

Economic Growth Region 2

Request for Proposals

Regional Operator

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
Services and WorkOne-AJC Oversight in Northern
Indiana Supporting the Work of the Northern
Indiana Workforce Board (NIWB, Inc.) and the
Region 2 WIOA Partners Consortium**

RFP Issue Date: April 22, 2016
Period of Public Comment Ends: May 20, 2016
Proposal Due Date: May 27, 2016

*Serving the following Northern Indiana counties: Elkhart, Fulton, Kosciusko,
Marshall, and St. Joseph*

Northern Indiana Workforce Board, Inc.
851 Marietta Street
South Bend, IN 46601

Questions: Barbara White – bwhite@gotoworkone.com

Section I: Background and General RFP Information

The Northern Indiana Workforce Board, Inc. (NIWB) is seeking a Regional Operator (RO) for Economic Growth Region 2 (EGR-2). The Board is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to procure a Regional Operator who will provide guidance and strategic direction, ensuring service delivery provided in the WorkOne-AJC – America’s Job Centers (AJC’s) in the region is based on sector partnerships and career pathways, removing the employer-identified Skills Gaps to meet the hiring needs of local employers.

A. The interested individual or organization will provide workforce knowledge and keen policy interpretation and guidance to NIWB Center Managers, DWD Local Office Managers, and Youth Provider Management overseeing WIOA service delivery in the WorkOne-AJC. This individual is responsible for EGR -2 WIOA performance and coordination of services and referrals offered by all EGR-2 WIOA Partners Consortium programs. The system is built on mutual respect and dignity, focusing on performance, creating a fun atmosphere where all voices are heard and all staff members are able to contribute ideas and thoughts freely without fear. The system is one which is built on integrity – always telling the truth, even in difficult situations. The system is data-driven, but not to the loss of excellent customer service and a strong focus on job seekers and their basic human needs. Bidders should note that the following are fundamental principles of the EGR-2 WorkOne-AJC system:

- **Integrated Service Delivery** The Region 2 WorkOne-AJC system delivers workforce development services through an integrated service delivery model. Included in this integration model are staff members who deliver state funded services through Wagner-Peyser, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Veterans Services, and Re-Employment Services. Also, in this integrated service model are staff who are provided to the NIWB through a vendor’s contract. These staff members provide WIOA services. The purpose of this RFP is to identify an interested individual or organization that can provide service delivery support through Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding in the context of this integrated environment, ensuring that performance measures are being met with high levels of customer satisfaction.
- **Functional Supervision** In the Region 2 integrated model, functional supervision plays a key role within WorkOne-AJC operations. To implement this supervisory approach, the NIWB employs Center Managers who are directly responsible for day-to-day operational activities in the five WorkOne-AJC’s in the region. These Center Managers, along with their DWD Local Manager counterparts, make daily decisions concerning customer flow, deployment of staff as necessary to manage the customer needs, and are responsible for the overall quality and effectiveness of daily WorkOne-AJC services. The Region 2 functional supervision model recognizes that service provider organizations have internal human resource functions that must be managed within their organization. Such functions would include final hiring and firing decisions, benefits administration, and time/attendance reporting. However,

it should be noted, that even in these critical human resource areas, Center Managers and Department of Workforce Development Local Office Managers will have input and the opportunity to influence these decisions. Through another RFP, the goal is to identify a vendor who can provide staffing to ensure that WorkOne-AJC operations function as desired. The Center Managers co-manage the offices and programs with the Department of Workforce Development Managers as selected for the region. In this model, the Regional Operator guides the work of the Center Managers, the DWD Local Office Managers and the customer flow through information received from the Business Consultants, the Data Validation/MIS Compliance team, and the Region 2 WIOA Partners Consortium. The Regional Operator facilitates the growth of the EGR-2 WorkOne-AJC staff and Center Managers by continually leading, educating, and building up the work in a team-based environment.

- **Team-Based Staff Deployment** In the Region 2 integrated service delivery model, staff members are deployed in functional teams that work together to meet the needs of job seekers and business customers. The specific functional teams that operate in each Northern Indiana WorkOne-AJC Center include the Welcome Team, the Skills/Training Team, and the Employment Team. As part of regional WorkOne-AJC operations, there will also be a regional Business Services Team to coordinate employer services and a Workshop Team to deliver in-house training activities across the five counties of the region. The Regional Operator will oversee the activities of the teams and guide their work to meet data-driven performance and customer satisfaction.
 - As the **Region 2 WIOA Partners Consortium** continues to develop, many services offered within the region will be completely integrated with region-based goals and measures. The Regional Operator will serve in the Partners Consortium much the same as other members of the consortium, e.g., Career Tech Ed programs, Adult Ed programs, post-secondary institutions, Vocational Rehabilitation, FSSA, IMPACT, SNAP, and TANF programs. Other members are being added as the Consortium continues to grow. Employers are being brought in to guide and direct the training offerings in the region. It should be noted that the Regional Operator will not oversee the Consortium.
- B. As the WIOA integration model is fully implemented in Region 2 WorkOne-AJCs, the role of the Regional Operator and their scope of work will continue to evolve. This evolution is driven in part by the delayed release of the Federal regulations for the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and state policy development based on these regulations. WIOA requires workforce boards to operate and manage the WorkOne-AJC system, developing a seamless workforce system across agencies and partnerships. The Regional Operator will need to ensure agility and flexibility to meet the changing workforce needs in Region 2.
- C. The NIWB contracts with a Youth Service Provider to operate high-quality WIOA Youth and JAG programs, serving Youth 16-24 years old. These programs focus on the hardest to serve populations. Key areas of focus for the Youth Team are

Drop-out Prevention and Drop-Out Recovery. The Youth field staff members are contracted through the NIWB with individuals holding leadership positions for principle areas of the Youth programs. The Regional Youth Plan, setup of programs and resolution of issues with programs is handled by the NIWB Director of Youth Services and Compliance. The individuals holding leadership positions for the Youth programs report to the Regional Operator to ensure compliance to the Youth Plan and all WIOA performance measures.

- D. Region 2 consists of Elkhart, Fulton, Kosciusko, Marshall, and St. Joseph counties. There are full-service WorkOne-AJC Centers in all five counties. The interested individual or organization should understand that the NIWB is looking for a Regional Operator that can move throughout these five counties providing support and accountability.
- E. The NIWB is committed to aligning WorkOne-AJC operations and activities with the high wage, high demand occupations and industries in Region 2. This will ensure that WorkOne-AJC customers are developing the skill sets required by employers and that they are being prepared for jobs projected through sector strategies and partnerships within the region. The regional Career Pathways efforts have identified a number of high-growth occupations that are to be targeted:

Manufacturing, Industrial, and Commercial Occupations

CAD Drafters and Designers	Welders
CNC Mill and Machine Operators	Computer Repair and Installation
Die Setters	Electronic Technicians
Heating and Air Technicians	Industrial Maintenance and Repair
Machine Operators	Over the Road/Route Truck Drivers
Quality Assurance Technicians	Tool and Die Makers/Mold Makers
	Engineers-all disciplines

Health Care Occupations

Dental Hygienists and Technicians	Emergency Medical Technicians
Medical Assistant	Medical Lab Technicians
Pharmacy Technicians	Phlebotomists
Radiology Technicians	Registered Nurses
Respiratory Therapists	Physical Therapists

Business and Other Occupations

Accountants and Auditors	Computer Programmers/Analysts
Computer Support Specialists	Culinary/Food Preparation Services
Data/Systems Managers	Childhood Development Specialists
Graphic Designers	Human Resource Specialists
Law Enforcement/Safety/Security	Network Administrators
Paralegal/Legal Assistants	Web Designers

The NIWB is seeking proposals from an individual or organization that understands the relationship between workforce and economic development and that can assist in aligning Region 2 WorkOne-AJC operations with these targeted occupations. The members of the Business Services Team report to the NIWB Center Managers to do the strategic work as developed by the NIWB Business Consultants. There would be no direct management from the Regional Operator of the Business Consultants.

F. The NIWB is seeking an interested individual or organization that demonstrates the six critical characteristics listed below:

- Competent and cooperative management with a vision for staffing and supporting the integrated Northern Indiana WorkOne-AJC workforce development system
- A commitment and ability to ensure that customer service to serve thousands of Region 2 job seekers is tantamount in the development of process and flow
- An understanding of employer needs, skills gaps, sector strategies, and career pathways and the ability to develop and facilitate training opportunities as they arise
- A willingness to integrate resources and activities with other organizations, especially members of the Region 2 WIOA Partners Consortium
- Flexibility in deploying human resources and an ability to adapt to change as economic conditions and operational needs evolve
- Have field staff managed by NIWB and DWD Local Office Management

G. The NIWB seeks proposals from individuals or organizations that are innovative and performance based. The resulting contract with the successful bidder will be for a two-year period which may begin any time after contract negotiations are completed. Based on performance, the NIWB may elect to renew the contract for up to two additional years.

H. This Request for Proposals is not in itself an offer of work nor does it commit the NIWB to fund any proposals submitted. The NIWB is not liable for any costs incurred in the preparation or research of proposals. The NIWB reserves the right to make an award to any bidder or to make no awards, if that is deemed to serve the best interests of Region 2. In addition, the NIWB reserves the right to:

- Amend or withdraw this RFP at any time;
- Reject any and all proposals; and/or
- Re-issue this RFP

- Successful bidders must negotiate the proposal before the NIWB will make any final commitment.
 - All commitments made by the NIWB are contingent upon the availability of funds.
- H. Bidding organizations should note that under the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the contents of your proposal or other information submitted to the NIWB is subject to public release upon request, except those items specifically exempt from disclosure. The bidder shall mark as "proprietary" those parts of its proposal that it deems proprietary. However, the bidder is alerted that this marking is advisory only and not binding on the NIWB. If there is a request from the public under FOIA to inspect any part of the proposal so marked, the NIWB will advise the bidder and request further justification in support of the "proprietary" marking. If the NIWB determines, after receipt of the justification, that the material is releasable, the bidder will be notified immediately. Under no circumstances will a proposal or any part of a proposal be released prior to the contract award decision.
- I. The specifications in this RFP may change based on issuance of State or Federal policy or WIOA regulations. By submitting a proposal, the bidder agrees to work cooperatively with the NIWB to comply with subsequent changes.
- J. The successful bidder will be required to maintain a local management office within Region 2 to work with the NIWB in resolving functional supervision issues and any other staffing or personnel issues as required. The successful bidder will also need to identify a single point of contact who will work with the NIWB on all such issues.
- K. To ensure a fair and open process for all interested bidders, the following time table will be used with this RFP process:

RFP Issued and Open for Public Comment	April 22, 2016
Questions & Answers Deadline	April 29, 2016
End of Period of Public Comment	May 20, 2016
Proposals Due	May 27, 2016
Proposal Review Completed	June 10, 2016
Regional Workforce Board Approval	June 17, 2016
Contract Negotiations Completed	June 24, 2016
Contractor Begins Delivering Services	July 1, 2016

The NIWB may require selected bidders to attend oral interviews, participate in negotiations and rewrite their statements of work as agreed upon during the negotiations.

Section II: Proposal Requirements

- A. Proposals must be received electronically by noon EST, May 27, 2016 via email to Barbara White (bwhite@gotoworkone.com). Proposals received after that time and date will be rejected.
- B. To be complete, your proposal must include:
- Attachments completed with requested information and executed properly.
 - One copy of the proposal electronically with signatures
 - An electronic copy of the proposal must also be submitted via email and sent to the attention of Jeff Balogh, CFO, at jbalogh@gotoworkone.com
 - All pages must be numbered
 - Proposal is limited to 15 single-sided pages
 - Proposals that fail to follow instructions and do not include all applicable information and forms may not be considered.
- C. Attachment A - Non-Collusion Affidavit must be signed and submitted.
- D. Attachment B Assurances and Certifications must be signed and submitted.
- E. Your response to the narrative section of the proposal is limited to no more than 15 pages. This page limitation is imposed for the sake of the reviewers of your proposal. This limitation does not include other sections of your proposal such as Attachments A and B, your audit or annual financial reports, and other attachments such as resumes and organizational charts.
- F. Questions regarding this RFP may be submitted in writing to Barbara White via email to bwhite@gotoworkone.com. Questions will be addressed until April 29, 2016.
- G. Bidders have the right to appeal any action or decision related to this RFP. Appeals must be submitted to the Northern Indiana Workforce Board, Inc. and will be reviewed and investigated by the Board. The decision of the Workforce Board in such situations shall be final. Bidders wishing to make a formal appeal should do so in writing to:

David Walters
Northern Indiana Workforce Board Chair
851 Marietta Street
South Bend, IN 46601

- I. Use this as a checklist to ensure that you have included all items required in this RFP. Failure to include all required information could result in rejection of your proposal.

Cover Letter with original signatures
Proposal Statement of Work
Proposed Budget Plan
Attachment A (Non-Collusion Affidavit) with original signatures
Attachment B (Assurances and Certifications) with original signatures
Organizational chart including management structure
Resume for proposed single point of contact
Copy of personnel policies or handbook
Copy of most recent audit report or year-end financial statement

Unless specifically requested by the NIWB, changes and/or amendments to the originally submitted proposal will not be considered. In addition, the NIWB reserves the right to:

- Amend or withdraw this RFP at any time;
- Reject any and all proposals; and/or
- Re-issue this RFP if necessary.

Section III: Proposal Statement of Work

Interested organizations should adhere to the following outline in responding to this RFP. This will make your proposal more reviewable and will allow reviewers of your proposal to make more informed decisions.

A. Experience of bidding organization (20% of overall rating)

The following questions will provide your organization with the opportunity to highlight and review your experiences, strengths, and overall state of readiness to staff Region 2 WorkOne-AJC Centers and ensure the delivery of workforce services to job seeker and business customers.

1. Provide an overall description of your organization. What is your organization's mission and vision, governance structure, and legal status? Please include an organizational chart for your management structure that highlights key management personnel and their proposed roles with this project. **(5% of overall rating)**
2. Describe your organization's experience in providing staff and/or oversight to another organization to achieve a specific business purpose. Be specific in your description by detailing the services that were provided as well as the specific services that your assigned staff delivered. Also, please highlight any significant business results or benefits that were achieved from the deployment of your staff to deliver the requested services. **(10% of overall rating)**
3. Please identify your single point of contact for the position of Regional Operator for the Region 2 WorkOne-AJC system. If this person is already identified, what experience does this individual have that makes them the best candidate for this position? Please provide a resume or job description of your proposed Regional Operator candidate to highlight the skills they will bring to this role. **(5% of overall rating)**
4. Be prepared to provide three references and contact information for individuals outside your organization that are familiar with the quality of services the Regional Operator candidate is capable of providing. Letters of support are not required and will not be considered in the overall evaluation of bidding organizations

B. Regional Operator for an Integrated WorkOne-AJC System (40% of overall rating)

The foundation of the Region 2 integrated service delivery model is the assignment of staff to one of five functional teams. The following questions will provide your organization with the opportunity to demonstrate how your candidate will manage and support these teams so that they can deliver high quality workforce services.

1. Describe in specific terms how your Regional Operator candidate would support

the following WorkOne-AJC teams. **(15% of overall rating)**

- The Welcome Team – the Welcome team greets visitors, conducts initial assessments, completes WorkOne-AJC enrollment activities, and makes referral decisions based on information obtained in the process
 - The Skills Team – the Skills Team works with job seeker customers on a variety of skill development issues including basic skills, technology skills, soft skills, occupational-specific skills, and others.
 - The Employment Team – the Employment Team works with job seeker customers on a variety of job finding activities, including resume development, interview preparation, job referrals, and others.
 - The Business Services Team – the Business Services Team works with employer customers to develop applicant recruitment and assessment plans, customized training activities, on-the-job training programs, and others.
 - The Workshop Team – the Workshop Team develops, schedules, and delivers a wide range of in-house skill development and job finding workshops.
2. Describe the specific work your Regional Operator candidate will perform to ensure that performance is being met and staff members are being held accountable. What specific assessments, activities, training, and reviews are involved in this process? What are the key areas of focus? How will performance be reported to the Board? How will the Regional Operator report areas of concern and plans to correct? **(10% of overall rating)**
3. Describe how your organization will interact with the Business Consultants, VP of Operations, and Director of Youth Services and Compliance, while working with the Center Managers and DWD Local Office Managers in their roles as functional supervisors of staff. How will the Regional Operator effectively work in this environment to create efficiencies and good customer service? **(10% of overall rating)**
4. In the Region 2 integrated service delivery model, there is an expectation that job seeking and business customers accessing services in the more rural locations of the region will be able to access the same high quality services as customers in larger cities and counties. Describe your Regional Operator’s ability to provide direct supervision and support in the more rural locations of Region 2. **(5% of overall rating)**

C. Financial Management and Budget (40% of overall rating)

The bidder should provide information on budgets as follows:

1. Bidders must maintain a financial management system that is auditable and in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles. Financial records must be available for audit and monitoring purposes. Bidders should provide a brief description of the financial accountability of the organization in this section. Bidders

should also provide one copy of their most recent independent annual audit or, if your organization is not formally audited, your most recent independent year-end financial report. **(7% of overall rating)**

2. Has your organization had any financial or compliance findings in the last three years? If so, describe what issues were identified and provide a detailed description of how these issues were resolved. If your organization has operated a WIA or WIOA Program before, please include as attachments the past two years of monitoring reports. **(5% of overall rating)**
3. As noted earlier in this RFP, the NIWB is requesting a single entity to provide services as the Regional Operator. Please detail your organization's budget to support this individual using the following budget categories **(28% of overall rating)**:
 - Salary
 - Benefits:
 - Healthcare
 - 401k
 - Health Savings Account
 - Other benefits
 - Management or organizational fees charged by the bidding organization
 - Any other costs to be charged by the bidding organization

Please include a brief narrative statement for each of these four categories that describes the specific items included in these budget categories. For example, within the benefits category, briefly describe the benefits that will be available to staff working in your organization.

In addition, please complete a formal budget plan using the Excel format provided by the NIWB. Instructions for completing a Budget Plan are located in the first tab of the file. Questions regarding this budget plan may be submitted in writing to Barbara White via email to bwhite@gotoworkone.com. Budget questions will be addressed until April 29, 2016.

It should be noted that all electronic data and paper files remain the property of NIWB and must be stored within the Region 2 office or Region 2 equipment where service is provided, or as directed by NIWB.