

**CHICAGO COOK WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP
LOCAL WORKFORCE INNOVATION AREA #7**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FOR
One-Stop Operator**



CHICAGO COOK
WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP

A proud partner of the AmericanJobCenter network

FUNDING PERIOD: July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

**CHICAGO COOK WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP
69 W. WASHINGTON ST. SUITE 2860
CHICAGO, IL 60602**

**RESPONSES DUE:
Thursday, May 16, 2024 by 4:00 PM**

Bidder Webinar: Thursday, April 18th, 2024 10:00am – 12:00pm

Webinar Registration:

<https://chicookworks-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZltd-2rqj8oGNLzTLEesj4bF6z8wdStC05X>

**Attendance is not mandatory, but respondents are highly encouraged to attend

RFPquestions@chicookworks.org

Letter of Intent due:

Thursday, May 2nd, 2024 – by or before 4:00 pm*(CDT)

[One-Stop Operator Letter of Intent Form](#)

***Strongly encouraged, but not mandatory**

**George Wright, CEO
Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership**

**Jacki Robinson-Ivy, Co-Chair
Smita Shah, Co-Chair
Chicago Cook Workforce Innovation Board**

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SECTION I. Purpose, Performance Period, Funding, and Schedule

A. Purpose

The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (The Partnership) and the Local Workforce Innovation Area #7 (LWIA 7) Workforce Innovation Board (WIB) are issuing this RFP to identify through competitive selection one entity or consortium of entities to provide One-Stop Operator (OSO) services in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA or The Act). The Partnership seeks a highly qualified, neutral entity to coordinate services among the various required One-Stop partners (WIOA One-Stop Partners) present at the 10 existing One-Stops in its workforce system, called “American Job Centers” (AJCs), resulting in more streamlined and integrated services for job seeker and business customers. The geography of service is LWIA 7, which comprises Cook County inclusive of the City of Chicago.

B. Performance Period

The period of performance begins on July 1, 2024 and concludes on June 30, 2025. The Partnership reserves the right to renew grant agreements for up to three (3) additional one-year terms based on funding availability and the selected respondent’s achievement of benchmarks, compliance with WIOA, and conformity with The Partnership’s and the Workforce Investment Board’s (WIB) vision for the public workforce system.

C. Funding

The Partnership anticipates releasing **\$450,000** through this RFP to fund one entity (or consortium) to perform One-Stop Operator services across 10 existing American Job Centers from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.

The successful respondent to this RFP will enter into a grant agreement with The Partnership and become part of The Partnership’s service network. Agreements executed as a result of this RFP process will be paid through cost reimbursement unless otherwise specified. Final agreements will be subject to any changes in legislation, regulations, or policies promulgated by the federal or state funders. The Partnership reserves the right to vary or change the terms of any agreement executed as a result of this RFP, including funding levels, scope of services, performance standards, and contract terms, as it deems necessary.

D. Tentative Schedule

Release of RFP	April 8, 2024
Bidder Webinar	April 18, 2024
Letter of Intent Due (optional).....	May 2, 2024
Question Submittal Deadline	May 6, 2024
Anticipated Posting of Questions and Answers	May 10, 2024
Proposal Submittal Deadline	May 16, 2024
Proposal Review	May/June 2024
Selection Review by Chicago Workforce Innovation Board	June 2024
Anticipated Contract Commencement	July 1, 2024

SECTION II. Background

A. Overview of The Partnership

Created in 2012, The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership is an umbrella organization operating the public workforce system in the City of Chicago and Cook County. The Partnership combines federal and philanthropic resources to broaden the reach and impact of workforce development services for both employers and job seekers. The Partnership has programmatic and administrative responsibility for all WIOA services provided in Chicago and Cook County (LWIA 7).

The Chicago Cook Workforce Innovation Board, which oversees The Partnership, has statutory responsibility for the local implementation of WIOA and provides a forum for business, labor, education, government, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders to collaboratively develop strategies that address the supply and demand challenges confronting the local workforce. The WIB, together with The Partnership, provides leadership, strategic planning, policy direction, and oversight for WIOA services in LWIA 7.

All efforts put forth by The Partnership are guided by the following vision, mission and values:

Our Vision: Every person has the opportunity to build a career; every business has the talent to grow and compete in a global economy.

Our Mission: To create, promote, and effectively manage a network of workforce development organizations that:

- Designs innovative solutions to address business needs, and,
- Prepares individuals for, and connects them to, career opportunities.

Our Values:

- **Collaboration:** We strategically engage a variety of local, regional, state, and national partners in workforce and economic development to ensure program effectiveness. The breadth of these activities allows us to connect businesses and individuals to a wide array of resources.
- **Innovation:** We design and implement initiatives that result in dynamic outcomes for businesses and job seekers alike. We seek creative solutions to current and future workforce development challenges.
- **Transparency:** We clearly communicate our expectations, policies, and processes to stakeholders and partners. We openly and publicly share the results of our initiatives.
- **Financial Responsibility and Stewardship:** As stewards of public, private, and philanthropic funds, we ensure effective and efficient management of our resources to achieve the maximum returns on investment and greatest impact on the business or individual served.
- **Quality:** We commit to continuous improvement. We aspire to a standard of excellence that ensures the delivery of high caliber services for all stakeholders while identifying opportunities for further growth.
- **Dignity of Work:** We believe in the value of work and the mutually beneficial impact that it has on individuals and the companies that employ them. We support investment in human capital as a means of strengthening local communities and the regional economy.
- **Equity:** We intentionally acknowledge systems of oppression when providing the resources and supports people need to reach their full economic and human potential. We actively work to eliminate disparities people experience based on race/ethnicity, disability, background, gender, age, sexual orientation, or economic and educational status. We partner with employers who share our belief and are committed to the idea that all residents of our region can achieve a meaningful career that provides family-sustaining income.

The Partnership administers a comprehensive workforce development system with multiple entry points where job seekers and businesses can access the full range of WIOA services and benefits. The backbone of this system is our 10 American Job Centers (AJCs) located throughout Chicago and suburban Cook County (described in Section IV). These are high-capacity program sites serving the general job-seeking population as well as businesses. AJCs must serve Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth (ages 16-24 under WIOA) and must have active participation from the Core WIOA Partners, listed below in Section II(B).

B. Overview of WIOA and the One-Stop Delivery System

Signed into law on July 22, 2014 and funded by the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act supports workforce development programs throughout the nation in service of job seekers and businesses. WIOA helps job seekers access employment, education, training, and supportive services needed to succeed in the labor market; and businesses find the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity administers WIOA funding for the State of Illinois, and in turn delegates the implementation and administration of WIOA to local workforce boards and their administrative agencies.

Pursuant to 20 CFR 678.300(b), WIOA Title I assigns responsibilities at the local, state, and federal level for creating and maintaining a “one-stop delivery system” (One-Stop system) that enhances the range and quality of education and workforce development services that employers and individual customers can access. The common identifier for this One-Stop system is “American Job Center” (AJC).

The U.S. Department of Labor envisions a WIOA One-Stop system that is quality focused, employer driven, customer centered, and tailored to meet the needs of regional economies. It is designed to increase access to, and opportunities for, the employment, education, training, and support services that individuals need to succeed in the labor market, particularly those with barriers to employment. The system aligns workforce development, education, and economic development programs with regional economic development strategies to meet the needs of local and regional employers, and provide a comprehensive, accessible, and high-quality workforce development system.

This vision for the One-Stop system is accomplished locally through the creation of high-quality One-Stop centers that connect customers with the full range of services available in their communities, whether they are individuals pursuing employment, career advice, education, or occupational training; or are businesses in search of skilled workers. High-quality One-Stop centers are characterized by:

- Excellent customer service provided to job seekers, workers, and businesses;
- Innovative and effective service design; and
- Integrated management systems and high-quality staffing.

The required partners in the One-Stop delivery system (WIOA One-Stop Partners) administer separately funded programs as a set of integrated streamlined services to customers. A Memorandum of Understanding, negotiated and executed between the local workforce development board and the WIOA One-Stop Partners with the agreement of the chief elected official(s), governs the operation of the One-Stop delivery system in the LWIA.

As identified in Section 121(b)(1)(B) of WIOA, the required partners in the One-Stop delivery system are the entities responsible for administering the following programs and activities in the local area:

PROGRAMS	AUTHORIZING LEGISLATION
Career services for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth	WIOA Title I-B
Job Corps; Youth Build; Native American programs; Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker programs	WIOA Title I
Adult education and literacy services	WIOA Title II
Employment services	Wagner-Peyser Act, amended by WIOA Title III
Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)	Rehabilitation Act, amended by WIOA Title IV
Senior Community Service Employment Program (CSEP)	Older Americans Act
Career and Technical Education (CTE) at the post-secondary level	Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education Act
Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) activities	Trade Act
Programs under Jobs for Veterans State Grants	
Employment and training activities under Community Services Block Grant	
Employment and training activities carried out by Department of Housing and Urban Development	
Employment programs	State unemployment compensation laws
Reentry programs	Second Chance Act
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Social Security Act

Programs authorized or amended under WIOA Titles I-B, II, III, and IV are Core Programs and their administrators in the local area are Core Partners of the One-Stop system (WIOA Core Partners).

As stated above in Section II(A), The Partnership administers a comprehensive One-Stop delivery system with multiple entry points where job seekers and businesses can access the full range of WIOA services and benefits. The system includes 10 One-Stop centers, a.k.a. American Job Centers, which form the backbone of the system and have active participation from the Core WIOA Partners.

SECTION III. Eligible Respondents

A. Eligible Respondents

Pursuant to 20 CFR 678.600, One-Stop Operators may be a single entity (public, private, or nonprofit) or a consortium of entities.

Eligible single entities include:

- 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 Workforce Development Board, 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 school and secondary schools are not eligible One-Stop Operators per 20 CFR 678.600(d), with the exception of nontraditional public secondary schools, such as night schools, adult schools, or area career and technical education schools.

A WIOA One-Stop Partner (defined in Section II) is eligible to perform One-Stop Operator services as part of a consortium if the consortium comprises a minimum of two (2) of the other WIOA One-Stop Partners.

Entities that meet the above-mentioned criteria per 20 CFR 678.600 are eligible respondents to this RFP.

Additionally, entities must satisfy the following criteria to be considered eligible respondents to this RFP:

- 1) Entities must operate in accordance with Federal, State, and local law;
- 2) Entities must be currently eligible to do business with the City of Chicago, Cook County, the State of Illinois, and The Partnership;
- 3) Entities must be willing to comply with 20 CFR 678.600(e), which sets expectations that the One-Stop Operator:
 - Disclose any potential conflicts of interest arising from its relationships with training and other service providers;
 - Not establish practices that create disincentives to providing services to individuals with barriers to employment who may require longer-term career and training services; and
 - Comply with Federal regulations and procurement policies relating to the calculation and use of profits, including 20 CFR 683.295, the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR part 200, and other applicable regulations and policies; and
- 4) Entities must possess the technical competence, management expertise, professional staff capacity, administrative and fiscal capacity, and demonstrated fiduciary responsibility to accomplish the objectives and scope of work stated in this RFP.

Respondents may submit proposals in which subcontractors are identified to provide components of the full scope of services. If including subcontractors in a proposal, the respondent's proposal must:

- In the narrative response, clearly delineate the respective roles and responsibilities of the prime respondent and each subcontractor; and
- In the fiscal response, clearly identify the respective percentage of fiscal responsibility of the prime respondent and each subcontractor.

Minority-owned, DBEs, and women-owned entities are encouraged to respond to this RFP.

Proposals from respondents who have had a previous Partnership contract terminated for inadequate performance, or for any WIOA proscribed action, within the previous 12-month period are **ineligible** to apply.

Additionally, entities are **ineligible** to respond to this RFP if they: 1) are currently barred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by a Federal, State, County or City department/agency, quasi-governmental agency (including but not limited to Chicago Housing Authority, City or Suburban community colleges, Chicago Public Schools et al.), or The Partnership; 2) have existing grants with any Federal, State, County or City agency that have been suspended or otherwise deemed not in good standing within the past two (2) years; or 3) are not in compliance with Illinois Department of Revenue, Federal Internal Revenue Service or Federal Office of Management and Budget requirements.

Awards made to entities subsequently found to have been ineligible may have funds clawed back at The Partnership’s sole discretion.

B. Conflict of Interest

In accordance with 20 CFR 678.620(b)(1), an entity serving as One-Stop Operator may also serve a different role within the One-Stop system and perform some or all of these functions when acting in its other role, **if it has established sufficient firewalls and conflict of interest policies and procedures.**

Pursuant to 20 CFR 679.430, any entity selected or otherwise designated to perform more than one of the functions within the local One-Stop system must develop a written agreement with the local workforce development board and the CEO to clarify how the entity will carry out its responsibilities while demonstrating compliance with WIOA and corresponding regulations, relevant Office of Management and Budget circulars, the State's conflict of interest policy, and the LWIA 7 WIB’s conflict of interest policy.

SECTION IV. One-Stop Operator Role and Responsibilities

A. Role and Relationship with Required Partners

As previously described in Section II(B) of this RFP, the required WIOA One-Stop Partners are the entities responsible for administering the following programs and activities in the local area:

PROGRAMS	AUTHORIZING LEGISLATION
Career services for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth	WIOA Title I-B
Job Corps; Youth Build; Native American programs; Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker programs	WIOA Title I
Adult education and literacy services	WIOA Title II
Employment services	Wagner-Peyser Act, amended by WIOA Title III
Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)	Rehabilitation Act, amended by WIOA Title IV
Senior Community Service Employment Program (CSEP)	Older Americans Act

Career and Technical Education (CTE) at the post-secondary level	Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education Act
Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) activities	Trade Act
Programs under Jobs for Veterans State Grants	
Employment and training activities under Community Services Block Grant	
Employment and training activities carried out by Department of Housing and Urban Development	
Employment programs	State unemployment compensation laws
Reentry programs	Second Chance Act
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Social Security Act

Programs authorized or amended under WIOA Titles I-B, II, III, and IV are Core Programs and their administrators in the local area are Core Partners of the One-Stop system. The following entities and their local delegates are the Core Partners of the One-Stop system in Illinois: Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Title I), Illinois Community College Board (Title II), Illinois Department of Employment Security (Title III), and Illinois Department of Human Services (Title IV). The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership is the delegated administrator for WIOA Title I in LWIA 7.

Pursuant to 20 CFR 678.620(a), the One-Stop Operator must at a minimum coordinate service delivery by required One-Stop Partners and service providers. Local workforce boards may establish additional roles of the One-Stop Operator.

Part (C) of this section of the RFP outlines the functions and responsibilities of the One-Stop Operator in LWIA 7 as established by The Partnership and the Chicago Cook Workforce Innovation Board.

B. Chicago Cook One-Stop Centers (American Job Centers)

The Partnership administers 10 One-Stop centers, a.k.a. American Job Centers, with existing WIOA One-Stop Partners and service providers in place. The AJCs are at the following locations throughout the City of Chicago and suburban Cook County:

- **American Job Center in Pilsen (comprehensive)**
1700 W. 18th Street, Chicago, IL 60608
- **American Job Center @ The King Center (comprehensive)**
4314 S. Cottage Grove Avenue, Chicago, IL 60653
- **American Job Center @ Daley College**
7500 S. Pulaski Road, Chicago, IL 60652
- **American Job Center in East Garfield Park**
605 S. Albany Avenue, Chicago, IL 60612
- **American Job Center @ Truman College**
1145 W. Wilson Avenue, Chicago, IL 60640
- **American Job Center in Harvey**
16845 South Halsted Street, Harvey, IL 60426
- **American Job Center @ Prairie State College (comprehensive)**

202 South Halsted Street, Chicago Heights, IL 60411

- **American Job Center in North Riverside**
7222 Cermak Road, North Riverside, IL 60546
- **American Job Center in Maywood**
1701 South 1st Avenue, Maywood, IL 60153
- **American Job Center in Wheeling (comprehensive)**
1400 S. Wolf Rd. Wheeling, IL 60090

The American Job Centers in Pilsen, at The King Center, at Prairie State College and in Wheeling are designated comprehensive One-Stop centers as defined in 20 CFR 678.305.

A comprehensive One-Stop center is a physical location where job seeker and employer customers can access the programs, services, and activities of all WIOA One-Stop Partners, along with any additional partners as determined by the local workforce board, during regular business days and hours. The center must:

- Have at least one WIOA Title I staff person physically present;
- Provide the Career Services listed in 20 CFR 678.430;
- Provide access to Training Services described in 20 CFR 680.200;
- Provide access to any employment and training activities carried out under Section 134(d) of WIOA;
- Provide access to programs and activities carried out by the required and additional One-Stop partners listed in 20 CFR 678.400 through 678.410; and
- Make available workforce and Labor Market Information.

One-Stop Partner programs may deliver career services at a comprehensive One-Stop center in one of three ways:

- By a program staff member physically present at the One-Stop center;
- By a staff member from a different Partner program physically present and appropriately cross-trained to provide information to customers about the resources available through all Partner programs; or
- By using technology to provide a direct linkage to a program staff member who can provide meaningful information or services.

The Partnership's existing American Job Center locations are subject to change, and the selected One-Stop Operator must be willing to provide services in any location within Cook County.

C. Functions and Responsibilities

The role of the One-Stop Operator (OSO) for Local Workforce Innovation Area 7 is to work in collaboration with The Partnership to coordinate service delivery among the WIOA One-Stop Partners described in Section IV(A) of this RFP. The Partners provide job seekers and employers with information and services to positively impact educational, employment, and business outcomes. The collective goal is to consistently offer seamless services to their shared job seekers and employers.

The One-Stop Operator shall perform the following functions and responsibilities with guidance of The Partnership:

- 1) Coordinate WIOA service delivery across required WIOA One-Stop Partners and service providers. The OSO shall:

- a. Coordinate Partner services delivered at One-Stop centers and through direct linkages;
 - b. Coordinate Partner services to shared job seekers;
 - c. Coordinate Partner services to shared businesses;
 - d. Coordinate service delivery efforts within functional areas across Partner staff;
 - e. Ensure clear delineation of roles and responsibilities across Partners;
 - f. Ensure universal understanding across Partners of respective roles and responsibilities;
 - g. Work with The Partnership to address and rectify instances where Partners fail to fulfill understood roles and responsibilities;
 - h. Mediate and resolve conflicts between the Partners as needed; and
 - i. Undertake other functions to coordinate service delivery across WIOA One-Stop Partners.
- 2) Under the direction of The Partnership, lead LWIA 7’s service integration activities at One-Stop Centers including efforts to share necessary data, reduce duplication of services, and leverage program resources to the mutual benefit of Partner programs and their shared customers, resulting in efficient, effective, and seamless service delivery. The OSO shall:
- a. Periodically seek feedback from Partners to assess potential challenges with service delivery and integration to assess service integration needs;
 - b. Develop and implement solutions based on Partner feedback;
 - c. Undertake other functions to implement service integration.
- 3) Convene meetings to support ongoing service integration¹ and facilitate seamless service delivery among WIOA One-Stop Partners. The OSO shall:
- a. Coordinate with One-Stop Partners to develop agendas and facilitate meetings;
 - b. Convene monthly center-level Partner meetings to ensure service coordination;
 - c. Convene quarterly system-wide Partner meetings;
 - d. Convene other Partner meetings as required to support specific projects as needed; and
 - e. Produce and disseminate meeting minutes.
- 4) Coordinate operations at One-Stop centers. The OSO shall:
- a. Maintain a regular physical presence at every One-Stop center;
 - b. Coordinate utilization of classrooms, conference rooms, and other facilities at centers;
 - c. Maintain a calendar of activities at centers;
 - d. Ensure consistent “American Job Center” branding across centers;
 - e. Implement operational adjustments as needed in response to changes in Partner participation, physical infrastructure, available resources, etc.; and
 - f. Undertake other functions to coordinate operations at One-Stop centers.

¹ Information on the principles, goals, and requirements of service integration under WIOA may be found in the Illinois WIOA Policy, Chapter 1 Sections 9.2 and 13, available at <https://apps.il-work-net.com/WIOAPolicy/Policy/Home>.

- 5) Manage LWIA 7's universal referral process and platform to improve efficiency and customer experience of referrals, including standardization of format, follow-up requirements, and reporting. The OSO shall:
 - a. Manage the referral software platform, currently [Airtable](#), and provide support and technical assistance to One-Stop Partners;
 - b. Monitor referral process in real time to ensure timely follow-up with customers;
 - c. Track and report referral data to The Partnership and One-Stop Partners; and
 - d. Manage transition to a new statewide referral platform in the event the State of Illinois implements a universal referral platform.
- 6) Facilitate cross training of frontline staff of WIOA One-Stop Partners to ensure that the staff of each Partner program learns the key program goals and eligibility criteria of other Partner programs.
- 7) Implement a comprehensive customer service strategy to ensure quality service to shared job seekers. The OSO shall:
 - a. Manage customer satisfaction feedback and reporting mechanisms;
 - b. Manage and analyze customer satisfaction data for purposes of reporting and performance improvement;
 - c. Follow up with relevant parties in cases of customer inquiry and complaint to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all shared customers;
 - d. Under The Partnership's guidance, liaise with local government agencies and other relevant partners to coordinate services for job seekers; and
 - e. Identify and implement necessary measures to continuously improve customer service.
- 8) Implement a comprehensive customer service strategy to ensure quality service to shared employer customers. The OSO shall:
 - a. Review existing processes and procedures for serving employers; and work with Business Services staff from relevant Partners to develop and implement standardized processes, materials and procedures across all One-Stop Centers;
 - b. Coordinate with Partners to design and implement employer satisfaction feedback and reporting mechanisms;
 - c. Manage and analyze employer customer satisfaction data for purposes of reporting and performance improvement;
 - d. Follow up with relevant parties in cases of employer customer inquiry and complaint to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all shared employer customers;
- 9) Assist WIOA One-Stop Partners with community outreach and the promotion of program services.
- 10) Identify ways in which technology may be used to enhance One-Stop operations, and work with One-Stop Partners to develop and implement technological strategies to improve service delivery, customer service, service integration, and reporting.
- 11) Coordinate with The Partnership and WIOA One-Stop Partners to complete One-Stop center certification processes for the 4 Comprehensive One-Stops. Illinois' One-Stop certification policy requires an evidence-based system of effective service delivery, physical and programmatic accessibility, and pursuit of continuous improvement opportunities. The certification process ensures that local workforce innovation boards oversee the delivery of

employment and training programs in their communities and support high levels of effectiveness and sustainability.²

- 12) Remain informed on Federal and State One-Stop Operator policies and attend relevant webinars and in-person trainings hosted by The Partnership, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Opportunity, the U.S. Department of Labor, and other entities as relevant.
- 13) Attend quarterly meetings of the Chicago Cook Workforce Innovation Board and its Service Delivery Committee. As instructed by The Partnership, report to the WIB on One-Stop performance, service integration efforts, and progress on implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between One-Stop Partners.

D. Limitations

Pursuant to 20 CFR 678.620(b)(1) and subject to 20 CFR 678.620(b)(2), a One-Stop Operator **may not**:

- Convene system stakeholders to assist in the development of the local plan;
- Prepare and submit local plans (as required under Section 107 of WIOA);
- Be responsible for oversight of itself;
- Manage or significantly participate in the competitive selection process for One-Stop Operators;
- Select or terminate One-Stop Operators, career services, and youth providers;
- Negotiate local performance accountability measures; or
- Develop and submit budgets for activities of the workforce development board of the LWIA.

SECTION V. Performance and Deliverables of One-Stop Operator

A. Performance

The Partnership will assess the performance of the One-Stop Operator based on its execution of each of the functions and responsibilities described in Section IV(C) of this RFP and its accomplishment of the following objectives:

- 1) Seamless coordination of service delivery across WIOA One-Stop Partners resulting in a smooth, comprehensive, and productive service experience for shared business and job seeker customers of the One-Stop center, as attested by customer feedback.
- 2) Integration of services delivered by respective WIOA One-Stop Partners resulting in effective and efficient utilization of Partner resources and seamless customer transition between programs/services, as attested by Partner and customer feedback.
- 3) A high level of commitment from WIOA One-Stop Partners to implementing service coordination and integration, as evidenced by: consistent attendance at Partner meetings; efforts to cross train staff on the programs of other Partners; active engagement in service integration planning; and other collaboration efforts.

² Information on the State's One-Stop certification policy and process may be found in the Illinois WIOA Policy, Chapter 1 Section 8, available at <https://apps.il-work-net.com/WIOAPolicy/Policy/Home>.

- 4) Smooth and efficient operations at all One-Stop centers that foster collaboration among WIOA One-Stop Partners and optimize available internal and external resources to support effective service delivery to business and job seeker customers.

B. Deliverables

The Partnership will negotiate specific contract deliverables with the selected One-Stop Operator. These may include but are not limited to:

- Measurable improvement in service integration between One-Stop Partners which could include increased referrals between partners, shorter response time between a referral being sent and follow-up with customer, improved customer satisfaction scores, increased number of staff cross-trained to be able to provide services for more than one Partner program, and other metrics negotiated.
- Consistent attendance by representatives of the Core WIOA One-Stop Partners (Titles I – IV) at monthly center-level meetings, quarterly system-level meetings, and other joint planning meetings.
- Formal reports to WIOA One-Stop Partners, The Partnership, the Chicago Cook Workforce Innovation Board, and other relevant stakeholders.
- Cross-training and onboarding materials including American Job Center guides and manual(s), training videos and other materials as needed.
- Development and implementation of a One-Stop Center Certification process.
- Development and implementation of a referral platform transition plan in the event the State of Illinois adopts a statewide referral platform.
- Data dashboards reporting customer satisfaction survey results, referral data including number of referrals and response time. Other dashboards as needed.

SECTION VI. Proposal Questions and Required Attachments

A. All Required Submittal Documents

Proposals must include all the following documents (as applicable) to be considered complete and eligible for review:

Program Proposal

- 1) One-Stop Operator Proposal Checklist*
- 2) Organizational Information*
- 3) Executive Summary (signed by authorized representative)
- 4) Program Narrative (Response to Program Questions 1-5)
- 5) Consortium Partner or Subcontractor MOUs if applicable
- 6) Staff Resumes and/or Job Descriptions
- 7) Letters of Reference
- 8) Budget*^
- 9) Budget Narrative*^

Fiscal Proposal

- 10) Fiscal Narrative (Response to Fiscal Questions a-i)
- 11) Fiscal Questionnaire*
- 12) Cost Allocation Plan
- 13) Indirect Cost Rate Approval Document

- 14) Conflict of Interest Policy
- 15) Accounting Department Organizational Chart
- 16) Chart of Accounts
- 17) Segregation of Duties Worksheet*
- 18) Fiscal Policies and Procedures Manual
- 19) IRS W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification
- 20) IRS 501(c)(3) Tax Exempt Determination Letter
- 21) Certificate of Good Standing
- 22) Most Recent Financial Audit
- 23) List of Board Members
- 24) Budget*^
- 25) Budget Narrative*^

***Required forms can be downloaded with this RFP from The Partnership's website at <https://chicookworks.org/our-network/request-for-proposals/>.** Other attachments listed above are described in the narrative questions in Section VI(B) below. Forms and attachments do not count toward page limits for narrative responses.

^Both the Program Proposal and Fiscal Proposal must include copies of all budget forms and the budget narrative.

All components of the Fiscal Proposal, except for the Budget and Budget Narrative, must be submitted by each partner entity if the respondent is a consortium.

B. Proposal Questions

Provide narrative responses to the questions below to demonstrate your organization's technical, administrative, and fiscal capacity for performing the scope of services outlined in Section IV(C): Functions and Responsibilities.

Executive Summary (2 pages maximum)

The Executive Summary must be submitted on the responding organization's letterhead and must include:

- a. An overview of the organization's qualifications, including the number of years it has successfully provided services, the type of services provided, the types of clients served, and the geography of service.
- b. A description of the partnership model and all partners if responding as a consortium, with the lead partner clearly identified.
- c. An overview of your proposed strategies and methods for performing the functions and responsibilities of the One-Stop Operator as outlined in Section IV(C) and delivering the outcomes described in Section V.
- d. The amount of funding requested.
- e. **Signature of the President, CEO, Executive Director, or other authorized representative.**

Programmatic Questions – (15 pages maximum)

Respondent Qualifications

1. **What is your partnership model? Please indicate whether you are submitting as a consortium or single entity.**

- a. If submitting a response as a consortium, explain your rationale for the partnership model and how collaboration will be managed. Identify the lead consortium partner and describe the roles and responsibilities of each partner. **Attach a detailed MOU between all consortium partners.**
 - b. If subcontractors are included in the proposal, explain your rationale for their inclusion and describe the roles and responsibilities of each subcontractor. **Attach a detailed MOU with each subcontractor included in the proposal.**
2. **What experience does your organization have providing services relevant to the functions and responsibilities of the One-Stop Operator as outlined in Section IV(C), including services similar in scope, complexity, and scale?**
- a. Describe your organization's project management experience within the past three (3) years. Describe the nature and scope of the work performed and quantify the scale of work in terms of contract amount and number of personnel and/or participating entities.
 - b. Describe your organization's relationship management experience within the past (3) years, including experience (1) developing and facilitating complex partner relationships; (2) facilitating collaboration across multiple partners; (3) negotiating; and/or (4) resolving conflicts and mediating between partners.
 - c. Describe your experience developing and implementing continuous improvement processes within the past three (3) years. Describe the nature and scope of the processes implemented and quantify the work in terms of contract amount, complexity and scale of processes, and/or other relevant parameters. Describe methodologies and technologies used.
 - d. Describe your organization's relevant subject matter experience within the past three (3) years, including experience: (1) operating workforce development programs; (2) operating social service programs; and/or (3) working with WIOA One-Stop Partners.
 - e. Describe your organization's experience working in Chicago and/or Suburban Cook County and the surrounding region within the past three (3) years. Explain your understanding of the social and economic challenges facing the region and describe how your organization has provided or tailored services to address these challenges.
 - f. Describe your organization's experience with data collection and measuring outcomes with the past three (3) years.
 - g. **Attach three (3) letters of reference that attest to your organization's experience in the areas described in (a) through (f) above.**
3. **What is your staffing plan and what are the qualifications of individual staff who will perform the work of the One-Stop Operator, and how does the organization develop staff professionally?**
- a. Provide the name and title of each individual staff who will perform the services of the One-Stop Operator. Describe the relevant education and training, professional experience, skills, and other characteristics that qualify each to perform the proposed role. **Attach a current resume (with up-to-date information on current title and functions) for each proposed staff. Attach a job description for each proposed staff position that has not yet been hired.**
 - b. Specify the annual percent FTE budgeted for each staff (specify title) who will perform the work of the One-Stop Operator. Provide a detailed explanation of the role each staff will play in executing the proposed program design.
 - c. Describe your organization's professional development policies and practices. How will your organization develop proposed staff to ensure that they maintain current knowledge and skills required for the scope of work? What development activities and resources does your organization provide internally to staff? What external development activities and resources

do you make available to staff? Describe how managers and supervisors support staff development.

Program Design:

- 4. How will your organization deliver the One-Stop Operator scope of services outlined by this RFP in Section IV(C): Functions and Responsibilities to accomplish the objectives described in Section V(A): Performance?**
 - a. Describe the strategies, methods, and specific activities your organization will undertake to successfully perform each of the functions and responsibilities of the One-Stop Operator as outlined in Section IV(C).
 - b. How do your proposed strategies and methods address impediments to coordination and collaboration, such as organizational idiosyncrasies and incompatible interests?
 - c. How do you propose to improve service integration between One-Stop Partners to ultimately improve WIOA customer experience? How will you measure service integration and customer experience improvements?
- 5. How will your organization maintain neutrality in its dealings with each of the WIOA One-Stop Partners and all other relevant partners and stakeholders in performing the functions and responsibilities of the One-Stop Operator?**
 - a. **If your organization is a current provider of program services under WIOA Title I-B or Title II at a One-Stop center (or its satellite site) within The Partnership's system,** describe your proposed policies and procedures for ensuring neutral treatment of all One-Stop Partners and other relevant partners when performing the functions and responsibilities of the One-Stop Operator.
 - b. If you did not respond to part (a) above, identify any conflicts of interest that may arise from your organization's performance of One-Stop Operator services in LWIA 7 and your proposed policies and procedures for ensuring neutral treatment of all One-Stop Partners and other relevant partners when performing the functions and responsibilities of the One-Stop Operator.

Fiscal Questions

- a. What is your organization's legal status/registration? Briefly describe the entity's statutory reporting requirements.
- b. Describe the leveraged resources that the organization will utilize to perform this scope of work. These may include in-kind or cash contributions, staff effort, space, or other revenue, including revenue from fee-for-service work. List each source of leveraged resources, the dollar value, and the function of each leveraged resource (e.g., to spread operating costs or to broaden the scope of services, etc.). Note that budgets must support this information with a breakdown of the funding from each source as it is utilized for this scope of work.
- c. Describe your organization's fiscal capacity. Provide the organization's total annual budget, and describe any current projects valued at over \$100,000.
- d. Does your organization perform its own accounting? If not, indicate the name, address, contact person, phone number, and email address of the accounting firm. What accounting software does the contracted third party utilize?
- e. If your organization performs its own accounting, describe the accounting and financial procedures and system of oversight. What accounting software does your organization utilize? What is the

current and/or proposed organizational structure of your organization's accounting department?
Attach an organizational chart for the accounting department.

- f. Does your organization have an accounting system that allows for the proper recording of project financial transactions, including the allocation of expenditures in accordance with the respective components, disbursement categories, and sources of funds? If not, what accounting system will be used for the project? **Attach a chart of accounts.**
- g. Are the following functional responsibilities performed by different units or persons: (1) authorization to execute a transaction; (2) recording of the transaction; (3) custody of assets involved in the transaction; and (4) reconciliation of bank accounts and subsidiary ledgers? Are the functions of ordering, receiving, accounting for, and paying for goods and services appropriately segregated? **Complete and attach The Partnership's Segregation of Duties Worksheet.**
- h. Describe your organization's payroll system, including internal controls for accuracy and validity. What is the method for documenting employee time? Are time studies utilized? If so, how are they prepared?
- i. Does your organization have adequate policies and procedures to guide fiscal activities and ensure staff accountability? **Please attach a fiscal policies and procedures manual if applicable.**

In addition to the attachments described above in the Fiscal Questions, submit the following **required fiscal attachments** as applicable:

- **IRS W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification:** All respondents must provide a completed form W-9 regardless of organization type. Form W-9 may be downloaded from the IRS website at <https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/about-form-w-9>.
- **IRS 501(c)(3) Tax Exempt Determination Letter:** If applicable, submit a current letter (dated within the last three years) from the IRS verifying that the responding organization is exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- **Certificate of Good Standing:** Any respondent incorporated as a not-for-profit under the General Not for Profit Corporation Act of 1986 (805 ILCS 105/101.01 et seq.) is required to submit a Certificate of Good Standing from the Illinois Secretary of State's Office, Department of Business Services. A Certificate may be obtained through the Illinois Secretary of State's website at <https://www.ilsos.gov/corporatellc/index.jsp>. The Department may be reached at (217) 782-6875; (217) 782-6961; or TDD (800) 252-2904.
Any respondent organized as a charitable not-for-profit (including any individual, group of individuals, association, or other legal entity) under the Charitable Trust Act (760 ILCS 55/1 et seq.) is required to submit a Certificate of Good Standing from the Office of Illinois Attorney General, Charitable Trust Bureau, 100 W. Randolph St, 11th floor, Chicago, IL 60601. The Bureau may be reached at (312) 814-2595 and TDD: (312) 814-3374.
- **Most Recent Audited Financial Statements:** Include Single Audit (if applicable), management letter, and federal and state tax returns (or 990 / AG990-IL informational returns). Entities whose total public contributions (fund-raising activities) in a single year are below the State of Illinois audit threshold³ should provide their most recent 2-year comparative financial statements (e.g., statements of financial position, statements of activities, statements of cash flows, and statements of functional expenses) if applicable.

³ Per 225 ILCS 460/4-Solicitation for Charity Act, the audit threshold for charitable organizations is gross receipts of \$300,000, or if the charity used a paid professional fund raiser and raised contributions in excess of \$25,000.

- **List of Board Members:** All non-governmental respondents must submit a list of current board member names, affiliations and titles, business mailing addresses (other than responding entity's address), e-mail addresses, and phone numbers.

C. Budget

Budget forms and instructions are posted with this RFP on The Partnership's website at <https://chicookworks.org/our-network/request-for-proposals/>.

Submit the following required items:

- 1) Budget (Excel workbook inclusive of all sheets/tabs) – submit electronic copy in Excel format
- 2) Budget Narrative Form

Private for-profit organizations should indicate anticipated program-related fixed fees over program costs in the relevant sheet of the Budget. Fixed Fees will be negotiated as a separate element of cost during the grant agreement negotiations. In negotiating fixed fees, the following factors will be considered: (1) the complexity of the work involved; (2) risk borne by the grant recipient; (3) the grant recipient's investment; (4) the amount of subcontracting; (5) the quality of its past performance; and (6) the industry profit rates in the surrounding geographical area for similar work. Further, the fixed fee amount may not exceed 7% of the total other cost categories (less pass through). For more information, see Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership Policy Letter, "Cost Plus Fixed Fee" at <https://workforceboard.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/360016307011-Cost-Plus-Fixed-Fee-Policy>

Please note, the policy on profit, stated profit levels, and procedures for determining and paying profit are all subject to change in keeping with Federal, State, or local regulations, or Chicago Cook Workforce Innovation Board policy.

SECTION VII. Submittal Procedure and Requirements

A. Submittal Procedure and Format

To be considered for funding, respondents must submit a complete response to this RFP as described above in Section VI(A): All Required Submittal Documents. Narrative responses may not exceed page limits specified above in Section VI(B) Proposal Questions. Page limits exclude all attachments.

All proposals must be submitted in **electronic form**. Any material considered proprietary must be so designated by annotation within the document.

For the purposes of electronic submission, originals are scans of paper documents that contain **original signatures in blue ink** of the President, CEO, or equivalent person with legal signature authority for the organization and **marked "Original."**

If your organization is unable to provide scanned signature originals, include unsigned forms in your proposal and include the following statement in the email body of your proposal submission:
"Respondent requires electronic signature follow-up."

The Partnership will contact your organization to obtain the electronic signature of its authorized signatory following receipt of your proposal. Please note that the electronic signature process may occur after the proposal submittal deadline. Proposals that include unsigned forms but are otherwise complete will be considered complete at the time of submission so long as respondents comply with the instructions herein regarding electronic signature follow-up.

Narrative responses must be formatted as follows:

- 8.5 x 11-inch (letter size)
- One-inch margins
- 12-point font
- Double spacing
- Numbered pages with organization name in footer
- Page break for each new section with clear section header

Submit your complete RFP **by email** with sections organized as follows:

Subject Line of Email	“WIOA OSO –” + Organization Name
Body of Email	“WIOA One-Stop Operator RFP” List of Email Attachments Organization Name Organization Address Contact Person for Proposal Contact Email and Phone Number **Include statement re: electronic signature follow-up if applicable**
Attachment 1 Named “OSO 2024_ OrganizationName_ Checklist” As PDF	One-Stop Operator Proposal Checklist
Attachment 2 Named “OSO 2024_ OrganizationName_ Program” As <u>one</u> PDF	Organizational Information Executive Summary Program Narrative Consortium Partner or Subcontractor MOUs Staff Resumes and/or Job Descriptions Letters of Reference Budget Budget Narrative
Attachment 3 Named “OSO 2024_ OrganizationName_ Fiscal” As <u>one</u> PDF	Fiscal Narrative Fiscal Questionnaire Cost Allocation Plan Indirect Rate Approval Document Conflict of Interest Policy Accounting Department Organizational Chart Chart of Accounts Segregation of Duties Worksheet Fiscal Policies and Procedures Manual IRS W-9 IRS 501(c)(3) Letter Certificate of Good Standing Most Recent Financial Audit List of Board Members
Attachment 4 Named “OSO 2024_ OrganizationName_ BudgetNarrative” As PDF	Budget Narrative
Attachment 5 Named “OSO 2024_ OrganizationName_ Budget” As Excel	Budget

B. Submittal Address and Deadline

A Letter of Intent is strongly encouraged but not mandatory. Letters of Intent allow the Partnership to plan for volume of proposals and resources if needed. If your organization is submitting a Letter of Intent, it must be received by 4:00pm May 2nd, 2024. Please fill out the Letter of Intent Form here:

[One-Stop Operator Letter of Intent Form](#)

Completed RFP responses must be submitted **electronically to:**
OSORFPSubmission@chicookworks.org.

RFP responses must be received **before or by 4:00 PM CST on Thursday, May 16, 2024. Proposals received after this date and time will not be accepted.**

Technical Problems with Submission

If you experience a technical problem when submitting your proposal (e.g. file size is too large), immediately email RFPquestions@chicookworks.org with subject line "OSO submission problem" to explain the problem.

If you experience a technical problem when submitting your proposal **on the day of the submittal deadline**, email RFPquestions@chicookworks.org as instructed above and call:

One-Stop Operator RFP Submission Support Hotline: 312.848.7174*

*Calls to this number will only be answered on the day of the submittal deadline. Do not call this number at any other time.

SECTION VIII. Evaluation Process and Criteria

A. Proposal Review Process

Proposals will be evaluated by a team of reviewers, which may include Partnership staff, Workforce Innovation Board members, and outside experts.

Review of Proposal Narrative: Members of the review team will conduct an in-depth assessment of the narrative sections of each proposal. Reviewers will use a scoring instrument based on the evaluation criteria given in the RFP.

Fiscal Review: The Partnership will conduct a fiscal review of all qualified proposals including, budgets, audits, leveraged funds, and responses to questions related to fiscal operations. The Partnership reserves the right to review and request further information regarding the respondent's financial situation, if not sufficiently outlined in the submitted proposal. The Partnership reserves the right to assess the risk posed by any recent, current or potential litigation, court action, investigation, audit, bankruptcy, receivership, financial insolvency, merger, acquisition, or other event that might affect an entity's ability to operate the requested program.

The review team will perform an in-depth evaluation of all responsive proposals based upon the criteria herein. Prior to its final funding decision, The Partnership may also:

- a. Meet with representatives of the responding entity to discuss the proposed program and budget;
- b. Identify and/or negotiate program or budget changes the responding entity must make as a condition of funding; and

- c. Identify other documentation the entity must provide as a condition of funding.

Based on its evaluation of proposals, The Partnership will select a respondent for recommendation to the Service Committee of the WIB and full WIB for approval. Once approved by the WIB, The Partnership may award grant agreements to the successful respondent.

An entity’s failure to submit a complete proposal or to respond in whole or in part to RFP requirements may cause The Partnership to deem the proposal non-responsive and thus ineligible for review. Entities that fail to meet the evaluation criteria specified herein, or proposals that do not meet the service needs will not receive further consideration for funding. Failure to meet evaluation criteria can include, but is not limited to, non-responsive language in the submission, failure to clearly address all RFP questions, lack of required documentation, and proposing services that do not meet the specified scope of work.

B. Evaluation Criteria

All eligible proposals will be scored according to the evaluation criteria set forth below.

CRITERIA	POINT VALUE
Program Proposal	
Respondent Qualifications (Q1 – Q3)	30
Program Design (Q4 – Q5)	40
Fiscal Proposal	30
Total Points Available	100

SECTION IX. Solicitation and Terms

A. Period of Solicitation

This RFP will be released on Monday April 8, 2024. The deadline to submit a response to the RFP is Thursday, May 16, 2024 by no later than 4:00 pm (CST).

B. RFP Inquires, Questions, and Answers

All questions pertaining to the RFP must be received in writing via email at RFPquestions@chicookworks.org by 5:00 pm (CST) on Monday, May 6, 2024. Use subject line “OSO.” Questions received after May 6, 2024 will not receive a response.

The primary mode of communication between The Partnership and potential bidders will occur via <https://chicookworks.org/our-network/request-for-proposals/>. The Partnership anticipates posting answers to all questions by Friday, May 10, 2024. A Question and Answer page will appear on The Partnership website at <https://chicookworks.org/our-network/request-for-proposals/>. It is the bidder’s responsibility to check the website page frequently to stay apprised throughout the process. Only those questions directed to the above email or received on the Bidder Webinar will be answered. Questions will not be answered over the phone or in person.

C. Bidder Webinar

The Partnership will host a Bidder Webinar for all prospective respondents to this RFP, where Partnership staff will review program information, key proposal requirements, and contract terms, as well as respond to questions. Attendance is highly recommended.

A brief period will be reserved on the Bidder Webinar for questions. Every effort will be made to answer questions posed on the Webinar; however, no answers are final until posted on the website. Questions not answered on the Webinar should be submitted to RFPquestions@chicookworks.org with subject line “OSO.”

Other than during the Bidder Webinar, staff members are unable to provide technical assistance during the application process. Please do NOT contact staff directly with any questions. All questions should be directed to RFPquestions@chicookworks.org with subject line “OSO.”

The Bidder Webinar will be held on **Thursday, April 18, 2024 from 10:00am – 12:00pm PM CST**. In order to attend, you must first register for the Bidder Webinar at:

<https://chicookworks-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZltd-2rqj8oGNLzTLEesj4bF6z8wdStC05X>

D. Limitations

The Partnership shall not pay for any costs incurred by the applicant(s) in the completion of this RFP. Submission of an RFP does not, in any way, obligate The Partnership to award a contract. The Partnership reserves the right to accept or reject any applications, to negotiate with all qualified sources, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP, if it is in the best interest of The Partnership to do so. The Partnership may require the successful applicant(s) to participate in contract negotiations prior to contract finalization. The Partnership shall reserve the right to terminate, with or without cause, any contract entered into as a result of this RFP process.

E. Disclaimers

All contract awards by The Partnership, pursuant to this RFP, are contingent upon the availability of funds. The respondent is liable for any and all costs incurred prior to final authorization by the Chicago Cook Workforce Innovation Board and the execution of a contract with The Partnership.

The Partnership also reserves the right to:

- Rescind an award and/or reallocate the funding to another applicant should the successful respondent fail to execute its grant agreement in a timely fashion;
- Increase funding levels for any or all entities selected pursuant to this RFP, if additional funds become available, based on performance, effectiveness and other details;
- Change and amend as necessary its policies or procedures governing the delivery or scope of services described herein; and
- Perform an assessment of the risk that any recent, current, or potential litigation, court action, investigation, audit, bankruptcy, receivership, financial insolvency, merger, acquisition, or other event might have on an entity’s ability to operate a proposed program.

F. Notice of Award

All respondents will be notified by email as to their award status. Unsuccessful respondents who wish to obtain information on the evaluation of their proposal should submit a written request to this effect to The Partnership’s Senior Contract Specialist at cmartin@chicookworks.org. Unsuccessful respondents are encouraged to re-apply in subsequent funding cycles.

G. Protest Procedures to Resolve Procurement Disputes

Any applicant desiring to protest a determination concerning this RFP must file a protest with The Partnership no later than five (5) calendar days following notification of the Chicago Cook Workforce Innovation Board vote. All protests shall be submitted in writing to cmartin@chicookworks.org and must specify in detail the grounds of the protest, the facts and evidence in support thereof, and the remedy sought. The Partnership shall resolve any protest based upon the written protest and any oral and

written response thereto provided by The Partnership staff, in conjunction with the WIB's consideration of the application and the staff recommendation. Resolution of the protest shall be by WIB vote and shall be deemed final. In the absence of a timely and properly submitted written protest, no party responding to this RFP shall be eligible for any remedy.

H. Disallowed Costs and Cancellations

The successful bidder(s) must accept liability for all aspects of any Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program conducted under contract with The Partnership. The successful bidder(s) will be liable for any disallowed costs or illegal expenditures of funds or program operations conducted. The Partnership reserves the right to cancel an award immediately if new state or federal regulations or policy makes it necessary to change the program purpose or content substantially, or to prohibit such a program.

I. Contracting

The contract award will not be final until The Partnership and the bidder have executed a mutually satisfactory contractual agreement. The Partnership reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposal submitted. No program activity may begin prior to the WDB approval of the award and execution of an award letter and/or contractual agreement between the successful bidder and The Partnership. Reductions in the funding level of any contract resulting from this solicitation process may be considered during the contract period when a bidder fails to meet expenditure, participant, and/or outcome goals specified in the contract or when anticipated funding is not forthcoming from federal or state governments. The Partnership reserves the right to determine both the number and the funding levels of contracts finally awarded. Such determination will depend upon overall fund availability and other factors arising during the proposal review process.

J. Cost and Negotiations

The Partnership reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received and to negotiate with any and all offers on modifications to proposals. Bids submitted which are over the maximum amount of funds specified for this RFP will be rejected. The proposal warrants that the costs quoted for services in response to the RFP are not in excess of those that would be charged any other individual for the same services performed by the bidder.

K. Modification of Contracts

Any contract awarded pursuant to this RFP may be unilaterally modified by The Partnership upon written notice to the contractor under the following circumstances:

- a. Contractor fails to meet performance and service expectations set forth in the contract; or
- b. The federal or state government increases, reduces or withdraws funds allocated to The Partnership, which impact services solicited under this RFP; or
- c. There is a change in federal or state legislation and/or their regulations, local laws, or applicable policies and procedures.