

1. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION 10-A

This is a Request for Information (RFI) for an On Line Remediation Tool. This RFI is issued by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (IDWD). IDWD's mission is to assist Hoosiers with developing skills and employment in high wage, high skill or high demand jobs.

This RFI seeks responses for a seamless integration of a technology solution, which assesses basic skills required for college readiness (reading, writing, basic math and pre-algebra), and provides remediation and instruction of basic skills through an individualized learning path. The target audience for the solution includes non-traditional, adult learners seeking skills assessment and re-training through WorkOne centers.

The key objective of this RFI is to provide respondents with information concerning the state's need to identify a system designed to prepare individuals for taking the COMPASS exam so they may meet or exceed established thresholds proving mastery of foundational knowledge required for college readiness.

The overall objective is to increase persistence in education and re-training, measured by an increasing number of individuals proving college readiness and matriculating into college course work.

There will not be a contract resulting directly from this RFI; however, respondents to this RFI will be placed on the list of potential respondents and will receive an announcement of any solicitation that may arise from this RFI.

2. BACKGROUND

Indiana Department of Workforce Development (IDWD) partnering with the Indiana Department of Education has identified a barrier critical to the mission of helping Indiana citizens with continuing education or retraining.

Citizens who seek education or retraining through the Ivy Tech Community College system are administered the COMPASS exam. This assessment measures basic skills (reading, writing, basic math and pre-algebra), and determines an individual's readiness to pursue college-level course work. If the individual does not meet the pre-determined thresholds on the assessment, it is required they enroll in a series of non-credit developmental education courses.

The critical issue is that a large number of individuals taking the COMPASS exam do not exceed threshold cut scores. As a result, a high proportion of individuals choose not pursue the developmental coursework, or if they do pursue developmental coursework a large percentage do not matriculate into credited courses required to obtain a degree. According to National Center for Education Statistics (2007), only 29% of all postsecondary students who take 1-2 remedial courses and a mere 19% who take 4 remedial courses actually go on to complete their degrees within 8 years. Postsecondary remediation is an indicator of postsecondary failure.

An identified barrier to achievement of the COMPASS exam thresholds is that individuals do not have an opportunity to assess, remediate and acquire basic skills prior to taking the COMPASS exam. Citizens returning to education after several years,

considered non-traditional students, have articulated the challenges associated with taking the COMPASS exam with no preparation.

3. SOLICITATION OF PRESENTATIONS

Before accepting proposals for review in accordance with the usual procurement procedures for the State, IDWD is soliciting feedback from potential respondents to a solicitation regarding the information presented in this RFI.

4. SPECIFIC NEEDS

The solicitation process will be open to all respondents regardless of their decision to participate in this RFI. IDWD seeks creative, high-level responses to the RFI components. IDWD is especially interested in receiving the following information from each respondent's RFI submission:

- A. Respondent's qualifications and related experience necessary to provide a reliable and proven college-readiness assessment, remediation and instruction tool(s) appropriate to use in a workforce development system.
- B. Describe the interpretation of the tool(s); Can it be administered to and interpreted for individuals and groups?
- C. Describe the tool and in what format it can be delivered (paper and pencil, computer based or internet versions).
- D. A sample of the tool and corresponding report and supporting documents.
- E. Indicate the evaluation options for the tool. Describe processes and how long it takes to obtain results.
- F. Describe the tool(s)' applications in workforce development, career development, education and training and economic development situations.
- G. Describe the interpretation of the tool(s). Will staff need to be trained to interpret the results and, if so, describe the training process?
- H. Describe the diagnostics of the assessment portion of the tool. What can individuals expect to do with the results?
- I. Please provide norming population information and demographics. What is the copyright date on norms? When was instrument last normed? What is the schedule for future norming?
- J. Please provide clarification on accommodations for clients with special needs. Does the normed group account for those needing special accommodations?
- K. Please discuss the predictive validity of the tool(s) and EEOC compliance, as appropriate. Of particular interest, we seek to understand how assessment scores are validated and used as predictors of successful career and education decisions.
- L. Cost for individual use of the tool.
- M. Cost associated with implementing the tool(s). This may include cost of training staff to administer, score/evaluate, and interpret the assessment.
- N. Any other costs associated with the tool(s) (i.e. technical support).
- O. Indicate any equipment or technology needs necessary to provide the tool(s) t and to present or evaluate the assessments.
- P. Describe how your tool(s) will be used to effectively assess a high volume of clients, including workers in transition, entrant workers, and incumbent workers.
- Q. Comparable project references of similar scope and size.
- R. Please confirm the tool(s) provides accommodations for individuals with disabilities and/or other barriers.

5. RESPONSES

Please send the information requested above in a pdf or MS Word document to bataylor@dwd.in.gov. Please place "Response to RFI 10-A" in the subject line of the email.

Responses to this RFI are due by 4:00 P.M. ET on July 7, 2010.

The State's Single Point of Contact for this RFI is: Barb Taylor, Indiana Department of Workforce Development, bataylor@dwd.in.gov.

A formal Question and Answer period is allotted within the timeline. Any questions regarding this RFI must be submitted by e-mail to bataylor@dwd.in.gov no later than **3:00 P.M. ET on June 21, 2010. No late questions will be accepted.** Responses to all questions will be promptly prepared. **The official Question and Answer document will be posted to the State of Indiana website once completed. The current 'Questions and Answers' link will become active once the document has been posted.**

Responses will be considered public information once a solicitation is complete. If a solicitation is not undertaken, the responses are considered public once the decision is made.