



NORTHERN
INDIANA
WORKFORCE
BOARD, INC

Request for Proposals

REGIONAL ONE-STOP OPERATOR SERVICES Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Funded by the US Dept. of Labor Economic Growth Region – Region 2

Date of RFP Release:
July 21, 2021

REVISED

Letter of Intent Due:
August 27, 2021 @ 5:00 pm (EST)

Proposals Due:
September 10, 2021 @ 5:00 pm (EST)

Questions must be emailed to
bwhite@gotoworkone.com
Attention: Barbara White
Northern Indiana Workforce Board, Inc
851 Marietta Street
South Bend, IN 46601

This WIOA Title I-financially assisted program is an “equal opportunity employer/program,” and that “auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities”

Introduction:

The Region 2 Northern Indiana Workforce Development Board, Inc. (NIWB) is a non-profit, business and industry- led corporation representing Elkhart, Fulton, Kosciusko, Marshall, and St Joseph Counties in Indiana. Instituted under Indiana law as a regional leadership organization, the Board is d e d i c a t e d to building an educated, skilled regional workforce, competing successfully in the new economy, through coordination, collaboration and partnerships among economic development, education, workforce development and local government.

The Board’s Strategic Elements:

Vision: Serving as an effective catalyst in developing the region’s workforce to compete successfully in the global economy.

Mission: To promote and contribute to the region’s growth of a skilled, competitive workforce through business partnerships and talent development resources, maximized for the long-term viability of the regional economy

Priorities:

- WorkOne Northern Indiana
- Economic Development
- Apprenticeships
- Skills & Education
- Youth and Career Preparation

The Board is also responsible for the WorkOne Employment System, in the region, and oversight of the WorkOne Employment Centers. These centers constitute the regional public employment service system in Region 2. There are five (5) centers: 1 full service center in Elkhart and 1 in South Bend, plus t h r e e (3) Affiliate Centers in Fulton, Kosciusko, and Marshall Counties.

Statement of Purpose:

The NIWB is soliciting proposals for an entity to serve as the One-Stop Operator of the Region 2 WorkOne System. Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the One-Stop Operator’s role is to coordinate the service delivery of required one-stop partners and service providers. The Board is seeking a One-Stop Operator that can assist in implementing the Boards Strategic Elements through coordination and relationship building with the regional talent development ecosystem.

Contract Type:

Contracts executed as a result of this RFP will be paid through cost reimbursement based on the scope of work for negotiated services, outcomes, and outputs. The One-Stop Operator, based on performance, will serve in this role from October 1, 2021 until September 30, 2023, with an option for parties to extend the services for up to two successive years through September 30, 2025. The value of the contract for each year could be \$55,000 to \$90,000 based on the scope of work and contract negotiations with the Board.

System Overview

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

WIOA is the federal law that creates and funds the public workforce development system. It is administered by the U.S. Department of Labor (U.S. DOL) and the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) to provide job seekers more seamless access to high-quality career services, education, and training through the one-stop delivery system. The workforce and talent needs of area businesses inform and guide the regional workforce system, ensuring that job seeker services and employer services are well aligned toward meeting employer needs and toward assisting individuals to be prepared and competitive with their employment and career in the global economy.

WIOA funding is distributed to states and subsequently to local WDBs. NIWB serves as the Workforce Development Board (WDB) for Economic Growth Region 2 in Indiana. All services provided by agents and service providers must meet the performance goals set by U.S. DOL, DWD, and NIWB.

Bidders should have a strong understanding of WIOA and its requirements. WIOA is divided into four titles, each of which is briefly discussed below:

Title I: Workforce Development Activities

Title I governs the one-stop delivery system, for which NIWB Board is most directly responsible. Title I-A requires NIWB to engage in regional coordination. The One-Stop Operator is specifically charged with assisting NIWB in this coordination.

Title I-B creates in each local region a one-stop delivery system comprised of training and career services, programs under Titles II, III, and IV, and other federally required partner programs. Additionally, Title I-B outlines the provision of training services and career services to adults, dislocated workers, out-of-school youth, and in-school youth. In the Region 2 Workforce Service Area, training and career service providers are determined by service providers who have participated in the Region 2 WIOA Partners Consortium. This group has been in place since November 2014 and continue to work collaboratively to solve workforce issues in our region.

Title II: Adult Education and Literacy Act

Title II legislates the Adult Education and Literacy Act, which is intended to “create a partnership among the Federal Government, States, and localities to provide, on a voluntary basis, adult education and literacy activities.” The purpose of Title II is to “assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and economic self-sufficiency.” NIWB currently partners with area adult education and literacy providers receiving WIOA Title II funds through the DWD Adult Education program. These providers have been in place for many years and actively participate in the Region 2 WIOA Partners Consortium.

Title III: Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933

Title III is the Wagner-Peyser Act. “The Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 established a nationwide system of public employment offices known as the Employment Service. The Act was amended in 1998 to make the Employment Service part of the One-Stop services delivery system.” Further, “The Employment Service focuses on providing a variety of employment related labor exchange services including but not limited to job search assistance, job referral, and placement assistance for job seekers, re-employment services to unemployment insurance claimants, and recruitment services to employers with job openings.” The Wagner-Peyser Act is implemented by Indiana Department of Workforce Development field employees located in the WorkOne offices in Region 2.

Title IV: Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Title IV affects the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the provision of vocational rehabilitation services. Based on findings that “individuals with disabilities experience staggering levels of unemployment and poverty,” vocational rehabilitation services are provided to help individuals with disabilities “prepare for, obtain, or retain employment.” The Vocational Rehabilitation program is implemented by the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration. Voc Rehab serves as a strong partner in Region 2.

WIOA Required Partners

WIOA outlines specific entities who fulfill mandatory roles and benefits within the WorkOne system. These entities must partner together to improve the delivery of services across the Region 2 Workforce System. These required activities and the mandatory local Region 2 partners are included below:

Required Activities	Region 2 Partners
Programs Authorized Under this Title (WIOA Title I Adult/DWD/Youth programs)	NIWB and Competitively Procured WIOA Service Provider for Youth Services and Competitively Procured Staffing for Adult/DW Services
Wagner-Peyser	IDWD
Adult Education and Literacy	IDWD Adult Education Services for Region 2
Vocational Rehabilitation	FSSA
Title V of the Older Americans Act	National Able/NIWB
Postsecondary Career and Technical Education (CTE) (Perkins)	Ivy Tech Community College and Local Career Tech Ed programs
Title II of the Trade Act	IDWD
Chapter 41 of Title 38 (Job Counseling, Training, and Placement Service for Veterans)	IDWD
Employment and Training under U.S. Housing	Elkhart Housing Authority
Programs Authorized under State Unemployment Laws	IDWD
TANF E&T (Title IV of the Social Security Act)	FSSA DFR

Specifications and Scope of Work

NIWB seeks an entity to serve as the One-Stop Operator. The role of the One-Stop Operator is to assist with implementing the Boards Strategic Vision through collaboration, coordinating required one-stop partner activities, and strengthening the talent development ecosystem.

One-Stop Operator Bidder Eligibility

The One-Stop Operator may be a single entity or a consortium of entities. If the consortium of entities is one of one-stop partners, it must include a minimum of three of the required one-stop partners. The One-Stop Operator may be public, private, or non-profit. The One-Stop Operator may operate one or more One-Stop Centers; however NIWB seeks to select only one One-Stop Operator for the local area. The following entities may be a One-Stop Operator:

- (1) An institution of higher education;
- (2) An Employment Service State agency established under the Wagner-Peyser Act;
- (3) A community-based organization, nonprofit organization, or workforce intermediary;
- (4) A private for-profit entity;
- (5) A government agency;

- (6) A Local WDB, with the approval of the chief elected official and the Governor; or
- (7) Another interested organization or entity, which is capable of carrying out the duties of the one-stop operator. Examples may include a local chamber of commerce or other business organization or a labor organization.

Elementary schools and secondary schools may not be a One-Stop Operator unless it is a non-traditional public secondary school, such as a night school, adult school, or area career and technical education school.

Fiscal Requirements of One-Stop Operator

Any entity serving as the One-Stop Operator must understand and comply with the Office of Management and Budget’s *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (2 C.F.R. part 200). Any for-profits must understand the Office of Management and Budget’s *Contract Cost and Price* (2 C.F.R. 200.323(b)) regarding negotiation of profits.

Duties of the One-Stop Operator

NIWB expects the One-Stop Operator to support the vision and mission of the Region 2. Workforce Development Board by implementing the following WorkOne One-stop system duties in partnership with the Board:

1. Coordinate the service delivery of required one-stop partners and service providers with a focus on ensuring that all one-stop partners and providers share a mission and common goals around access and quality of services for customers, based on the Region 2 One-Stop Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU);
2. Provide recommendations and assist the Board in the development of policies and process to support the coordinated one-stop mission and vision, and assist in the implementation of the same as appropriate;
3. Assist in the coordination and facilitation of regular one-stop partner meetings (minimum of 12 per year) including but not limited to invitation, meeting logistics, agendas, training, and meeting collateral;
4. Maintain records of all one-stop partner meetings and activities related to the one-stop operator functions (e.g., minutes, attendance, etc.);
5. Lead the development of a shared methodology for one-stop system metrics and the tracking of those metrics;
6. Assist the one-stop system in increasing and tracking referrals and co-enrollments and leveraging resources;
7. Establish a mutually-agreed upon approach with the Board and partners to ensure the provision of excellent customer service across the One-Stop System;
8. Identify, recommend, and facilitate:
 - a. Opportunities for professional development of partner staff, and
 - b. Standardize training in partnership with Board staff;
9. Evaluate and provide recommendations to Board staff, and implement as directed, service delivery, communication, customer flow, and other opportunities to strengthen the overall system;
10. Identify and recruit additional partners into the One-Stop System through networking and the avocation of the value and opportunities of joining the One-Stop System;
11. Develop and coordinate (with Board staff support) the annual Partnership MOU and Infrastructure and Shared Costs Agreement – including but not limited to scheduling, facilitating, and negotiating as appropriate;

12. Assist Board staff in the preparation for and implementation of the One-Stop Certification;
13. Conduct a quarterly assessment to ensure that all One-Stop Certification requirements and processes remain current and submit a report to Board staff.

According to WIOA, the One-Stop Operator **may not** perform any of the following duties:

1. Convening system stakeholders to assist in the development of the Local Plan;
2. Preparing and submitting Local Plans;
3. Being responsible for oversight of itself;
4. Managing or significantly participating in the competitive selection process for one-stop operators;
5. Selecting or terminating one-stop operators, career services, and youth providers;
6. Negotiating local performance accountability measures;
7. Developing and submitting the budget for activities of Region 2 Workforce Development Board in the local area.

An entity serving as a one-stop operator, that also serves a different role within the one-stop delivery system, may perform some or all of these functions when it is acting in its other role, if it has established sufficient firewalls and conflict of interest policies and procedures.

Performance Goals

Federally Required Measurements

WIOA establishes primary indicators of success for its programs. These indicators are the metrics for which Region 2 NIWB is held accountable. The primary indicators of success for Adult, Dislocated Workers, Title II, Title III, and Title IV programs are the following:

1. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
2. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;
3. The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
4. The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program;
5. The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment; and
6. The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers.

The primary indicators for youth programs are:

1. Percentage of program participants who are in education or training services, or in unsubsidized employment during second quarter after exit;
2. Percentage of program participants who are in education or training services, or in unsubsidized employment during fourth quarter after exit;

3. The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
4. The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program;
5. The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment; and
6. The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers.

The One-Stop Operator will not be directly measured on these outcomes. However, they are indicative of NIWB's priorities, and respondents should demonstrate how they will contribute to NIWB's ability to successfully achieve federal performance measures.

One-Stop Operator System Measurements

NIWB intends to evaluate, but not reimburse, the One-Stop Operator based on performance outcomes and outputs. NIWB has not finalized specific performance indicators for the One-Stop Operator and will do so in conjunction with what is proposed by the respondent during the contract negotiations period. Some examples of output indicators include:

- Development and measurement of system metrics;
- Number of multi-partner professional development activities;
- Execution of MOU and Funding Agreements;
- Engagement of new partners measured by new MOUs;
- Increase in referrals and co-enrollments among required partners;
- Number of partner meetings with and documentation of outcomes from meetings;
- Development of mechanisms for tracking partner usage of the One-Stop System and outcomes; and/or
- Assisting the Region 2 Board and Partners in ensuring One-Stop Certification is achieved.

NIWB strongly encourages respondents to propose indicators believed to be appropriate measures for determining system progress and effectiveness among partners and providers of the local WorkOne System.

Proposal Format

Each respondent is requested to submit its proposal in a format suitable for ease of review with minimum repetitious material. To maintain comparability of proposals, please prepare proposals using Microsoft Word and typed in 12-point font, double-spaced, with numbered pages at the bottom of each page. The Organizational Capability and Qualifications, Coordination of Service Delivery Plan, and Budget Narrative should not exceed 15 pages. The page limitation does not include the Proposal Cover Sheet or the requested attachments.

Proposal Cover Sheet

The Proposal Cover Sheet should not exceed a single page and shall include:

- The title of the proposal;
- The respondent's organization name, address, phone number and web address;
- The name of the person authorized to negotiate contracts and make decisions for the organization their direct phone number and email address;
- The total funds requested;
- A proposal summary briefly describing the services to be provided; and
- The authorized signature and submittal date.

Organizational Capability and Qualifications

The respondent must provide an overview of its organization and staff, capability and qualifications to successfully carry out the services described herein. This description must include:

- A company history including the organization's mission, vision, governance structure, and legal status;
- The number of employees, including an organizational chart specific to the proposed service delivery plan as an attachment;
- The qualifications of all key staff conducting the proposed services, including their expertise with WIOA services to adults, dislocated workers, young adults (out-of-school youth) , and special populations with unique needs and barriers. Include resumes, job descriptions and/or profiles for all key staff as attachments; and
- The experience and or prior work that demonstrates expertise in executing and delivering the services described in this solicitation, including specific workforce services, along with performance outcomes, the organization and/or key staff have provided to WIOA adults, dislocated workers, young adults (out-of-school youth)and special populations with unique needs and barriers.

Technical Qualification

To be eligible for consideration, individuals or organizations submitting proposals must demonstrate:

- No financial or policy interest in Region 2 or NIWB;
- Experienced staff or subcontractors to provide the services described herein or must show the ability to acquire such staff;
- Demonstrated experience in effectively performing similar types of services in the public or private sector;
- Ability to contract with NIWB in a timely manner for the delivery of these services;
- Ability to fulfill contract requirements, including the indemnification and insurance requirements;
- Satisfactory performance under a current or past contract with NIWB for similar services, when executing existing and/or previous contracts;
- Capacity to maintain adequate files and records and meet reporting requirements, as prescribed by NIWB;
- Capability to fiscally and administratively provide and manage the proposed services on a cost-reimbursement basis, to ensure adequate audit trail, to maintain audit ready files, and to monitor its own organization files (internal audit function);

- Knowledge and understanding of Federal Fair Labor Standard Act and Indiana Department of Employment and Training Act (IC 22-4 et seq.) and accompanying rules, regulations and policy directives regarding the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act programs issued by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development; and
- Knowledge and understanding of OMB's Uniform Guidance at 2 C.F.R. part 200. More information can be found at:
 - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/granule/C.F.R.-2014-title2-vol1/C.F.R.-2014-title2-vol1-part200/content-detail.html>;
 - www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/02/16/2016-02473/uniform-administrative-requirements-cost-principles-and-audit-requirements-for-federal-awards; or
 - cfo.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/9.9.15-Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf

Coordination of Service Delivery Plan

The proposal narrative should describe how the respondent plans to fulfill duties of the One-Stop Operator, and optimize the goals of the one-stop system. Where relevant, please include a timeline, schedule of activities with services, and key dates for the plan.

Budget and Budget Narrative

The respondent should provide an outline of their financial management structure, including experience and or expertise managing and accounting for Federal and/or State Funds. A brief description of the organization's staff structure and internal control system in place should also be included in the narrative, and a copy of the organization's most recent financial audit should be attached.

Each proposal must include an operational budget using budget sheet provided. The budget narrative should consist of the proposed costs for executing the Coordination of Service Delivery Plan, along with description justification of the costs. For the purpose of this RFP, cost categories must include:

- Wages –Includes the staffing cost, and position type, levels and numbers of positions should be specified in the narrative.
- Fringe Benefits –Includes FICA unemployment insurance, worker's compensation, disability, life insurance, retirement costs and medical coverage as per your policies.
- Occupancy –The physical space necessary to deliver services will be provided at WorkOne.
- Staff Travel – Includes all travel and training costs.
- Non-Direct – Supplies and consumables will be supplied by WorkOne.
- Profit – For-Profit entities may propose a reasonable profit amount that will be will be negotiated and based on performance. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget issues circulars that provide guidelines on cost principles. The cap for overhead and profit combined is 10 percent of the total program budget.
- Total – This is the total proposed cost for operating the specific module during the specified time period covered by the specific budget worksheet.

RFP Timeline

Activity	Schedule
RFP Issued (REVISED & REPOST)	Wednesday, August 17, 2021
Questions Regarding RFP	Wednesday, August 25, 2021 @ 5:00 pm (EST)
Letter of Intent	Friday, August 27, 2021 @ 5pm (EST)
RFP Responses Due	Friday, September 10, 2021 @ 5pm (EST)
Notice of Award (per Board approval)	Monday, September 20, 2021

The letter of intent does not require an entity to respond, but failure to submit one prior to the deadline will result in ineligibility to submit a proposal.

An electronic letter of intent, questions and response to the RFP should be sent to:

Barbara White
 NIWB
 Email: bwhite@gotoworkone.com.

Selection Criteria

All respondents are advised that each proposal will be evaluated based on responsiveness to this RFP. Proposals will be reviewed for completeness, clarity and adherence to stated requirements. Proposals will be evaluated based on the criteria described below and points will be applied for scoring in rank order from the highest to lowest. However, NIWB reserves the right to select lower ranked proposals when warranted. Such selection of proposals shall be made at the sole discretion of NIWB.

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points
Organizational Qualifications Points will be applied based on the experience and perceived capabilities of both the organization and their staff to successfully complete the proposed Coordination of Service Delivery Plan to meet the needs of this solicitation.	20
Coordination of Service Delivery Plan Points will be applied based on the innovation, quality, stability, and strength of coordinated services delivery plan.	55
Budget and Budget Narrative Points will be applied based on the overall cost and justification proposed by the respondent, including an evaluation of the respondent’s ability to appropriately manage and account for the contract funds.	25
Total Points	100

Terms and Conditions

General Terms and Conditions

1. A bidder or its principals shall be in good standing, not debarred or suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or otherwise excluded from entering into a financial agreement of federal or state funds.
2. Local, small, minority owned businesses are encouraged to respond and shall not be discriminated against during proposal review.
3. NIWB is an equal opportunity employer. All bidders shall certify the same.
4. The bidder certifies and agrees that it will provide and maintain a drug-free workplace.
5. Issuance of the RFP does not commit NIWB to award a contract, to pay cost associated with proposal development, or to procure or contract for goods and/or services. Payment for services will be negotiated.
6. NIWB reserves the right to reject any and all proposals if it is in the best interest of the Board to do so and waive any minor informalities or irregularities in the RFP process. NIWB shall be the sole judge of these irregularities.
7. For the top-ranked bidder(s) selected, references or other points of contact as necessary will be made and any comments will be used to complete the evaluation process. NIWB reserves the right to enter into negotiations with one or more bidders as a result of the RFP evaluation process and enter into a best and final negotiation with one or more of the bidders.
8. NIWB will consider non-responsive any submittal for which critical information is omitted, lacking or represents a major deviation from the RFP.
9. Proposals received after the issued due date will be considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed or evaluated.
10. Other issues of grievances, hearing resolutions and authority shall be addressed prior to award of contract and relevant issues may be stated within contract. NIWB reserves the right to negotiate proposed outcomes, budget, and other matters prior to actual execution of the contract.
11. Bidders shall certify either no real or apparent conflict of interest exists in carrying out the proposed scope of work, or where conflict(s) of interest may exist; such potential conflicts must be clearly disclosed in the proposal.
12. All submitted proposals are considered the property of NIWB and are considered confidential.

Insurance Levels

NIWB expects that the selected One-Stop Operator will secure and keep in force during the term of the agreement, the following insurance coverage, covering the One-Stop Operator for any and all claims of any nature which may in any manner arise out of or result from the Operator's performance under this agreement. The One-Stop Operator shall, at its sole cost and expense, provide:

1. Commercial General Liability Insurance policy providing coverage against claims for personal injury, death or property damage occurring in connection with the Project. The limits of such insurance shall not be less than \$1,000,000 combined single limit per occurrence, \$5,000,000 aggregate;
2. Worker's Compensation coverage consistent with the laws of the State of Indiana;
3. Commercial Automobile Liability Insurance, including Non-Owned and Hired Auto Liability with a limit of not less than \$1,000,000;
4. Commercial Umbrella Liability coverage of at least \$1,000,000;
5. Employment Practices Liability coverage of \$1,000,000 per claim and in the aggregate. This coverage shall include Third Party coverage.

**Regional Operator Proposal
Budget Worksheet**

Respondent Name: _____

Instructions: The budget worksheet should clearly identify the respondent's cost for operating the proposed program.

Line Item Categories	Total Cost
Salaries and Wages	
Fringe Benefits	
Staff Travel	
Other -Non Direct: (Describe)	
Total	