



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FOR
SURVEY OF EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT WITH
OHIO'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Issued By

The Ohio Department of Development
Workforce and Talent Division

I. OVERVIEW

The Ohio Department of Development (Development), under the guidance and direction of the Lt. Governor Lee Fisher, leads Ohio's effort to coordinate the contributions of state agencies, commissions and boards in developing a comprehensive statewide workforce development system. While Development has considerable adeptness in monitoring the quality of the state's workforce development services on a program-by-program basis through regulatory compliance (i.e., common measures, fiscal audits, and quality reviews), measuring the impact of the system on a broader, outcome-based level has yet to be achieved. It is still unclear whether the state's workforce development system is meeting the needs of Ohio's businesses. In the interest of improving Development's understanding and awareness of where and how the workforce development system is engaging with employers, as well as learning what programs and services are most desired by businesses, Development is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP).

II. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose and objective of this RFP is to identify a contractor that is capable of conducting a multi-faceted survey that will:

1. Measure Ohio employers' engagement and satisfaction with the State's workforce development system;
2. Compile data and information that will enable Development and the Governor's Workforce Policy Advisory Board to learn about the strengths and weaknesses of the state's workforce development system;
3. Provide employers with an opportunity to articulate concerns about the state's workforce development system; and
4. Establish metrics that can be tracked over time to assess and measure employer satisfaction, as well as gauge the impact of changes to Ohio's workforce development system.

III. SCOPE OF WORK

1. Development is issuing this RFP to engage a contractor to conduct a multi-faceted survey that will result in the collection of responsive data and information from no fewer than 2,500 employers throughout Ohio.
2. The format and/or methodology of conducting the statewide survey may include mail-in (paper form) surveys, online (electronic form) surveys, computer-assisted telephone (CAT) surveys and face-to-face (interview style) surveys.

3. In order to obtain a valid geographic distribution of responses from Ohio employers, a minimum of 100 and maximum of 500 responsive surveys must be compiled from each of the state's 12 Economic Development Regions.

IV. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

The proposal must be prepared in accordance with the instructions in this Request for Proposal.

1. Proposals must be addressed as follows:

Employer Survey Proposal
Ohio Department of Development
Workforce and Talent Division
77 S. High Street, 28th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

2. **Proposals must be received at the above address by 4:30 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) on Thursday, July 3, 2008.** Late proposals will not be reviewed.
3. Any delivery method is acceptable provided the proposal is received (not postmarked) by 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 3, 2008.
4. Proposals must be submitted in paper form.
5. All proposals must include one (1) complete, sealed, signed copy of the Technical Proposal, along with one (1) complete, sealed, signed paper copy of the Cost Proposal.
6. The Cost Proposal must be submitted in a separate envelope from the Technical Proposal. If the Cost Proposal envelope is enclosed in another envelope for the purpose of delivery, the Cost Proposal envelope shall be clearly marked as follows:

Cost Proposal for Employer Survey
Applicant's Name
Applicant's Business Address

7. Proposals submitted via facsimile or e-mail will not be reviewed.

V. PROPOSAL FORMAT AND REQUIREMENTS

To be scored, a proposal must include a TECHNICAL PROPOSAL and a COST PROPOSAL as described in this section, contain all the information specified for

each of the categories listed in this section, and meet the requirements of this section.

1. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL. The Technical Proposal shall be composed of four distinct parts, i.e., Transmittal Letter, Proposal Overview, Draft Survey, and Organizational Experience and Qualifications. *The Technical Proposal must not contain cost information or the entire proposal will be disqualified from further consideration.*

A. The *Transmittal Letter* section of the Technical Proposal must:

- i. Identify the applicant;
- ii. Provide the name, title, business address and telephone number of the applicant's contact person who has the authority to answer questions concerning the applicant's proposal and is able to execute a binding contract on behalf of the applicant; and
- iii. Identify any and all parts of the applicant's proposal that contain trade secret information as defined in Ohio Revised Code § 1333.61.

B. The *Proposal Overview* section of the Technical Proposal must:

- i. Summarize the applicant's understanding of the project;
- ii. Indicate how the applicant plans to address the purpose, objectives and deliverables stated in this RFP;
- iii. Outline the applicant's technical approach and draft work plan to be implemented, i.e., describe in detail how the applicant will implement the mail-in, electronic, telephone and/or face-to-face survey processes;
- iv. Identify the project staffing, including any subcontractors;
- v. Provide a Table of Organization for the project, as well as a chart indicating the names of staff and staff hours or activities/tasks linked to the responsibility of each of those individuals involved in each deliverable of the project;
- vi. Describe the applicant's proposed procedure(s) for reporting the status of the project, including work completed;
- vii. Describe the applicant's proposed procedure for collecting and sharing survey information with Development;
- viii. Describe the applicant's proposed procedure for addressing and resolving unanticipated problems during the course of the project, specifying that the procedure will not adversely affect the timelines associated with the project; and
- ix. Describe the applicant's proposed format for the final report for Development.

C. The *Draft Survey* section of the Technical Proposal must:

- i. Be presented in the form of a survey that would be presented to employers for completion;

- ii. Define Ohio's public workforce development system;
- iii. Be designed to obtain data and information from employers about their size, location, industry, workforce development services used and services required to improve their economic competitiveness;
- iv. Provide employers with the opportunity to indicate and/or articulate their engagement (or lack of engagement) with Ohio's workforce development system;
- v. Measure employers' knowledge, attitudes, satisfaction and experiences related to engagements with Ohio's workforce development system; and
- vi. Establish metrics that can be tracked over time to assess and measure employer engagement and satisfaction, as well as the impact of future changes to Ohio's workforce development system.

D. The *Organizational Experience and Qualifications* section of the Technical Proposal must:

- i. Provide the names, resumes, education, and experience of personnel listed in the Table of Organization chart for this project (including any subcontractors), and fully explain how their education and experience is relevant to the areas described in Section II (Purpose and Objectives) and Section IV (Scope of Work) of this RFP;
- ii. List any prior experience relevant to this RFP (including current contact names and phone numbers for these references) and a list of similar projects currently underway by the firm, individual or by any subcontractor(s) as well as all similar projects completed over the past five (5) years in Ohio or elsewhere. The Evaluation/Selection Review committee will consider these additional references and may contact each of these sources. Relevant experience may include experience conducting large-scale surveys of employers and businesses related to workforce development;
- iii. Include a completed "Vendor Information Form." Please refer to the following website to obtain a copy of the form:
<http://www.obm.ohio.gov/forms/oaks/Vendor%20Information%20Form.pdf>;
and
- iv. Include a completed "Declaration regarding Material Assistance / Non-Assistance to a Terrorist Form." Please refer to the following website to obtain a copy of the form:
<http://www.mrdd.ohio.gov/forms/providers/DMA.mdi>.

2. COST PROPOSAL. As stated in Section IV(6) of this RFP, the Cost Proposal must be submitted in a separate, sealed envelope and labeled appropriately.

A. Total Cost and Duration Requirements. The Cost Proposal must:

- i. Provide the applicant's "best and final offer" and indicate the total cost to complete the applicant's proposal and fulfill the requirements of this RFP;

- ii. Remain open for one hundred and eighty (180) days following the date of submission.

B. Cost Proposal Required Elements. The Cost Proposal must:

- i. List the deliverables identified in this RFP and all associated costs;
- ii. List all key personnel hourly labor rates for all personnel assigned to the project and listed in the Table of Organization;
- iii. List the estimated costs for overhead, equipment, materials, postage, telephone and computer services, if any;
- iv. List any and all other costs, with explanation;
- v. List the aggregate total (or sum) of the proposal; and
- vi. Contain the signature of an officer or agent authorized to legally bind the applicant.

VI. CRITERIA FOR PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND SELECTION

1. All proposals will be reviewed and scored by a Proposal Review Committee, comprised of staff from Development. The Proposal Review Committee shall include a representative from each of the following Divisions/Offices within Development:
 - i. Workforce and Talent Division
 - ii. Strategic Business Investments Division
 - iii. Technology and Innovations Division
 - iv. Policy, Research and Strategic Planning Office
2. Any proposals not meeting the requirements contained in this RFP will not be scored. Complete Technical Proposals will be reviewed and scored by the Proposal Review Committee. A maximum of 75 points will be awarded for the Technical Proposal, as outlined below:

Available Points	Technical Proposal Evaluation Criteria
20	The proposal clearly outlines the method(s) for achieving each of the deliverables.
20	The proposal outlines a draft project work plan with realistic methods for achieving the deliverables outlined in the RFP.
20	The draft survey meets the requirements of the RFP and clearly demonstrates a sound understanding of the purpose and objectives of the project.
5	The proposal includes procedures for: communication throughout the contract period; resolving unanticipated problems; and status updates to Development (format and mode) as stated in the RFP.
5	The proposal reflects the project staffing and demonstrates the competence, knowledge, and qualifications of all employees and subcontractors as outlined in the RFP and as applicable to achieving the deliverables.

5	The proposal reflects experience with similar projects in Ohio or elsewhere related to Workforce Development.
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NOTE: Any Technical Proposals receiving less than a total of 50 points out of the possible 75 points will not be considered further.

3. Upon completion of Technical Proposal scoring by the Proposal Review Committee, the committee will unseal the Cost Proposals that meet the required score as listed in 2 of this section for further consideration. The Cost Proposal score shall be based on the lowest proposed cost of those proposals that received a score of at least 50 points for the Technical Proposal. A maximum of 25 points will be awarded for the Cost Proposal, as outlined below:

Available Points	Cost Proposal Formula
25	Step 1: $\text{Lowest Proposed Cost} \div \text{Cost of Proposal Being Evaluated} = X$ Step 2: $X \times 25 \text{ (i.e. maximum cost points)} = \text{Score}$

4. The score from the Technical Proposal evaluation shall be added to the score received for the Cost Proposal to determine the applicant's total score.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS PROHIBITED

1. From the issuance date of this RFP and until either a contract is awarded to an applicant or Development announces that no award shall be made, there shall be no communications concerning the RFP between any applicant who expects to submit or has already submitted a proposal and any employee of Development involved in the issuing of this RFP. This prohibition of communication extends to any and all agents of the applicant, including lobbyists, current and former business associates and/or clients.
2. The only exceptions to this prohibition are as follows:
 - A. Written requests for clarification/interpretation by applicants in accordance with Section VIII of this RFP; and
 - B. Requests made by Development for additional information as determined by the Proposal Review Committee.

VIII. REQUESTS FOR INTERPRETATION / CLARIFICATION

1. If an applicant finds any perceived conflict, error, omission or discrepancy in this RFP, the applicant shall complete and submit the “contact us” form below: <http://www.development.ohio.gov/SurveyOfEmployerEngagement/>
2. **Requests for interpretation and/or clarification of this RFP must be submitted via the above “contact us” form no later than 4:30 p.m., (Eastern Standard Time) on Friday, June 27, 2008.**
3. Development may update this RFP with responses to requests for interpretation and/or clarification at its discretion anytime before 4:30 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) on Thursday, July 3, 2008.

IX. RESERVED RIGHTS

1. Payments for any and all services provided pursuant to the contract are contingent upon the availability of state and federal funds.
2. Development is under no obligation to issue the contract as a result of this solicitation if, in the opinion of Development, none of the proposals are responsive to the objectives and needs of Development or if it is in the best interest of Development to not award a contract.
3. Development reserves the right to not select any applicant should Development decide not to proceed. Development is under no obligation to issue the contract until approval is received from the proper authorities, including the state controlling board (if the cost of the selected proposal exceeds \$50,000).
4. Development reserves the right to reject any and all proposals where the applicant takes exception to the terms and conditions of the RFP or fails to meet the terms and conditions, including but not limited to, standards, specifications, and requirements as specified in the RFP.
5. All proposals are public record and become the property of Development. Proposals shall not be returned to applicants.
6. Development will not release specific content of any proposal to the extent the applicant identifies the content as trade secret and that determination is confirmed by Development’s Legal Division.
7. Development reserves the right to reject, in whole or in part, any and all proposals where Development, taking into consideration factors including, but not limited to, the results of the evaluation process and price, has determined that award of a contract would not be in the best interest of Development or the State.

X. ETHICAL AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST REQUIREMENTS

1. No applicant/contractor or individual, company or organization seeking a contract shall promise or give to any Development employee any item of value that is of such character as to manifest a substantial and improper influence upon the employee with respect to his or her duties.
2. No applicant/contractor or individual, company, or organization seeking a contract shall solicit any Development employee to violate any of the conduct requirements for employees.
3. Any applicant/contractor or potential contractor who violates the requirements and prohibitions defined here or of Section 102.03 or 102.04 of the Ohio Revised Code is subject to termination of the contract or refusal by Development to enter into a contract.
4. Development employees and applicant/contractors who violate Sections 102.03, 102.04, 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Ohio Revised Code may be prosecuted for criminal violations.
5. An applicant/contractor, company, organization or spouse of an applicant/contractor or company official who, has made one or more contributions totaling in excess of \$1,000.00 to the Governor or Lt. Governor or their campaign committees within the two previous calendar years is prohibited from submitting a proposal in response to this RFP.