governmental sources.

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