



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR
THE OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS CAPITAL AREA
CAREER CENTERS**

Questions and Answers

Q: Given that email submission is required, can we use a file sharing service (i.e., Drop Box) if files are too large for email? Is there a preferred solution if this is allowed?

A: Yes, we can utilize Kite Works a secure file sharing tool. We just require an email address for the user that will be uploading the forms. Please note submission must be upload by the deadline and technical difficulties do not qualify for extensions. Instructions for using Kite Works will be emailed to the contact on the letter of intent to bid no later than Friday, April 1st, 2022, at 10:00am.

Q: P. 34 states "PAGE LIMITS – Total Narrative maximum page limit is 50 pages, excluding attachments C-K, budgets, and other required forms." Are additional descriptive attachments referenced in narrative responses allowable? Items such as diagrams and customer flow charts may be better illustrated as attachments.

A: Yes, attachments referenced in narrative responses are allowable, and do not count toward the total narrative page limit. The Narrative maximum page limit is increased to 100 and will be reflected in an RFP erratum.

Q: Are the responses to the Cyber security framework part of the page count?

A: The responses to the Cyber Security Framework Questions A-N, top of page 43, are part of the Total Narrative page count. Your policies and procedures would include examples of your controls on how you will ensure those third-party vendors do not interact or gain access to any WFS system data.

The Cyber Security Framework Vendor Onboarding Questionnaire, referenced on page 42, is not part of the narrative and will only be submitted by the Finalist via the WFS vendor management onboarding portal and may be required to provide evidence of compliance. This will be reflected in an RFP erratum.

Q: If the "corporate team "or senior management do not have access and therefore cannot access your data, would the Questions on page 103 apply? Clarification Received: Would the Texas Cyber Security Framework Onboarding Questionnaire apply to those who cannot access WFSCA data?

A: All finalists will be required to responded to the Cyber Security Framework Questionnaire via WFS vendor management onboarding portal and may be required to provide evidence of compliance.

9001 N IH 35, Suite 110E, Austin, TX 78753
Phone: 512.597.7100 Fax: 512.719.4710

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Q: If our partners (third party vendors) do not have access and therefore cannot access your data, would the Questions on page 103 apply? Clarification Received: Would the Texas Cyber Security Framework Questions apply to those who cannot access WFSCA data?

A: Through the Cyber Security Framework, you would establish your own vendor management program, policies, and procedures. Your policies and procedures would include examples of your controls on how you will ensure those third-party vendors do not interact or gain access to any WFS system data.

Q: Currently, only staff working and charged directly to a contract are issued an email address (by the Board) and databases access (also issued by the Board). Staff charged to a contract follow and comply with Board cyber security protocols and requirements. How is cyber compliance expected from staff that do not have access to your data?

A: The Cyber Security Framework accesses the organizations cyber security maturity levels and establishes if they have a clearly defined processes, controls, and oversight on how they handle sensitive data. Roles change and access needs may be required later. The cyber security framework ensures the correct protocols are in place should that occur.

Q: Our business partners do not interact and do not have access to your system or data; what does compliance look like for them? Clarification: Our vendors do not have access to your system or data.

A: Through the Cyber Security Framework, you would establish your own vendor management program, policies, and procedures. Your policies and procedures would include examples of your controls on how you will ensure those business partners do not interact or gain access to any WFS system data.

Q: Our business partners, who are private businesses, are very reluctant to share their cyber security protection and response plan; would the Board agree to receive these under separate cover and keep them confidential?

A: Yes, the board agrees, and they will be kept confidential with a signed non-disclosure agreement.

Q: The funding listed on Budget Form A - Distribution of Allocated Funds and the funding listed on Exhibit A do not match. Please advise which funding proposers should use.

A: The amount proposers should use is on Budget Form A- Distribution of Allocated Funds. Exhibit A illustrates Funding Estimates only because ES and WERC funds will not be part of the budget submission under this RFP.

Q: Please confirm the bidder may add lines to the Budget Form D - Salary Allocation Plan Template as necessary. For example, if we are proposing more staff than lines available on the form.

A: Yes, bidders may add lines for proposing more staff.

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Q: Please confirm that a single audit is need only after award.

A: All requested audits must be submitted with the proposal. If proposer is not currently required to submit to a single audit, current audit reports will reflect that. It is expected that the winning proposer is required to submit a single audit in the future if they are not already required to do so.

Q: To assure receipt of all file uploads, please confirm any file size limitations.

A: The file size limit is 1024 MB thru Kiteworks. Email is smaller. It is recommended that Kiteworks be used to upload files. Instructions will be provided to the contact listed on the Letter of Intent to Bid.

Q: To assure receipt of email, please confirm any file size limitations. If file size limitations exist, please confirm respondents may submit multiple emails with the required components. (e.g. 1 of 3, 2 of 3, 3)

A: All submissions should be through the Kiteworks account provided to each proposer. All combined files should not exceed 1024 MB. A Kiteworks account will be set up and technical Instructions will be provided to the contact on the letter of intent to bid, no later than Friday, April 1st, 2022, at 10:00am.

***Submission must be uploaded by the deadline. Technical difficulties do not qualify for an extension.**

Q: To best ensure compliance with the identified page limits, please confirm Q prompts may be truncated or removed.

A: Question prompts cannot be truncated or removed. The page limit is increased to 100.

Q: Are bidders required to complete the onboarding Questionnaire needed for the proposal? Clarification Received: Are bidders required to complete the Texas Cyber Security Framework Onboarding Questionnaire?

A: All finalists will be required to responded to the Cyber Security Framework Questionnaire via WFS vendor management onboarding portal and may be required to provide evidence of compliance

Q: Please confirm that Attachment L – Response Checklist is not needed.

A: Correct, the response checklist is not required to be included with the proposal.

Q :To best ensure compliance with the identified page limits, please confirm Questions/prompts are not subject to the formatting requirements.

A: Questions/prompts are subject to the formatting requirement.

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Q: Please confirm providing two years of all similar Texas projects' monitoring reports will suffice as a clear sampling of board oversight and compliant of the request on RFP page 40, 4.g. Our organization operates 100+ projects nationwide, each receiving multiple reports annually.

A: Providing 2 years of monitoring reports for all Texas projects and a summary report for the monitoring performed on projects in other states is acceptable. The summary report for monitoring in other states should include, but not limited to, location, program information, findings, corrective action plans, resolution.

Q: Can you please confirm which set of budget numbers we should utilize? We should use the \$4,260,536 figure, correct? We should not use the \$7,186,779.

A: Use the \$4,260,536 figure on Budget Form A- Distribution of Allocated Funds.

Q: To what extent will there be a transition budget available?

A: The transition budget is to be negotiated with the successful proposer.

Q: Do applicants need to budget for licenses to access and utilize the Board's Gazelle software tool?

A: No, a budget for licenses to access and utilize Gazelle is not needed.

Q: Having the enrollment or current active customer number was helpful. Can we get current or most recent report on the number of jobseekers placed in work from WIOA and TANF funding streams?

A: 144 WIOA job seekers (78 Adult, 66 Dislocated Worker) and 71 TANF job seekers.

Q: The RFP states that the cost of phones are not to be included in the budget. We assume this is referring to desk land lines. Are cell phones for staff conducting business either remotely or requiring considerable travel in the community also covered by the Board?

A: Board maintains all "landline" phones for the centers. Any expenses related to cell phones for staff use while working remotely should be included in the proposer's budget.

Q: Can you please confirm that the TWC and TVC partner staff in Exhibit E will be under contractor supervision?

A: That is correct.

Q: What databases, other than TWIST, WIT, & COLTS, will be contractor be required to use?

A: In addition to the databases listed, the contractor will be required to use the Caseworthy electronic case management system, HHSC's Benefits Portal and Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS), HubSpot CRM, and Gazelle.

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Q: Can you please speak more to who is responsible for the IT support under this contract? The Board will be providing the technology, but will the board provide support for the computers and technical assistance for maintaining the technology? Or, is IT support for all jobseeker computer labs and staff computers a contractor responsibility?

A: The Board is responsible for the purchase and maintenance of IT including support for board issued equipment and software. Contractor is responsible for ensuring the equipment is used for its intended purpose and for safeguarding the equipment assigned to the centers as outlined in the Boards Information Technology Policies.

Q: Will Microsoft licenses be provided by the funder for all staff?

A: Board is responsible for Microsoft licenses assigned to each computer.

Q: Can vendors include attachments to help illustrate a response to a Q such policies, list of contracts, etc.? And if yes, are attachments counted towards the page limit?

A: Yes. Attachments used to illustrate a response are considered part of the page limit. The page limit is being increased to 100.

Q: Will all services in the TANF service matrix count toward the 50% TWC work rate?

A: All services in the TANF service matrix will not count toward the 50% TWC work rate. Effective October 1, 2021, TWC replaced the Choices Work Rate with the Choices Full Engagement Measure. Approximately 12 of the services in the TANF service matrix will count toward the 50% full engagement rate.

1. Occupational/Vocational Training
2. Basic Educational Skills/ABE
3. On-the-Job Training
4. Community Service
5. Subsidized Employment
6. English as a Second Language
7. High School – CHOICES
8. High School Equivalency Credential
9. Entrepreneurial Training
10. Work-Based Literacy
11. Middle School
12. Other-work experience opportunities

Q: Can you please provide salary wage ranges for the positions listed in Exhibit H please?

A: Salary ranges cannot be provided.

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Q: For the submission electronically, can a link(s) to Dropbox be provided in the as the access to the complete proposal documents?

A: Yes, we will utilize Kiteworks, a secure file sharing tool. We just require an email address for the user that will be uploading the forms. Please note submission must be upload by the deadline and technical difficulties do not qualify for extensions.

Q: Will Workforce Solutions Capital Area be sending out a ZOOM link to bidders who have submitted a letter of intent to bid prior to the bidders conference? On page 12 of the RFP, under A. Bidder's Conference it indicates that "Only bidders who have submitted the Letter of Intent to Bid (Attachment A) will receive a Zoom link" but our organization has yet to receive the link.

A: Zoom Links were provided to the contact named on the letter of intent to bid on March 23, 2022.

Q: On page 17 of the RFP, Question.9. states, "Contractors will be responsible for maintaining the physical appearance and condition of career centers as well as equipment and furnishings." Does this mean contractor is responsible for janitorial and general IT functions?

A: The Board is responsible for the janitorial and general IT functions. However, Contractor staff is expected to maintain the general appearance of the centers, staff break room areas and notify Board if there are janitorial (non-breakroom related)/general IT concerns.

Q: On page 18 of the RFP, Question.20. states, "Any and all purchases/procurements of a technology solutions, computer hardware, software, network devices, storage devices, printing equipment, telephone and web services by a contractor with funds received under a contract issued by the Board will require prior approval to ensure selected solutions is compatible and meets required security standards." Please provide some examples of items meeting this definition that have been purchased/procured by current contractor.

A: The Board has purchased computers for all workstations and the resource/training rooms in the centers. If Contractor wishes to purchase laptops for staff to use while working remotely, for example, the configuration of the laptops will need Board IT approval prior to purchase by Contractor. Contractor will also be responsible for the cost of all associated software licenses required for laptops i.e., (Antivirus, Encryption, Office, Patch Management, VPN, and the required remote access software.

Q: Regarding Budget Form B (Line-Item Budget): In the Client Pass-Through Funds section, does Client Wage Subsidies include subsidized work experience and on the job training? Is anything else included?

A: We expect subsidized work experience and on the job training to be included in Client Wage Subsidies. If there are other costs Proposer wishes to include, this should be discussed in the Budget Narrative.

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Q: Regarding Budget Form D (Salary Allocation Plan): Do we need to list Hourly Rate and Period Salary for all staff, or do we list Hourly Rate for hourly employees and Period Salary for salaried staff?

A: We expect the Hourly Rate and the Period Salary for all positions. Period Salary is the annualized yearly salary for the hourly rate shown. In the erratum to follow these Q&A, we will amend the Budget Form D to replace “Period Salary” with “Annualized Salary”.

Q: Can the Board provide a copy of the current Career Center organizational chart, including all current staffing by location?

A: Yes, this will be provided with the Q&A to the contact on the intent to bid.

Q: Can the Board provide salary ranges for current Career Center staffing, including Career Center Management and Program Staff and City and County-Funded WERC/RE:WorkNOW Staff?

A: Salary ranges cannot be provided.

Q: Can the Board provide job descriptions for all staffing identified on Exhibit H – Information on Current Contractor Staffing?

A: Job descriptions cannot be provided, but an organization chart will be provided with the Q&As.

Q: Regarding proposal submission format, is there a font size or spacing requirements for the proposal narrative?

A: No, there are not any font size or spacing requirements.

Q: In reference to Section V.F. Instructions for the Proposal Narrative, are applicants required to restate each of the Qs indicated in the RFP as part of the proposal narrative response?

A: Yes, the Questions must be restated.

Q: Can you please clarify page limits for the proposal narrative? Are vendors required to submit a proposal narrative not exceeding 50 pages? On page 34 of the RFP, Section V.A. Instructions for Submitting Proposal, Item 3 Page Limits, it indicates that the “Total Narrative maximum page limit is 50 pages, excluding attachments C-K, budgets, and other required forms.” On page 35, Section V.F. Instructions for the Proposal Narrative, it indicates that “Narrative responses for each item should be clear and concise and presented in the exact order as provided. Optimal page limit is 50 pages.”

A: Attachments required to illustrate narrative responses are allowable and do not count toward the total narrative page limit. Attachments C-K and budgets do not count toward the page limit. The Narrative maximum page limit is increased to 100 and will be reflected in an RFP erratum.

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Questions During Bidder's Conference

Q: How many proposers will be invited to the Operations Committee?

A: The top bidders will be invited, but it depends upon independent evaluator scores and the differences between the scores.

Q: Are the cybersecurity Questions required for the company even if not working on the Capital Area project?

A: Yes, those computers and networks can potentially have access to our system.

Q: In reference to Exhibit H, is it possible to get salary ranges for positions listed?

A: Salary ranges cannot be provided.

Q: Are there any state-imposed Technical Assistance Plans or Corrective Action Plans, currently, for this Board area?

A: A Technical Assistance Plan is currently being initiated for the TANF Choices program in Capital Area.

***The erratum will be emailed to the contact named on the letter of intent to bid; and it will be posted on the ESD and WFSCA Board's website.**

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