

MICHIGAN WORKS! SOUTHEAST
Program Year (PY) 2018 Request for Proposal (RFP)
Bidders Conference
Specialized WIOA Business Services
Michigan Works! Southeast
March 28, 2018 - 3:00 p.m.

Bidders Present: Susan Smith, Hillsdale County Economic Development Program
Tim Robinson, Lenawee Now
Mary ZumBrunnen, One Community Consulting
Charlie Penner, Small Business Development Center
Marcia Gebarowski, Ann Arbor SPARK

Staff Present: Bill Sleight, Director

Introductions were made by all those in attendance. Bill stated that this would be the main opportunity to ask questions about the RFP and receive technical assistance.

The RFP Instructions

Bill reviewed the RFP instructions: Main points made during overview include:

- The overview and intent of the RFP is to procure specific, specialized business services for employers in the Counties of the Southeast Michigan Consortium as outlined in the instructions and RFP.
- Proposals are due 4 pm April 26 to the Hillsdale Service Center, 21 Care Drive, Hillsdale 49242, attention: Maggie Flaherty.
- The program goals and objectives were reviewed. Bill emphasized that we are seeking proposals that will help MWSE achieve our performance goals and objectives and the proposed activities should be directed toward that end. The specific goals are to:
 1. Expand the services provided to employers through Michigan Works! Southeast
 2. Increase business engagement with the Michigan Works! system.

The MWSE Business Services Team interacts with hundreds of employers every year. We are seeking ways to reach employers in targeted industries that are new to MWSE, or who have not engaged with us in more than a year.

3. Increase business engagement with the local school systems, especially secondary and post-secondary schools, resulting in increased awareness of regional high wage, high growth career opportunities; the support and development of training programs and services which address employer needs, and an increase in the number of

individuals receiving industry recognized credentials in in-demand occupations.

The objective here is to improve business education partnerships through activities such as career fairs, Manufacturing Week, MI Career Quest, mentoring activities, job shadowing, internships, etc. Also to help educational institutions develop new programs or modify existing programs so they address critical skill shortages in the region.

4. Assist businesses with locating/developing training to increase job retention and decrease turnover
5. Effectively promote MWSE's role and services to the business community
6. Improve job placement, retention and earnings outcome for job seekers served by MWSE.

We are judged on whether we achieve specific benchmarks related to retention, earnings and credential attainment. Contracted activities through this RFP should help us achieve those benchmarks.

- The Workforce Development Council has developed a strategic plan, and it is expected that contracted activities will help us achieve the goals of that plan. A copy of the plan will be made available to bidders.
- Basic requirements for all contractors were covered. Bidders were reminded that if awarded a contract they must identify themselves as part of the Michigan Works! system, and must acknowledge this by including our logo in all promotional materials, and publications. They also were encouraged to provide match resources to the project, in order to leverage scarce grant funds.
- Bill reviewed the WIOA Performance Standards. Standards listed in the instructions are for the current program year. The standards for PY 18 which begins July first have not yet been negotiated. In response to questions, Bill acknowledge that contractors will not be directly measured on these standards since they are not providing direct services to eligible participants. However, bidders need to understand these standards and to offer services which will help us reach them. Bidders are asked to propose their own contract benchmarks that will both demonstrate the impact of the services on job seekers and businesses and will serve as leading indicators for us such as:
 - Number of employers referred to the Michigan Works! business services team for the first time.
 - Number of new employers who use MWSE! for recruitment, assessment and screening candidates and/or who participate in MWSE! sponsored hiring events.
 - Number of employers new to Michigan Works! who take advantage of MWSE training programs such as On-the-job training, incumbent worker training, paid work experience, Skilled Trades Training Funds, etc.

- Number of new apprenticeships at the company as a result of engaging with the MWSE Apprenticeship Coordinator.
 - Number of students engaged in career exploration activities as a result of the contractor's activities.
 - Number of eligible individuals placed into jobs as a result of contract activity.
 - Documentation of productivity gains, improved retention rates, and increased earnings and similar measures for companies new companies that engage with MWSE for recruitment, assessment and training services.
- Bill briefly covered the Proposal Review Criteria
 - It is estimated that we will commit \$450,000 for these services. This is dependent upon our allocation funding levels, as well as whether proposals will help us achieve our strategic goals.
 - Bidders were encouraged to review the submission instructions carefully. Note that signatures are required on three pages (10, 11 and 12) and that we need one signed original proposal and an electronic version of the proposal submitted by the due date. It is expected that proposals will be reviewed in early May, and that recommendations will be forwarded to the Workforce Development Board for action at their May 9, 2018 meeting.

The RFP Document

Bill then reviewed the RFP document. Main points made during overview include:

- Requirements for the proposal submission, starting with the cover sheet and "Section A: Agency Background and Administrative Capability"
- Section B identifies the laws, rules and regulations that must be followed as a part of this contract, if awarded. Also, general project parameters were covered in this section.
- The reporting requirements were reviewed in detail. In particular it was noted that any program income earned as a result of contracted activities must be reported to MWSE and accounted for. Program income means gross income earned by the contractor that is directly generated by a supported activity or earned as a result of the contract award during the period of performance. As examples, if the contractor uses contract funds to deliver a workshop, training program or hiring event and charges fees for those events, then any income earned must be reported. The contractor must show that the income was spend on allowable activities authorized in the contract.
- Required signature pages: Proposal certification, debarment certification and lobbying was discussed.
- The written narrative was discussed in detail along with the expectations for each of the sections. Each section followed along with a corresponding section in the review criteria.
- Time was spent discussing the budget and its parameters. An excel spreadsheet has been created for all the bidders to aid in the creation of the budget. It should only be necessary to enter data into the non-shaded areas of the budget spreadsheet. Totals should calculate automatically in the shaded sections once the non-shaded areas are completed.
- The budget template does contain a section for participant expenses. This form is used for all MWSE contracted activities. It is expected that this section will not be used for this

procurement, since contractors are not being asked to deliver direct services to program participants.

- Bidders must submit a budget narrative with the budget spreadsheet.
- The rest of the RFP contains instructions for the signatures pages (debarment, lobbying, union concurrence, if applicable and EO statement).

Questions were asked throughout the meeting and responses have been incorporated into the above report.

CORRECTIONS / ADDITIONS TO THE RFP

1. The Excel Budget Spreadsheet has been changed. The Spreadsheet now contains five worksheets, which are found by clicking on the tabs at the bottom of the spreadsheet. The first tab is the proposal budget, which was included in the original RFP packet. Only one change is made to this form: Line 1.13 is now labeled as "Support Services". It was previously labeled as "Other." It is not expected that bidders for this procurement will have any support services expenses or any other participant expenses.

The other tabs can be used by bidders for their budget narrative. Other formats will be accepted, but this format should guide you to provide the type of information reviewers will be seeking. The tabs are labeled to correspond to the different sections of the budget: Salary and Fringe Narrative, Operating Costs Narrative and Participant Costs Narrative. Finally, there is a Matching Funds Narrative where you can detail any match provided to the project.

2. On page 15, the estimated funding available for all five counties for these services is listed as \$300,000 per year. The correct estimate is \$450,000 per year.
3. Pages 20 and 21 are replaced by the Excel budget spreadsheet described in item 1 above.