

Minutes

Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Investment Area 14 Bidder's Conference

April 8, 2014

GDOL – Columbus Career Center
700 Veterans Street
Columbus, Georgia 31902

These minutes encompasses an overview of the discussion and questions and answers generated during the Bidder's Conference for the solicitation of Youth Services held by the Columbus Consolidated Government Job Training Division on behalf of the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Area 14. This conference was held at 10:00 a.m., April 8, 2014 at the Columbus Career Center, 700 Veterans Parkway.

Please be reminded that this was the only opportunity questions could be provided during the solicitation process. Good luck.

Organizations Represented:

- Dr. J. Hud, Project Rebound
- Ms. Ann Davis, TTOI

WIA Staff

Rose Parker, Facilitator

Howard Pendleton, WIA Director

James Shipp, Youth Coordinator/Program Specialist

Overview

The facilitator welcomed all attendees to the Bidders Conference. Attendees were informed that this is the only opportunity available to ask questions concerning the proposal for youth services that has been released.

Attendees were provided an overview of the solicitation packet. A reiteration of the specific funding information outlined in "IV. Funds Availability" was discussed. It was clarified that \$100,000 in funding will be awarded for an innovative program year-round program to serve forty (40) out-of-school youth that incorporate Basic Skills Upgrading, Work Readiness/Work Ethics, and a Work Experience activity that must result in job placement in unsubsidized employment upon completion of training. The facilitator noted that services requested will be for Muscogee County only and shall be for eligible out-of-school youth of Muscogee County.

Under the advanced funding policy, this local area will not accept any request for; honor any requests for advance funding. Please note that there is no pre-funding available.

Requested services will be performed during the period (July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015), with option for renewal based upon defined contract performance outcomes, including WIA measures, future funds availability, contractor's satisfactory performance, and other factors as may be deemed appropriate and necessary as negotiated and approved by both parties and the Board

A notice of correction to Page 50, 1st paragraph was provided that provided notice that:

CORRECTION IS MADE TO PAGE 50 AS FOLLOWS:

1ST PARAGRAPH SHOULD READ AS FOLLOWS:

"Include a certified copy of your fidelity bond, which shows coverage for the period that would be covered (July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015)."

Information: DUNS & CCR: Attendees were informed that the successful bidder will be required to have a Dun & Bradstreet Numbering System (DUNS) number (www.dnb.com) and must maintain active and current profiles in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) (www.uscontractorregistration.com) as required. The attendees were encouraged to register with the CCR and also obtain a DUNS number if their agency is seeking other federal grant opportunities.

Clarification: It was stated by the facilitator that clarification will be provided regarding the number of hours that work experience will be allowed for youth participating in the activity. As noted in the proposal, the maximum allowable hours for work experience will be for up to 320 hours. Any additional hours required, will be part of negotiations with the WIA Director.

Clarification 2: It was reemphasized that wages for youth participating in the work experience activity have not been incorporated in the funds provided under this solicitation. All wages for eligible participants will be paid by the WIA Administration. Attendees were informed that it is possible for them to include any other incentives that they wish to provide, but such would in fact come out of the contract funds. Additionally, it was asked that attendees Please note that wages for out-of-school youth in work experience will be paid at the same prevailing entry wage of any similar situated employee at the business at which a worksite agreement has been established.

A brief overview of the Implementation Schedule outlined on Page 4 of the solicitation package was discussed.

The facilitator noted that Page 17, Section V, describes how proposals must be submitted. Bidders were informed that all proposals must be in sealed envelopes marked in upper right hand corner marked as requested in the proposal packet. "Proposal: PY14 WIA Youth Services [**WEB Program (Work Experience and Basic Skills Upgrading) for Out-of-School Youth**]."

Each package submitted must contain one original and 5 copies. Each proposal must be clearly marked 'Original' or 'Copy'. The original copy and all attachments, **which require signatures**, must be signed by the person authorized to enter into contracts on behalf of the organization/agency. It was stated that the original proposal must be in **a color other than black ink** (preferably BLUE INK) in order to distinguish which is the original versus copy of the proposal.

Attendees were informed that no proposals will be accepted after the deadline for submission. As outlined on Page 5, deadline for submission is 5:00 p.m., April 18, 2014; and must be received at the Columbus Consolidated Government Annex – Job Training Division, 420 Tenth Street, 1st Floor, Columbus, Georgia. It was stressed that any proposals received after this time and date will not be accepted.

The facilitator noted that proposals may be submitted in a narrative format so long as the content of proposals contains information requested and the forms required as identified in the solicitation packet.

Upon receipt, proposals will be reviewed to determine whether or not they are responsive. Proposals will be considered responsive if it meets the criteria outlined on Page 10 of the proposal packet. The Youth Council Evaluation/Selection Committee will review only responsive bids. The review is rated on a 100-point scale, with 5 additional points for local ownership. Minority and female business are encouraged to submit proposals.

Discussion of services:

The facilitator provided a brief overview of the services that are proposed in the solicitation package. Please note that funds to be awarded under this solicitation do not include participant wages and FICA that will be associated with work experience. The WIA Administrative Entity will pay wages for all eligible clients enrolled in work experience activities.

Attendees were informed that the successful bidder will be provided training prior to start of program to cover Administration requires of contract implementation and reporting. Attendees were informed that it will be the successful bidder's responsibility to recruit participants for the services being funded. The WIA Administration will determine eligibility, administer both pre and post testing to determine basic skills deficiency of youth served and other requirements that are part of the WIA Administration policy.

Attendees were informed that of the 40 youth to be served, the WIA Administration is allowing only 5 youth who can be served who may not be basic skills deficient.

Attendees were informed that the contract awarded will be "cost reimbursement", which means that the WIA Administration will reimbursement any costs outlined in the agreed budget that have been incurred and support documentation provided.

Page 34 outlines the submission requirements of proposals. The Cover Page will be submitted with all proposals. The forms identified on page 42, 43, and 52 must be completed.

A brief discussion pursued regarding the implementation table outlined on page Appendix D, Registrant Goal Summary. You must identify how many people you will serve and what are your planned outcomes for 1st thru 4th quarter. Attendees were informed that these are cumulative totals by which performance will be judged during the program year.

The **Proposal Checklist** on page 35 is for your use only. It does not have to be submitted with the proposal.

Page 42 requires listing occupational titles that you will target and entry-level wages. You can find the O'Net codes for the positions you will target at <http://online.onetcenter.org/>

On **Page 39, PAST PERFORMANCE**, attendees were informed that if the agency has never been awarded funds under the Employment and Training Administration, it is possible to submit a narrative of the agency's past experience in working with the population this proposal is requesting services. If, however, the agency has been awarded funding, it will be necessary to complete the form provided in the proposal packet.

Attendees were informed that in addition to the work experience, there are 9 additional required elements required under WIA and one (1) local element (citizenship training) that must be provided to youth under this proposal. Proposals must show not only how work experience will be conducted, but the proposer must discuss how the other elements will be made available to the client directly or indirectly.

Members of the Administrative Entity will conduct a pre-award monitoring during the period of negotiations and prior to actual signing of contracts with selected bidders.

Page 50-51, Fidelity bond requirements. Attendees were informed that a fidelity bond must be provided that covers the entire contract period. Documentation of proof must be submitted and included as part of the contract prior to contract signatures being obtained. Pages 10-12 covers specific bonding requirements and amounts of bond required. If a position bond, each position must be bonded for the full amount.

In regards to the Budget, attendees were informed that a narrative must be submitted with a proposal that explains the costs identified in the budget. No material, labor, equipment or facility costs will be provided by the Lower Chattahoochee unless specified in the budget and agreed upon by the WIA Administration/Board.

Attendees were further informed that the assurances and certifications listed within the proposal will be part of all contracts that are awarded for Program Year 2014

The Management Plan describes your organization. Tell us how you are set up; provide organizational chart, and how you will monitor yourself. On Page 45, you are asked to discuss your financial capability. You must provide a copy of your UI Tax and Federal Identification number (State and Federal Tax Numbers).

The Certification of debarment certificate must be submitted with the proposal. The following list contains some of the general questions that were asked during the bidders conference, followed by responses of the Administrative Entity. We extend our thanks to each of the agencies in attendance and wish all bidders good luck.

Questions & Answers

No additional questions or answers may be provided.

Bidders were informed that all costs that are associated with providing program services must be identified on the budget form similar to that provided in the solicitation package. Wages and FICA for participants should not be included as part of the proposed budgets submitted. Payment of wages will be the responsibility of the WIA Administration.

A. What is an out-of-school youth?

Q. As defined on Page 23, of the proposal, “an out-of-school youth is defined as 1) a school dropout (no longer attending any school and who has not yet received a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent); 2) a youth who has received a secondary school diploma or its equivalent but is basic skills deficient, unemployed, or underemployed. A youth attending and alternative school at the time of registration is not considered a dropout.

B. What if an agency has a bond that covers this period, but expires before the contract period?

Q. The agency may use an existing bond that covers those positions that will be identified as part of the contract; and will be required to submit a copy of the renewed bond for inclusion in the contract for the remainder of the contract obligation.

A. What is the “fidelity bond”?

Q. Another terminology “liability insurance”, covers policyholders for losses that they incur as a result of fraudulent acts by specified individuals. As stated in the package, bidders must provide a “fidelity bond” that adheres to the requirements discussed on Page 50-51 of the solicitation package.

A. Is it possible to serve youth offenders, youth with disabilities, or youth with other barriers under this proposal?

Q. The request for proposal asks that you serve 40 out-of-school youth, 18-21 years of age, with basic skills deficiencies. It is solely up to the proposer to determine what other barriers that the youth they are serving may have. It is important, however, to note that the outcome for which this program is employment.

A. Define basic skills deficiency?

Q. In this context, basic skills deficiency will be those youth that have been identified through formal assessment administered by the WIA Administration as reading and/or math levels at 8.9 or below.

A. Is it possible to provide a stipend to participants?

Q. If stipend in this context mean wages, the response would be “No” because the WIA Administration will pay the wages for any eligible youth participating in work experience. If, however, you propose to provide any other monetary or other incentive such as bus pass, etc, for other performance through participation, it is suggested that this be made part of your proposed service and funds will be part of the contract award funding.

A. How many hours can an individual participate in work experience activity?

Q. This applies only to the work experience activity. The maximum number of hours allowed only in the work experience activity is up to 320 hours. Any additional hours that may be required will be negotiated with the WIA Administration. This does not include the hours for basic skills upgrade or any other activities associated with program design.

A. How can agencies obtain information regarding the prevailing entry wages for a specific occupation?

Q. You may inquire through the local Georgia Department of Labor, located at 700 Veterans Parkway, Columbus, GA; thru the GDOL website at www.dol.state.ga.us; or inquire through local business.

A. Is it possible to work another program, such as GED Program, into your program design?

Q. It is certainly possible to do so, but in this solicitation, we have laid out the main specifications that we are seeking. You must tell us how you propose to provide the services that we are soliciting. Remember also that the outcome should be employment and an increase of one or more functional levels in area of deficiency.

A. Is it possible for a youth to work part time?

B. Proposal is requesting Work experience is for period up to 320 hours or 2 months based upon 40 hour work week. Anything is possible. How you build your strategy is what has to be sold to the WIA Administration. You must tell us how you propose to provide the services that we are soliciting or what other strategy you are proposing that still meets the same outcome. Remember that the ultimate outcome for the youth at the end of training should be employment and an increase of one or more functional levels in area of deficiency.

A. Is it possible that more than one agency could be selected for funding?

Q. The Board has approved funding in the amount of \$100,000 to be awarded to one agency that has an innovative program that provides the services that the solicitation package is seeking.

A. Can a copy of the proposal packages be obtained from the Internet?

Q. Proposal packages can be download at www.columbusga.org/wia; or you may come by the office at Columbus Consolidated Government Annex, Job Training Division, 1st Floor, 420 Tenth Street, Columbus, Georgia.

A. Will youth be paid minimum wage?

Q. No. The WIA Administration will pay the prevailing entry wage of the training position at the same wage of similar entry level position of other employees.

A. Is there a certain number of pages that must be submitted with the proposal?

Q. The only limitation placed on the pages of the proposal is requiring a minimum of 10 pages for the narrative of the Service Strategy. It may be more than that. The more details you provide the better understanding the reviewers will have on how you plan to run your program.

A. In Section IV of the proposal, item #33 states, “all contractors shall submit annually an organization-wide audit...” Do we need to have an audit done to submit as part of the proposal packet?

Q. No, an audit is not required to submit a proposal. Item #33 is stipulating that the agency awarded this contract will be required to submit to an organization-wide audit each year s required by the circulars sited in Section IV.

A. What does a “non-traditional” job mean?

Q. An example of a “non-traditional” job would be a nurse’s position. “Traditionally” nurse’s positions have been held by women. A man in that position would be “non-traditional”.

The facilitator asked if there were any additional questions that needed to be asked; any clarification required of what was being requested in the solicitation. No further questions were asked during the Bidders Conference. Attendees were further reminded that once the meeting adjourned, no additional questions or responses could be provided.