



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

OF SOLANO COUNTY

Request for Proposals for Prison to Employment Program: Earn and Learn Training Services

ISSUE DATE: September 22, 2023

DUE DATE: October 20, 2023

The WDB is an equal opportunity employer and provider of employment and training programs.
Auxiliary aides and services are available upon request to persons with disabilities.

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Section One: Introduction

The Workforce Development Board (WDB) of Solano County is issuing this Request for Proposal (RFP) to interested and qualified applicants to provide Earn and Learn training services to justice-involved individuals in Solano County. Respondents are invited to submit proposals in accordance with the instructions of this RFP.

This solicitation is conducted based on the requirements and parameters of SB866 and the related policies and regulations of the California Workforce Development Board, the North Bay Regional Planning Unit (RPU), and the WDB.

This RFP provides potential Respondents with background information and describes the desired services, guidelines for proposals, and the sub-recipient selection process. The RFP and related documents can be found on the WDB website at: www.solanoemployment.org/opportunities.

BACKGROUND

The WDB is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that works to build and sustain a skilled workforce, support a vibrant economy, and create a shared prosperity for the community of Solano County. The WDB oversees federally funded workforce services through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) on behalf of the County of Solano, as well as implements other special projects. Staff members provide tailored job search services, job preparation, training, and placement services to job seekers, as well as work with local businesses to support both business-specific talent development efforts and industry-wide initiatives.

Prison to Employment (P2E) 2.0 is a California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) initiative out of state general funds for the implementation of regional workforce plans to serve the formerly incarcerated and other justice-involved individuals. Building off of the Prison to Employment Initiative launched in 2018, P2E 2.0 intends to serve the formerly incarcerated and other justice-involved individuals by providing training, education and career opportunities, and supportive services to ensure individuals receive the necessary resources and supports for success in attaining permanent employment.

Given the employment barriers of justice involved individuals in Solano County, the WDB is soliciting proposals to provide earn-and-learn opportunities for formerly incarcerated and other justice-involved individuals.

ESTIMATED FUNDING AND GRANT TERM

The WDB anticipates sub-awarding \$51,000 in Prison to Employment funding to one Respondent through this RFP. A sub-recipient contract will be developed with the selected awardee for an intended grant period of January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2025.

Although not likely, the WDB reserves the right to reallocate funds within the P2E 2.0 budget based on program needs. Funding is based on a cost-reimbursable model. The default payment method will be a check from the County and the Successful Respondent(s) should be prepared for a reimbursement timeline of up to six (6) weeks. Alternatively, selected awardees may request a direct deposit method during contract negotiations.

Upon request, Respondents may be able to receive up to 10% of the approved budget upfront for start-up costs related directly to the awarded project. Awardees seeking this funding advance must request the advance during contract negotiations with the WDB.

RFP TIMELINE

The following calendar is provided to outline the anticipated timelines for the bid, review, and selection process for the Earn and Learn Training RFP. The WDB reserves the right to adjust this schedule as it deems necessary. Notification of any adjustments will be posted on the WDB's website at www.solanoemployment.org/opportunities. Respondents are responsible for periodically viewing the WDB's website for any revisions to the timeline or RFP.

Event	Dates
Request for Proposal issued	September 22, 2023
Virtual Bidders' Conference	October 4, 2023, at 2:30 p.m. PT
Deadline to submit questions for Q &A	October 16, 2023, by 5:00 p.m. PT
Final Responses to Questions Posted	October 18, 2023, by 5:00 p.m. PT
Proposals Due	October 20, 2023, by 4:00 p.m. PT
Anticipated Award Announcement	November 3, 2023
Contract Negotiations	November 5 – November 22, 2023
Final Contract Approval	By December 12, 2023
Intended Contract Start Date	January 1, 2024

VIRTUAL BIDDERS' CONFERENCE

An informational Bidders' Conference is scheduled for:

Date: Wednesday, October 4, 2023

Time: 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. PT

Zoom Meeting Details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89893780411?pwd=REJaZE5pNnpwSWV3WDNJalNXMkc5Zz09>

Meeting ID: 898 9378 0411

Passcode: 815641

Dial by your location:

+16699006833,,89893780411#,,,815641# US (San Jose)

+16694449171,,89893780411#,,,815641# US

Attendance is strongly encouraged. Staff will review the RFP and respond to questions regarding its requirements. Staff cannot answer questions or provide assistance regarding a Respondent's individual program design. Questions may be submitted prior to the Bidders' Conference by email to Tammy Gallentine, tgallentine@solanowdb.org; all questions submitted prior to the Bidders' Conference will be answered at the conference. All questions and answers provided at the Bidders' Conference will be made publicly available and posted to the WDB website at: www.solanoemployment.org/opportunities. Answers provided during the conference will not be considered final until posted on the website.

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

To ensure a fair and open competition, questions related to the RFP that arise after the Virtual Bidders' Conference must be submitted in writing via email to: Tammy Gallentine, tgallentine@solanowdb.org. Written questions will be accepted through October 16, 2023. Questions received after the deadline may not be answered. Responses will be posted on the WDB's website weekly, with the final posting on October 18, 2023 by 5:00pm PT.

PROPOSAL DEADLINE

Proposals must be received by 4:00 p.m. PT, Friday, October 20, 2023 via email to tgallentine@solanowdb.org. Late proposals will not be accepted. The WDB is not responsible for delays in transmission of application. Proposal documents must be in a .pdf, .xls, or .doc format.

ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS

Eligible Respondents include entities based in Solano County, as well as those based in neighboring communities who have a clear history of service delivery within Solano County.

This funding is not intended to support the development and start-up costs of a completely new organization with no prior service delivery experience. Respondents must be able to demonstrate relevant previous experience, capacity, and commitment to successfully implement a program or initiative.

ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS

Eligible participants include Solano County's justice-involved and formerly-incarcerated populations.

The term "justice-involved" refers to individuals (adults and juveniles) who are on parole, probation, mandatory supervision, post-release community supervision, or are otherwise part of the supervised population and/or under the jurisdiction of a county or the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. This also includes individuals who are on county informal probation, county deferred entry of judgement, or any other county diversion program such as drug courts, veterans courts, community courts, or other specialty courts.

The term "formerly-incarcerated" includes any individual who has at any time served a custody sentence in any adult or juvenile federal, state, or local detention facility; or in any alternative custody program such as home detention.

Section Two: Program Description and Service Expectations

The intent of the P2E 2.0: Earn and Learn Training grant is to serve justice-involved and/or formerly incarcerated individuals with earn and learn training opportunities that provide the necessary resources and supports for success in attaining permanent employment.

SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of the Earn and Learn Training grant is to provide earn and learn training to justice-involved and/or formerly incarcerated individuals in Solano County. Services must be provided to

eligible participants. *See the Eligible Participants section of this RFP for details on the definition for P2E 2.0-eligible individuals.*

Earn and learn training as defined in the Unemployment Insurance Code includes, but is not limited to, a program that does either of the following:

- Combines applied learning in a workplace setting with compensation allowing participants to gain work experience and secure a wage as they develop skills and competencies directly relevant to the occupation or career for which they are preparing; **and/or**
- Brings together classroom instruction with on-the-job training to combine both formal instruction and actual paid work experience.

Respondents may deliver programs and services in a manner they deem appropriate, as long as the services meet the definition of earn and learn training and P2E 2.0 regulations are met. It is intended for the sub-recipient to work with the WDB staff to coordinate services as appropriate for participants to allow for connections to the larger workforce system.

The successful Respondent will be able to utilize collaborative partnerships to support participant success. The successful Respondent will also be able to document and communicate participant progress in a professional and responsible manner through CalJOBS and monthly reporting to the WDB.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Frequent, regular, and open communication between the sub-recipient and the WDB is key to the success of the P2E 2.0 program.

Roles and Responsibilities of the sub-recipient include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Deliver program services in accordance with the negotiated scope of work and budget;
- b. Provide and train qualified staff to plan and administer all contracted services;
- c. Provide program sustainability for the duration of the contract;
- d. Provide services during scheduled business days and hours and/or appropriate to program participant's needs;
- e. Provide a location where services can readily be provided for program participants;
- f. Provide internal oversight of all program activities and requirements;
- g. Guarantee that all program services provided are readily accessible to eligible individuals and meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Equal Opportunity requirements;
- h. Comply with all terms and conditions of sub-award agreement for the delivery of services;
- i. Enter participant data into the state CalJOBS system and maintain participant files, as appropriate; and
- j. Maintain effective communication with WDB staff.

Roles and Responsibilities of the WDB include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Evaluate and monitor the management and operations of the selected subrecipient(s), including annual fiscal, programmatic, and administrative monitoring;
- b. Provide technical assistance to sub-recipient staff in the areas of compliance, CalJOBS data entry, and performance;

- c. Inform sub-recipient of State and local policies and procedures that may impact the operations of the program, and give assistance as needed to implement them accordingly;
- d. Ensure compliance with all rules, regulations, and policies issued under P2E 2.0; and
- e. Process payments for services.

The roles and responsibilities of the WDB and sub-recipient may be refined in contract negotiations or due to changes in State or Local law, regulations, or policies relating to P2E 2.0 implementation.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

The selected Respondent will be required to provide tracking of performance metrics.

The selected awardee will be required to report on the following metrics to inform state P2E 2.0 reporting requirements:

- Number of individuals enrolled;
- Number of participants enrolled in earn and learn training;
- Number of participants completing earn and learn training; and
- Number of participants employed.

The awardee must enroll **at least 10 participants**. Respondents may propose additional measures based on their program model.

Activities and outcomes will be tracked in the state administered system: CalJOBS. In addition, the sub-recipient will be required to submit monthly program and fiscal reports/invoices to the WDB. The WDB will provide technical assistance and support to ensure the selected sub-recipient is successful in meeting reporting requirements.

The awardee will be responsible for maintaining a physical or digital case file for every participant determined eligible for services. These files will be the property of the WDB and must be turned over to the WDB upon request and at the end of the contract period.

GRANT ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS

Up to ten percent (10%) of the requested funds may be utilized for administrative costs under the federal *de minimus* indirect cost rate. Administrative costs are those that are not related to direct services to participants and employers. These costs can be either personnel or non-personnel related. Examples may include, but are not limited to, costs associated with accounting, property management, personnel management, payroll, and monitoring activities. Respondents proposing administrative costs will be required to follow the federal administrative cost allowability guidelines as outlined in [20 CFR 683.215](#).

No matching funds are required for consideration of proposals. However, Respondents are welcome to include information about additional funds that are leveraged to support the proposed programs and services. Funds cannot be used for capital improvement or to purchase real estate or large equipment (durable equipment costing more than \$5,000).

Section Three: Application Requirements

PROPOSAL FORMAT

Entities seeking funding must submit a complete proposal package. All requirements must be complete for the proposal to be considered for funding. Respondents must provide a narrative proposal no more than six (6) pages in length. General letters of support should not be submitted at this time.

All proposals must be submitted as follows:

- 12 point font size
- 1” margins on sides, bottom and top
- Pages numbered sequentially

For ease of review and to facilitate the evaluation, the proposal should be organized and presented in the order requested below.

Proposal Package:

- A. Cover Sheet – Form A
- B. Narrative – meeting guidelines below
- C. Budget Form – Form B

NARRATIVE

The narrative should provide a clear understanding of the services the Respondent proposes to provide. Responses should be specific, complete, and concise. Proposals should meet the scope of work goals and narratives should include responses to each point identified below.

Description of Targeted Population (15 points)

Identify the target population(s) the project plans to serve. Describe the population(s) and employment barriers impacting the target population to be addressed.

Project Plan (40 points)

Describe what activities and services the proposed project will do and how those services will be provided. Identify any partners that will work with you on this project, if applicable. Describe the earn and learn strategies to be used as part of the project, ensuring the strategy meets the definition of earn and learn training. Include anticipated timing of major activities or milestones.

Proposed Outcomes (15 points)

Describe the specific outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project in a narrative or chart form. *Required performance outcomes include number of individuals enrolled, number of participants enrolled in earn and learn training, number of participants completing earn and learn training; and number of participants employed.*

Related Qualifications and Experience (20 points)

Provide an overview of your organization and describe how your organization’s mission relates to the proposed services. Include a description of your organization’s experience and ability in: a)

serving target population; b) providing similar services; and c) administering publicly funded programs.

Detail any experience administering government-funded grant programs. If the organization does not have experience with government funding, describe the organization's experience in managing projects of similar size.

Budget (15 points)

Describe the experience fiscal staff have in managing and tracking government funding. Provide a brief description in the narrative of each category of cost identified on the Budget.

Provide a budget outlining the costs to operate the program. Respondents may use the budget form using Form B or may submit a different format as long as the same budget categories are outlined. The budget form does not count towards the narrative page limit.

Section Four: Selection and Contract Process

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

All proposals received by the specified deadline will be reviewed by the WDB. Staff will review proposals to ensure Respondents meet the minimum threshold of the RFP guidelines.

A Respondent's RFP shall be rejected prior to scoring if it:

- Is received any time after the deadline set for receipt of proposals;
- Is incomplete or fails to meet all the RFP specifications: i.e., does not include the required forms;
- Does not include a Proposal Cover Sheet signed by the authorized representative; or,
- Contains misrepresentation or inaccurate information by a Respondent.

Should a proposal be disqualified for not meeting the minimum criteria, the proposal will not be reviewed or rated. Respondents will be notified if they are disqualified. Final funding decisions cannot be appealed based on disqualification.

The proposals will then be reviewed and rated by a Proposal Review Committee. Committee members will evaluate each proposal based on an evaluation rubric. Each proposal submitted for consideration will be evaluated and rated on its own merits. The proposal rating criteria will be based on the point structure outlined in the submission requirements. Although not likely, the Committee reserves the right to request additional data, oral discussion, or presentation in support of written proposals.

CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

The recommended service providers shall be prepared to enter a contract with the WDB that shall incorporate elements within the proposal. The WDB reserves the right to add stipulations and terms and conditions, deemed to be in the best interest of P2E 2.0, the North Bay Regional Planning Unit, or the WDB during final contract negotiations. Final award of a contract will be contingent

upon successful negotiation of an agreement, acceptance by the Respondent of the contract agreement terms and conditions, submission of documentation outlined below, and availability of funding.

During the contract negotiation phase, the Respondent will be required to submit the following documentation:

- Proof of Insurance
- W-9 Form
- County Direct Deposit Form if requesting reimbursement through direct deposit

If a responding organization fails to sign and return the contract and contract documents within ten (10) working days of its delivery to the proposed service provider, the WDB may determine at its sole discretion that the proposed service provider is non-responsive to the terms of this RFP and withdraw the proposed contract. The WDB reserves the right to consider beginning negotiations with another proposer.

Once the contract is completed, WDB staff will prepare a recommendation to Solano's County Administrator's Office to approve the final contract.

APPEALS PROCESS

Proposers may appeal the preliminary funding recommendations by submitting a written letter within three (3) working days (November 14, 2023) prior to the Workforce Board meeting to:

***WDB Board of Directors
c/o WDB President/Executive Director
500 Chadbourne Road, Suite A
Fairfield, CA 94534
Attn: "Appeals RFP# FY-24-001
Earn and Learn Training"***

Appeals may also be emailed to Tammy Gallentine, Executive and Board Support Specialist, at tgallentine@solanowdb.org.

Appeals will be limited to the following two (2) issues:

1. The requirements, policies and procedures were not followed; or,
2. The rating criterion was incorrectly applied to an applicant's proposal.

Appeals will be heard only if the written request is received by 5:00 p.m. on November 14, 2023. The WDB will make all funding decisions based on recommendations forwarded to the Board with staff input and on any appeals, if applicable.

Section Five: Related Regulations

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION RULES AND REGULATIONS

Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation are not legally binding documents. However, the contracts, which are based on the proposals and resulting contract negotiations, become legally binding after being signed by both parties. All costs associated with the development of a proposal must be borne by the Respondent.

Public Records Act

All proposals in response to this RFP become the exclusive property of the WDB. At such time as the WDB recommends a proposal to the Board and that recommendation appears on their agenda, all proposals and related documents become a matter of public record and shall be regarded as public records, with the exception of those proposal parts which are clearly defined by the proposer as business or trade secrets and so marked as “confidential” or “proprietary.”

Neither the WDB nor the State shall be in any way liable or responsible for the disclosure of any such records or any part thereof if disclosure is required under the Public Records Act or other applicable law.

Gratuities

It is improper for any WDB officer, employee or agent to solicit consideration in any form from a Respondent or to receive gratuities from a Respondent with the implication, suggestion or statement that such consideration may secure more favorable treatment for the Respondent.

A Respondent shall not offer nor give, either directly or through an intermediary, consideration in any form to a WDB officer, employee, or agent for the purpose of securing favorable treatment with respect to the award of a contract. Among other items, such improper consideration may take the form of cash, discounts, and service, the provision of travel/entertainment, or tangible gifts.

Disbarment and Disclosure

Entities are not eligible if they are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any State or Federal department or agency. Respondents must disclose any legal judgments, claims, arbitration proceedings, lawsuits or other legal proceedings pending or outstanding (unresolved) against the organization, its owners, officers, or principals.

COMPLIANCE REGULATIONS

ADA

The selected Respondent will be required to comply with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Respondents must also be able to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, and the Americans with Disabilities Act to be eligible.

Conflict of Interest

Contractors must avoid apparent or perceived conflict of interest. Contractor has an affirmative duty to disclose to the WDB in writing the name(s) of any person(s) who have an actual, potential, or apparent conflict of interest.

EEO Certification

The selected Respondent will be required to certify and agree that all persons employed by them, their affiliates, subsidiaries, or holding companies are and will be treated equally by the firm without regard to or because of race, religion, ancestry, national origin, or sex, in compliance with all federal, State, and local anti-discrimination laws.

Financial Solvency

The successful service provider must be economically viable and have other funding sources so that it will survive with or without a contract resulting from this solicitation. Financial solvency will be reviewed in the risk assessment phase of proposal review.

Funding Restrictions

Administration and use of funding must follow guidelines for federal funding:

- Budget must reflect 100% of funds toward actual planned activities;
- Funds may not be used to support activities other than those described in this RFP, and resulting contract;
- Costs may not cover activities that are not appropriate and reasonable for the operation of this contract;
- Costs may not cover acquisition of equipment not necessary for the operation of the contract; and,
- Costs for activities and expenses incurred prior to the effective date of the contract are prohibited and will not be reimbursed.

Insurance Requirements

Subrecipient/contractor must maintain insurance against claims for injuries to persons or damages to property which may arise from, or in connection with, the performance of the work funded by the project. Contractors must maintain general liability coverage in the amount of \$1,000,000, workers' compensation if employing individuals, automobile liability coverage if staff or volunteers will be driving on behalf of the contracted project. The WDB must be included as additional insured.

Lobbyist Ordinance Compliance Certification

Each Respondent submitting a response to this RFP must certify during contract negotiations that no lobbying activities will be conducted using funds provided by this contract award.

Sectarian Prohibition

Participants shall not be employed under this title to carry out the construction, operation, or maintenance of any part of any facility that is used or to be used for sectarian instruction or as a place for religious worship.