

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Provision of Virtual Trainings

***Released by:
Washington Workforce
Association***

Release Date: October 21, 2020

Due Date: November 13, 2020

Contact Information: admin@washingtonworkforce.org

Equal Opportunity

Washington Workforce Association is an equal opportunity employer/program.

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.
Washington Relay 711.

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Section I

Introduction

The Washington Workforce Association is seeking information from organizations with the capacity to provide virtual trainings for staff and customers, as defined below, that will enhance the function, reach, and impact of Washington’s public workforce system during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

Background Information

The Washington Workforce Association (WWA) is a nonprofit non-partisan membership organization of the twelve Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) in Washington State. WWA provides information, training, tools, and recommendations to policy makers, workforce development professionals, Local Workforce Development Boards members, and the community. WWA works in partnership with other statewide, regional and national organizations advocating for a coordinated, adequately funded workforce system focused on the needs of job seekers, workers and businesses.

WWA’s twelve member LWDBs are business led organizations that coordinate workforce investments and strategies with stakeholders from education, economic development, labor and community-based organizations to advance the economic health of their respective communities through a skilled and competitive workforce. Each WDC is responsible for coordinating, aligning and setting the strategic vision for the American Job Centers - WorkSource Offices - in their regions. The LWDBs wish to expand access to quality virtual service delivery in order to

- Serve more customers in more communities,
- Train staff to meet customer needs, and
- Address the challenges of providing services while socially distancing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic

WWA is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) on behalf of its members. Responses to this RFI will create a pre-screened pool of vendors for LWDBs to consider for procurement of future, more specific projects requiring virtual services. This RFI does not in any way obligate WWA or its members to contract with vendors responding to this RFI.

For more information about WWA, including a directory of member LWDBs, please go to:
<http://washingtonworkforce.org/index.html>

Purpose

The purpose of this RFI is to identify interested vendors with the capacity to develop, provide, facilitate and/or “train the trainers” in order to expand virtual trainings that will enhance the function, capacity and accessibility of Washington’s public workforce system. This RFI focuses on training for 3 groups, described below. Potential topics for these groups are also included below.

- **Group 1: Job Seeker/Worker Customers** – trainings for these customers would help them improve their skills in order to be more competitive in the workforce, to become work ready and/or to develop new skills to advance in careers. Trainings should be based on the latest research and best practices, and be informed by industry needs and expectations. Customers in this group include:
 - **Job seekers** – these customers range from individuals with strong work histories who have been laid off, often for the first time, to individuals with limited work histories or

barriers to employment, including but not limited to disabilities, having served as a veteran, long term poverty, incarceration, low skill levels, low literacy, Limited English Proficiency, etc. Services are prioritized for customers with these and other employment barriers.

- **Workers** – services for this group of customers is typically provided to skills up workers to maintain employment or for new opportunities as the result of lay-offs, changes in technology, off-shoring or other factors.
- **Group 2: Business Customers** – Businesses typically access workforce services in order to find, upskill, and retain the skilled workforce they need, navigate public programs that help meet their workforce needs, and find assistance to avoid lay-offs or help to manage lay-offs when companies need to downsize. Trainings should be based on proven practices for business customer engagement and informed by industry needs.
- **Group 3: Workforce Staff** – this group includes employees of the workforce system, with titles that include employment specialists, career coaches, trainers and others that spend most of their time interacting with the customers described above and generally need training to keep up with changes in the labor market, learn about new technologies, or improve their skills to continuously improve services. These staff often need to receive training in small manageable bites, due to time constraints. Training should be based on state of the art best practices and current research.

Potential topics of interest for Groups 1 & 2 may include, but are not limited to:

- Virtual credentialing or certification trainings to assist laid off workers and job seekers in the pursuit of rapid (re)employment*.
- Training for businesses in how to perform their services remotely and/or safely in-person while social distancing is required.
- Training that up-skills employees for management roles with their current employer, creating openings in entry-level positions*.
- Training on resume development, interview skills, and professional soft-skill development.
- Mock interviews and assistance editing and completing resumes, cover letters, and job applications.
- Provision of credentialing, certification, or other professional development trainings for job seekers transitioning careers, progressing on a professional pathway, re-entering the workforce after time away from employment, etc.*.
- Coordination of paid internships, on-the-job training and other work experiences to assist job seekers in gaining current, “hands-on” experience in their career pathway of choice.
- Assisting employers in recruitment of qualified candidates, development of job descriptions, and assistance with advertisement of open positions.

**Vendors operating in Washington state that are interested in offering training through this RFI will need to be registered on [Washington’s Eligible Training Provider List](#). Instructions on how to register are provided at the site. Vendors in all other states interested in offering trainings through this RFI will need to be registered on their state [Eligible Training Provider List](#). For questions about becoming registered, contact the Washington Workforce Education and Training Coordinating Board at careerbridge@wtb.wa.gov*

Possible topics of interest for Group 3 include, but are not limited to:

- Training, resources and tools to expand the ability of the public workforce system to improve

diversity, equity, and inclusion for WorkSource staff and customers.

- Increasing WorkSource staff skill and confidence in navigating remote work.
- Developing the skills staff need to provide customer services in a virtual environment.
- Self-care and dealing with frustrated customers.
- Research-based strategies/best practices for maintaining safety/social distancing/proper sanitizing when providing in-person services to customers.
- Providing virtual access to services for customers with disabilities or other barriers to employment.
- Safety training to reduce the risk of spreading the Coronavirus.
- Certificate programs to support the professional development of workforce professionals as career coaches and customer service providers.
- Evidence based practices that get proven results for hard to serve customers.

In addition to the topics of interest describe above, it is also important for interested vendors to share the following core values of Washington’s Workforce system:

- Equity in access.
- Commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Customer emphasis that puts the public at the center of every decision and action.
- Innovation and creativity paired with proven effective practices.

Section II

Eligible Applicants

Vendors from the following categories are eligible to submit letters of interest for this RFI:

- Governmental agencies.
- Private non-profit organizations, including community-based organization.
- Private for-profit businesses and sole proprietorships.
- Educational institutions.
- Consortia of vendors, with a clearly identified lead organization.

Questions and Answers

Questions regarding this RFI may be sent to the email address admin@washingtonworkforce.org. Please specify this RFI by its title when submitting questions. Questions and answers will be posted to washingtonworkforce.org. Question will not be answered by email, text message, phone or fax. Questions will be accepted through 5 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time on October 27, 2020.

Submittal Instructions

Letters of Interest must be submitted by electronic mail to admin@washingtonworkforce.org with the following subject line “RFI: Provision of Virtual Training”, and include:

- Letter of Interest cover page & certification (form attached)
- Response to requested information in Section III of this RFI, using the prescribed format

RFI Key Events and Dates

RFI released	October 21, 2020
Deadline for submission of questions	5 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time October 27, 2020
Deadline to respond to all questions	November 2, 2020 Pacific Standard Time
Deadline for submission of letters of interest	5 p.m. Pacific Standard Time November 13, 2020
WWA review of submissions completed	November 20, 2020
Respondents notified of whether their application has been accepted into the pool of screened applications	November 25, 2020

CONDITIONS

1. WWA will select the Letters of Interest deemed most qualified to achieve the overall objectives of this RFI. Selected Letters of Interest will be placed into a pre-screened pool for WWA members to review and consider based on their own interests and needs.
2. This RFI does not commit WWA or its members to enter into contract with any vendors submitting Letter of Interest that are placed into the pre-screened pool. WWA and its members, at their sole discretion, will determine whether to contract with any of vendors in the pool.
3. WWA members, at their sole discretion, may choose to contract with vendors outside of the pre-screened pool for the services described in this RFI.
4. WWA and its members reserve the right to make such investigation as deemed necessary to determine the ability of vendors to furnish the services described in Letters of Interest. Vendors shall furnish all such information for this purpose as WWA or its members may request.
5. WWA reserves the right to reject any Letter of Interest for failure to meet the requirements contained herein, to waive any technicalities, and to select the Letters of Interest which, in WWA's judgment, best meet the requirements described in this RFI.
6. Neither WWA nor its member are liable for any costs incurred in the preparation or research of Letters of Interest.
7. Letters of Interest will not be returned.

Section III

Letter of Interest Format and Supplemental Questions

Letters of Interest in response to this RFI must be submitted electronically with the following format restrictions:

- 8 1/2" X 11" page size with 1" margins.
- 12-point Arial or Calibri font.
- Double spaced (itemized information may be single paced).
- Total submission length, including the Cover Letter (see below), not to exceed six (6) pages.

Vendors and consortia may submit more than one Letter of Interest.

Cover Letter

Please use the Cover letter form (below) and complete all required fields. Should a consortium of vendors wish to submit a Letter of Interest, a lead organization must be clearly identified in the Cover letter.

Letter of Interest Narrative

Letters of Interest must a brief narrative describing:

- **Description of the Virtual Training to include**
 - A description of the proposed virtual training and whether the training is intended for Group1, Group 2 and/or Group 3 as described in Section 1 of this RFI.
 - How the virtual training would be delivered.
 - How the virtual training would enhance the function, reach, and impact of the public workforce system.
 - If the virtual training provides certifications, include the number of students/trainees and completion rate of these trainees in the last year.
 - If proposed training pertains for any of the starred items for Group 1 listed on page X of this RFI, whether the training is on the Washington or another state's Eligible Training Provider List.
- **Organizational Capacity**
 - If the Letter of Interest is submitted on the behalf of a consortium, a list of the organizations participating in the consortium, and the role of each member of the consortium.
 - The history of the organization(s) providing the virtual training, including how long the organization(s) has been in business and how many students/trainees have been served with the specific virtual training(s) described in the Letter of Interest.
 - The organization's or consortium's plan for developing and/or delivering virtual training.
 - The unique qualifications of the organization or consortium to perform the virtual training described in the Letter of Interest.
 - How the organization(s) will ensure successful delivery of service should a training be solicited as the result of this RFI.
- **Costs and Compliance**
 - The total cost for the virtual training(s), including cost per student/trainee.

- A brief description of how the virtual training(s) is priced, including any itemized costs if relevant.
- Explanation of whether the organization(s) is bonded or carries liability insurance. If so, describe.
- Explanation of whether the organization(s) has filed for bankruptcy in the past three years.
- Explanation of whether the organization(s) is currently involved in or has pending legal action relating to organization operations or financial transactions. If so, describe.

Letter of Interest Cover Letter

Lead Organization:

If a Consortium, Consortium Member Organizations:

Lead Organization Street Address:

Lead Organization Mailing Address:

Virtual Services Offered:

Groups for which Virtual Services are Offered (1, 2, and/or 3)

Certification

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the requirements of the RFI and am prepared to implement the services specified in this Letter of Interest on behalf of my organization and any other vendors included in the Letter of Interest. I certify that the proposed services are in compliance with the RFI requirements. I also certify that I am authorized to sign this Letter of Interest. This Letter of Interest is firm for a period of at least ninety (90) days from the deadline for RFI submission.

I affirm that no employee of WWA nor its members has any financial or other interest in the organization(s) submitting this Letter of Interest.

Name _____ **Title** _____

Address _____ **City** _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Phone _____

E-Mail _____

Signature _____