

Delaware County Workforce Development Board



Request for Proposals Communications Plan and Services

Proposals due: 5pm EST February 15, 2022

The Delaware County Workforce Development Board is an equal opportunity employer.

Auxiliary aids and service are available upon request to persons with disabilities.

About Delaware County Workforce Development Board

Delaware County Workforce Development Board (DCWDB) is the Workforce Development Board (WDB) for Delaware County. We connect funding, expertise and opportunities to develop a thriving workforce in Delaware County. DCWDB seeks to deliver workforce development solutions to meet the current and future needs of businesses and job seekers.

The strategic vision of the DCWDB is to create a system that harnesses federal, state, local, and philanthropic resources to invest in employer-demanded skill development to ensure Delaware County has a world class workforce. The DCWDB connects to regional partners and research-based best practice to add value to the alignment between employers needs and the workforce development system.

During the Local Plan period of 2021 to 2024, the Delaware County Workforce Development Board will achieve the following goals:

- **Goal 1 Raise Awareness:** The DCWDB will raise awareness of the workforce development system among community members, potential partners, job seekers, and employers. Raising awareness of the workforce development system is critical to engage a wide array of stakeholders and to create an alignment between employers needs and the workforce development system.
- **Goal 2 Grow Out-of-School Youth Programming:** The DCWDB will grow Out-of-School Youth programming to better engage vulnerable youth and provide a variety of meaningful learning and work opportunities. Developing more Out-of-School Youth programming to maintain a world class workforce into the future will drive achievement of this goal.
- **Goal 3 Increase Employer Engagement:** The DCWDB will increase employer engagement and collaboration with economic development and the Chamber of Commerce. Bringing together the networks and resources of the Commerce Center, the Chamber of Commerce, and direct employer engagement allows employers to drive the workforce development system.
- **Goal 4 Increase Work-based Learning:** The DCWDB will increase career pathways and work-based learning opportunities for adults and youth, including pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, integrated education and training, on-the-job-training, and co-enrollment in programs. Creating work-based on-ramps for workers with or without barriers to employment creates a vibrant workforce development system.
- **Goal 5 Build Systems Connections:** The DCWDB will create formal connections to County systems that serve adults and youth, including the justice system, Child and Youth Services, Foster Care, etc. and continue to build connections to PA CareerLink® partners, program providers, and community-based organizations to collectively meet the needs of job seekers.

Positioning the workforce system in alignment with other support systems creates a comprehensive strategy to reduce barriers to employment.

- Goal 6 Increase Diversity, Equity, Inclusion: The DCWDB will investigate and address structures and practices that limit diversity, equity, or inclusion in the workforce development system. Delaware County can only achieve a world class workforce when the talents and goals of all residents are ignited.

Purpose of this RFP

Delaware County Workforce Development Board (DCWDB) is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify a communications consultant to develop a comprehensive communications plan and to conduct ongoing services to achieve communications goals.

The period of base contract for the development and initial implementation of the communications plans begins on March 8, 2022 and ends on June 30, 2022. A continued implementation contract may be awarded for July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 based on success of the initial implementation and available funds.

Contract Award & Funding Available

Please be advised that the level of funding available for the base contract will not exceed \$75,000.

The proposals submitted in response to this solicitation is not a legally binding document. However, the contents of the proposal of the successful bidder will become contractual obligations and failure to accept these obligations in a contractual agreement may result in the cancellation of the award.

Procurement Timeline:

- Public Notice January 18, 2022
- Release RFP on website January 18, 2022
- Bidders Info Session via MS Teams January 25, 2022
- Proposals Due February 15, 2022, 5pm EST
- Expected Date for Notification of Award March 2, 2022

Submission of Proposals

Proposals will only be accepted by email and must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on February 15, 2022. Proposal must be emailed to Kate McGeever mcgeeverk@co.delaware.pa.us with a subject line of "Communications Plan and Services- (Bidder's Name)."

Proposals received after this time and date will not be considered for review. Timely receipt of the proposals is the sole responsibility of the proposer.

The actual amount of award will be based on proposed budgets, availability of funds, and standards for use of public funds (all costs must be reasonable and necessary to carry out the planned functions, allowable, and allocable to the proper grant/cost categories). DCWDB is unable to define with certainty the funding allocation that will be made available for any agreement resulting from this RFP. DCWDB reserves the right to vary or change the terms of any contract executed as a result of this RFP, including funding levels, the scope of work, performance standards, and shortening or extending the contract period, as it deems necessary and in the best interests of DCWDB. The proposal most advantageous to DCWDB in terms of quality and cost will be recommended for funding.

Program Cost Reimbursement

Payment related to any agreement resulting from this RFP will be made on a cost reimbursement basis. This means your organization must have the financial capacity to pay all costs up front. DCWDB will require an invoice, proof of expenses, and required documentation to process a reimbursement. DCWDB will only reimburse the provider for actual expenses incurred during the effective dates of the contract. The reimbursement timeline will be finalized during the contract negotiation. Allowable costs will be determined by all applicable federal, state and local regulations.

Who can apply?

Eligible applicants include non-profit and for-profit organizations, private sector entities, educational institutions, community-based organizations and other entities operating in accordance with federal, state and local law, and in business for at least three years. Applicants must be an incorporated organization. Eligible applicants must be in good standing with the federal government, registered in the System for Award Management, not debarred, and have proof of insurance and FIEN/EIN number. Organizations currently barred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by a Federal, State, City or County department/agency, quasi-governmental agency, or Delaware County Workforce Development Board (DCWDB) are ineligible to apply.

Applicant Competency – All applicants must have the technical competence, knowledge and expertise, management and administrative capabilities and capacity, professional staff, financial resources and stability, and administrative and fiscal systems to carry-out the work described in this RFP. Applicants must meet high standards of public service and fiduciary responsibility. DCWDB requires assurance that the selected applicant’s performance of the terms and conditions of any agreement resulting from this RFP be undertaken in accordance with the highest level of integrity and business ethics.

PROPOSAL PROCESS & REQUIREMENTS

How to Apply

All proposals must be submitted to Delaware County Workforce Development Board (DCWDB) electronically via email to mcgeeverk@co.delaware.pa.us no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on February 15, 2022. Emails must have the subject line "Communications Plan and Services-[bidders name]." Late proposals will not be considered. Proposals must be submitted in 12-point, Calibri font, double-spaced with 1-inch page margins. Your proposal may not be considered if page limitations and formatting requirements are not met. Your proposal must contain all the content below in the same general order illustrated. Strong proposals will demonstrate a full understanding of the requirements described throughout this RFP and establish the capacity, expertise and program design needed to meet the required standards and goals.

1. Cover Sheet

2. Executive Summary – Include each of the following: (maximum 1 pages)

- a. Overview of the organization's qualifications and alignment with the services sought by this RFP. Basic organizational description, including year established, legal status, governance structure, mission, principal programs and services, executive leadership, annual budget and number of staff
- b. Concise description of the proposed project. Past experience in similar projects in size and scope to that required by this RFP.
- c. Amount of funding requested for the period of March 8, 2022 to June 30, 2022. Administrative and fiscal capacity, including but not limited to your organization's proven ability to provide fiscal support and oversight, utilize information systems, manage resources and personnel, and produce timely and accurate reports.

3. Project Narrative – Describe each of the following for your proposed program: (maximum 3 pages)

- a) Scope of Work: Applicants should directly respond to each of the sections in the scope of work. (Attachment A)
- b) Timeline: Recognizing that any agreement resulting from this RFP would effectively begin on March 8, 2022, provide a timeline illustrating the major goals, activities and tasks.

4. **Budget** – Provide a budget for the period of March 8, 2022 to June 30, 2022 including all costs. All costs must be allowable according to applicable federal, state and local regulations, including but not limited to the Uniform Guidance and regulations of the funding source, and allocable to the proposed program. Effective budgets will enable the proposed program to meet the intent and requirements of the contract, while being realistic, reasonable and

prudent, avoiding unnecessary or unusual expenditures. Refer to the appropriate regulations per the funding source in conjunction with the uniform guidance to identify disallowed costs associated with any agreement resulting from this RFP.

5. Budget narrative (maximum 1 page) – Provide a narrative to accompany the budget that describes the purpose of each cost, explains how all costs were estimated and justifies the need for all costs in meeting contract requirements. In your narrative, be sure to clearly communicate the calculation for staff, general operations, technology, administrative, indirect and any other costs necessary to perform the services described in this RFP. A strong budget narrative will minimize or eliminate the need for clarifications from evaluators reading the proposal.

6. Portfolio/Samples of Work- Include samples of work similar to what is requested in the Scope of Work.

Review and Selection Process

All proposals received by the submission deadline will be initially reviewed by DCWDB for responsiveness and compliance with the specifications and requirements contained in this RFP. Proposals passing the initial review will be scored by evaluators according to the criteria below, with attention to clarity, completeness and quality. High scoring proposals will clearly demonstrate an ability and likelihood to effectively perform the Statement of Work and meet the standards and intended outcomes of this RFP. Select applicants may be requested to participate in presentations or discussions with proposal evaluators and other DCWDB staff; although DCWDB reserves the right to select proposals for award without such presentations or discussions. Award recommendations of the evaluators will be presented to the DCWDB for final decision. Selection of a proposal for contract Page award will be subject to successful contract negotiations.

Scoring for the required sections of the proposal will be assigned as follows:

- Proposal Review Scoring Rubric Cover Sheet Required, but not scored
- Executive Summary 15 points
- Project Narrative 60 points
- Budget & Budget Narrative 25 points
- Total points available 100 points

The selected applicant will be invited to negotiate a contract for services based on the project described in the proposal, the requirements of this RFP and stipulations of the funding source.

Review Timeline (all dates are subject to change):

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Questions

All interested parties are highly encouraged to submit questions to obtain the clearest understanding of DCWDB expectations regarding the services sought by this RFP. To register for the Bidders information session On January 25, 2022 at noon, email mcgeeverk@co.delaware.pa.us

General Policies

- The DCWDB is not liable for any cost associated with responding to this RFP and will not authorize such costs as part of the contract with the selected organization.
- The DCWDB reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received and to cancel or reissue this RFP in part or its entirety.
- The DCWDB reserves the right to award a contract for any items/services solicited via this RFP in any quantity the DCWDB determines is in its best interest.
- The DCWDB reserves the right to correct any error(s) and/or make changes to this solicitation as it deems necessary.
- The DCWDB reserves the right to negotiate the final terms of any and all contracts or agreements with proposers selected and any such terms negotiated as a result of this RFP may be renegotiated and/or amended in order to successfully meet the needs of the workforce area.
- The DCWDB reserves the right to contact any individual, agency, employer, or grantees listed in the proposal; to contact others who may have experience and/or knowledge of the proposer's relevant performance and/or qualifications; and to request additional information from any and all proposers.
- The DCWDB reserves the right to conduct an on-site review of records, systems, procedures, including credit and criminal background checks, etc. of any entity selected for funding. This may occur either before or after the award of a contract or agreement. Misrepresentation of the proposer's ability to perform as stated in the proposal may result in cancellation of any contract or agreement awarded.
- The DCWDB reserves the right to withdraw or reduce the amount of an award or to cancel any contract or agreement resulting from this procurement if adequate funding is not received from the U.S. Department of Labor via the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry or other funding sources or due to legislative changes.
- Proposers shall not under penalty of law offer or provide any gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value to any officer, member, employee, or agent of the DCWDB for the purpose of having an influencing effect toward their own proposal or any other proposal submitted hereunder.
- No employee, officer, or agent of the DCWDB shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by WIOA funds if a conflict of interest, or potential conflict, would be involved.
- Proposers shall not engage in any activity that will restrict or eliminate competition. Violation of this provision may cause a proposer's bid to be rejected. This does not preclude partnerships or subcontracts.
- All proposals submitted must be an original work product of the proposers. The copying, paraphrasing, or otherwise using substantial portions of the work product from other entities and

submitted hereunder as original work of the proposer is not permitted. Failure to adhere to this instruction may cause the proposal to be disqualified and rejected.

- The contents of a successful proposal may become a contractual obligation if selected for award of a contract. Failure of the proposer to accept this obligation may result in cancellation of the award. No plea of error or mistake shall be available to the successful proposer as a basis for release of proposed services at the stated price/cost. Any damages accruing to the DCWDB as a result of a proposer's failure to contract may be recovered from the proposer.
- A contract with the selected proposer may be withheld at the DCWDB's sole discretion if issues of contract, questions of Federal or State regulatory non-compliance, or questioned/disallowed costs exist until such issues are satisfactorily resolved. The DCWDB may withdraw award of a contract if the resolution is not satisfactory to the Board.
- The respondent assures that WIOA funded services, activities and agreements will comply fully with the provisions of WIOA, Section 188, Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity regulations (29 CFR Part 38), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

ATTACHMENT A: SCOPE OF WORK

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN Due by April 1, 2022:

1. Interview the Delaware County Workforce Development Board staff regarding current practices. Evaluate existing communications tools and practices, including comparisons with other local workforce development boards and best practices.
2. Develop comprehensive communications plan that includes, at a minimum:
 - a. Clear articulation of target audience (Delaware County job seekers and employers) and the most successful methods for reaching those audiences.
 - b. Overall branding and messaging, including style sheet, that coordinates with both the County of Delaware and the PA Department of Labor and Industry.
 - c. Schedule, with budget, for multi-channel promotion. The promotion budget will be in addition to the budget in this project and will be discussed with the successful bidder.
 - d. Benchmarks to assess the success of every communication effort and overall impact on goal of raising awareness and use of services.
 - e. Templates for regular communication devices including newsletters, annual reports, reports to the board, mass email communications, etc.
3. Ensure all communications are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Equal Opportunity guidance.

COMMUNICATIONS IMPLEMENTATION April 1- June 30, 2022

Ongoing communication implementation includes, at a minimum:

1. Technical writing for press releases, newsletters, annual reports
2. Updates of social media and website (s)
3. Monitoring and reporting on communications efforts
4. Event-based communications

Attachment B: PROPOSAL COVER SHEET

Agency Name: _____

Agency Address: _____

Agency Website: _____

Contact Person: _____

Contact Information: Phone#: _____ E-Mail: _____

Total Funds Requested: \$ _____

AGENCY STATUS: (Check all that apply)

| | | | |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Non-Profit | <input type="checkbox"/> | For-Profit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Corporation | <input type="checkbox"/> | Partnership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Governmental | <input type="checkbox"/> | Local Education Agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Labor Union | <input type="checkbox"/> | Business or Trade Organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Labor Management Organization | <input type="checkbox"/> | Industry Association |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Private Licensed School by Pa. Department of Ed | <input type="checkbox"/> | Community- Based Organization |

Number of Years in Operation: _____ Federal I.D. # _____

In compliance with this RFP format, and subject to the conditions thereof, the undersigned offers to furnish the services requested and certifies he/she has read, understands, and agrees to all terms, conditions, and requirements of this proposal and is authorized to contract on behalf of the firm named above.

Contractor (Agency)

Date

Printed Name & Title of Authorized Signatory

Signature of Authorized Signatory