



# Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Development Bidders Conference

October 19, 2015  
GDOL Columbus Career Center  
700 Veterans Parkway  
Columbus, Georgia

These minutes encompasses an overview of the discussion and questions and answers generated during the Bidder's Conference for the solicitation of Out-of-School Youth Services held by the Columbus consolidated Government Job Training Division on behalf of the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Development Area Fourteen (WDA-14). The conference was held at 10:00 a.m.; October 19, 2015 at the Columbus Career Center, 700 /veterans Parkway.

Please be aware that this was the only opportunity questions and answers to those questions could be provided during the solicitation process. Good Luck!

#### Interested Parties in attendance:

Ms. Beverly Combs, Partnership In Caring  
Ms. Jeannetta Forte`, Partnership In Caring  
Ms. Shani Forte`, Partnership In Caring  
Ms. Nadia Haralson, Paxen, LLC  
Ms. Carley Huguley, Paxen, LLC

#### WIOA Staff

Ms. Rose Parker, WIOA Asst. Director  
Ms. Lisa Lane, WIOA Administrative Support Staff



## 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 Section I “B. Funds Availability” was discussed. It was noted that \$80,000.00 in funding will be awarded for an innovative year-round program that incorporates internship (Work Experience), pre-employment/work readiness skills training that results in unsubsidized job placement outcomes AND retention services for **twenty (20) WIOA eligible Out-of-School Youths, ages 18 – 24 years old, residing in the Muscogee County Area only.** The funding solicited under this RFP shall be for **the remaining six month period of Program Year 2015 (beginning January 1, 2016 and ending June 30, 2016).** The contractor awarded funding through this solicitation shall be subject to potential renewal of its contract each program year for a period not to exceed three (3) additional program years, beginning July 1, 2016. Renewal shall be contingent upon contractor’s successful performance during the 6-months, covered under this solicitation period and any succeeding program years thereafter; the availability of funds each program year; and, appropriate agreed upon contract negotiations by both parties and the Workforce Development Board.

The Workforce Board reserves the option to modify contracts as required to meet federal and state requirements. All funding is linked to defined performance outcomes including federal, state, and local negotiated performance measures, future finding availability, contractors’ satisfactory performance, and other factors as may be deemed appropriate and necessary.

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.

The facilitator noted that it will be required to solicit another RFP during the 6 month period because the contracts for the Youth Programs will be expired at the end of Program Year 2015. This will not have an impact on the award presented here today. There will be an additional RFP announced after December because the Youth Services have to be procured for Program Year 2016. These services include the In-School Youth Work Experience Activity, Out-of-School Youth with disabilities activity, and Out-of-School Youth WEB Program.

A brief overview of the Implementation Schedule outlined on Page 6 of the solicitation package was discussed.

The facilitator pointed out Section II: Background Information on Page 12 of the solicitation package which gives a background of Workforce Development and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. At this point, operation is under “proposed rule”, the successful bidder awarded a contract would be required to comply with any final regulations that may be announced and would be subject to regulation changes that could be more stringent than the current rules and regulation under the “proposed rule”. At this time, it is known that Performance Measures will change and they will have a significant impact on employment. They will be built around employment so the emphasis on the retention activity is important because the State will be reassessing the length of follow-up for retentions and they will be expanding. This proposal is gearing up for that transition.

The facilitator noted that Page 23, Section V, describes how proposals must be submitted. Bidders were informed that all proposals must be submitted **no later than 5:00 PM on November 6, 2015** to the Job Training Division; Columbus Consolidated Government Annex, 420 Tenth Street, Columbus, Georgia 31902. **No proposal will be accepted after this date and time.** Proposals must be submitted in a sealed envelope and marked, in the upper left-hand corner. **“Proposal: PY15 WIOA Out-of-School Youth Internship (Work Experience) and Retention Services”**.

Each proposal submitted shall contain **one “Original Signature” proposal and three additional copies** of the signed respective proposal. 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, **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 6, the deadline for submission is 5:00 PM, November 6, 2015; and must be received at the Columbus Consolidated Government Annex – Job Training Division, 420 Tenth Street, 1<sup>st</sup> 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 requested content of the proposals

contained the information requested along with 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 15 of the proposal packet. The Youth Committee will review only responsive bids. The review is rated on a 100 point scale, with 5 additional points being applied 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 Internship (work experience). The WIOA Administration will pay wages for all WIOA eligible clients enrolled in the Internship (work experience) activity.

Attendees were informed that it will be the successful bidder's responsibility to recruit participants for the services being funded. The WIOA Administration will determine eligibility and other requirements that are part of the WIOA Administration policy.

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

Page 25 outlines the submission requirements of proposals. The Cover Page (Page 39 of Solicitation Packet) must be submitted with all proposals. The forms identified on page 44 Summary of Past Performance and page 47 Participant Characteristics (Priority of Service) must be completed. The Certification of Debarment Certificate must also submitted with the proposal.

A brief discussion pursued regarding the implementation table outlined on page 59. You must identify how many people you will serve and what are your planned outcomes for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters will be.

The Proposal Checklist on page 40 is for your use only. It does not have to be submitted with the proposal.

Page 49 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/>

Attendees were informed that in addition to the work experience, there are 16 additional required elements required under WIOA and one local element (citizenship training) that must be provided to youth under this proposal. Proposals must show not only how internships (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 WIOA Administration will conduct a pre-award monitoring during the period of negotiations and prior to actual signing of contracts with selected bidders.

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.

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 WIOA Administration unless specified in the budget and agreed upon by the WIOA Administration and Workforce Board.

Attendees were further informed that the assurances and certification listed within the proposal will be part of all contracts that are awarded for Program Year 2015.

The Management Plan describes your organization. Describe how you are set up; provide an organizational chart and how you will monitor yourself. You are also 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 following list contains the list of questions that were asked during the bidder's conference, followed by response of the WIOA Administrative Entity. We extend our thanks to each of the parties in attendance and wish all bidders good luck. We look forward to impressive and innovative proposals.

## Questions & Answers

Q: There isn't an Out-of-School Youth Program currently?

A: *There are two Out-of-School Youth programs, our Literacy / Numeracy Program – the Basic Skills Upgrade Program; and Youths with Disabilities (special needs) Work Experience Program. Those are the only two Out-of-School Youth services that we currently have. These activities are not enough to cover the 75% Out-of-School Youth funding we're required to spend serving the target population. With the transition to WIOA, 75% of Youth funding must be spent on serving Out-of-School Youths (18 to 24 years of age). That is the purpose of generating this RFP to provide additional services to the out-of-school youth population.*

Q: What other Youth Services will be solicited after the contract for this RFP has been awarded?

A: *The board approved youth services that were competitively procured and contained renewal options. Those renewal options will expire June 30, 2015 - the end of this program year. Youth services must once again be competitively procured for Program Year 2016 (July 1, 2016 thru June 30, 2017). Youth services must be competitively procured to include the In-School Youth services and Out-of-School Youth services. This will not have an impact on the award presented here today. The RFP will be announced after December to procure Youth Services for Program Year 2016 as required.*

Q: Section V on page 25 of the proposal Multiple Components / Combination Bids, if we are planning to utilize current structure and current programming to help offset some of the cost for this RFP, do we need to provide two separate proposals for that – one with our leverage cost based on our current services and then an additional proposal based on the contract being a standalone or how does that work?

A: *For individuals that have multiple services, this RFP is a standalone service. We are awarding \$80,000.00 to an entity to provide services for twenty (20) WIOA eligible participants who are determined "out-of-school" between the ages of 18 and 24 years of age. If you have an additional service that you are providing, when you complete your "Cost Allocation Plan", it should show how you are spreading your costs for additional personnel and operating expenses for providing the multiple programs. Your budget should show how much you are charging for each program based on your cost allocation split for the services.*

Q: Its stated that responses may be in narrative format, is there a page limitation on the narrative and/or a preference in font?

A: *We try to limit responses to ten (10) pages as far as expanding on your program content. The focus should be on how you're serving your participants. How a participant will progress from entry into your program to exit of your program and the services provided to them. There is no preference in font. That is your choice.*

Q: Will the wages be covered by the Administrative entity for a participant?

A: *Wages will be covered by the WIOA Administration during the internship. Everything else up to that point will be borne by the bidder.*

Q: Will the WIOA Administration pay a participant for pre-employment/classroom training?

A: *The WIOA Administration will pay the prevailing entry wage of the training position at the same wage of similar entry level position of other employees during their internship. Stipends would have to be modelled into your proposed services and those funds would be part of the \$80,000.00. Understand that the wages paid during an internship are separate and are not part of the \$80,000.00 contract award. Payment of wages and FICA will be the responsibility of the WIOA Administration.*

Q: If you're doing some dual enrolments, going from one component of your program to another component of your program, can you capture that number twice?

A: *No, with your current contract, you are providing the basic skills upgrade and then transitioning them to either Work Experience Training or entry into Post Secondary Education. The WIOA Administration will have picked up the wages for the work experience training. This is two separate services you couldn't link the two.*

Q: So just to clarify, the current RFP is strictly a Work Experience Program?

A: *Yes, the outcome is unsubsidized employment and retention of that unsubsidized employment.*

Q: Could you expand on “Citizenship Skills” training?

A: *Proposed programs will ensure some form of citizenship skills training is provided either personally or through coordination with other programs in the workforce area. To aid participants in becoming good stewards of the Community. That is what we are seeking.*

Q: Who made the Citizenship Skills Training a requirement?

A: *The Local Workforce Development Board.*

Q: 320 hours or 8 weeks isn’t a very long internship, what if an employer wants a longer training period?

A: *If it is the opinion of a potential employer that additional training may be required to learn all the skill sets required to perform well in the position, a request can be submitted to the WIOA Director for consideration and possible approval. It will be up to the discretion of the WIOA Director whether or not additional training is warranted.*

Q: In regards to f. on page 46, we can choose the age group of out-of-school youth we want to serve?

A: *The full range of individuals we are soliciting for is between the ages of 18 and 24 years of age. That does not necessarily mean you would have to serve this full age range. Many times Bidders submit proposals for just one general age group. What we’re asking is that you identify the specific ages or age range in which you are going to be providing service.*

Q: If an individual is currently in the Adult Ed Program at Columbus Tech, are they still considered out-of-school?

A: *For clarification, under WIOA, if an individual is currently enrolled in the Adult Education Program at Columbus Tech – GED Program and is not enrolled in a post-secondary program of study or a occupational training or certificate program of study then they are still considered “out-of-school”.*

Q: What if a person is in an alternative education, like with a separate entity – not within the school system, but the entity’s focus for the individual to obtain the equivalent to their high school diploma, would they be considered out-of-school?

A: *If it’s a recognized alternative school by the State or school district, then the individual would be considered “in-school”. That’s why it was so relieving that the law had changed under WIOA and they were no longer recognizing the Adult Ed programs offered like at Columbus Tech or Job Corp. as being enrolled in school.*

Q: This contract won’t start until January 1, 2016, why does your solicitation packet in Appendix D (page 59) list the quarters as third (3<sup>rd</sup>) and fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) quarters?

A: *We are currently in the second quarter of Program Year 2015. The contract will be awarded for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters of Program Year 2015 (January 1, 2016 through June 30, 2016). This proposal is for the last six (6) months of the program year.*

Q: Will the RFP released for In-School Youth Services be for only the lower counties of WDA-14 and not Muscogee County?

A: *There will be an RFP released before July 1, of 2016 that will probably be to serve the in-school youth population in the lower counties of Workforce Development Area Fourteen. It will be the Workforce Development Board’s decision how the 25% of the Youth funding will be utilized in serving the In-School Youth in our workforce area. Until the law is changed the focus of the WIOA legislation is serving “out-of-school” youth.*

Q: If a Muscogee County resident is currently enrolled in Job Corp. in say, Albany, Georgia, could we serve them here?

A: *It would be extremely difficult for an individual to meet the requirement for both locations during the same time frame having to be in Albany, Georgia for Job Corp. and Columbus, Georgia for your program. Individuals who have completed the Job Corp. program that would be transitioning back to Muscogee County could be picked up and served by your*

*program.*

Q: Can we use part of the \$80,000.00 in this RFP to provide occupational (certificate) training for an individual who can be placed with a potential employer with a position that requires the certificate for permanent employment with the company?

A: *It depends on how you build your program. How you build your strategy is what has to be sold to the Workforce Board and WIOA 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 unsubsidized employment and retention.*

Q: Who makes the final decision on the contract award?

A: *The Workforce Development Board makes the final decision based on the recommendations of the Youth Committee. Our Youth Council was grandfathered over during the transition to WIOA and is now our Youth Committee. The Youth Committee handles all Youth Proposals and Services. They will rate the proposals and make their recommendations to the Board. The Board will be the final approver of the contract award. The Board will meet Thursday, December 17, 2015.*

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 or expanded on.

We look forward to impressive and innovative proposals. Good luck!

**Adjournment**

With no further discussion, meeting was adjourned.