



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
FOR  
MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION  
OF  
WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS OF CENTRAL TEXAS  
WORKFORCE CENTERS**

**Released by**

**WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS OF CENTRAL TEXAS  
WORKFORCE BOARD**

**Issued: January 15, 2021, 5:00 p.m.**

**Letter of Intent to Bid: January 29, 2021, 5:00 p.m.**

**Mandatory Bidders Conference Call: February 3, 2021, 2:00 p.m.**

**Proposals Due: February 26, 2021, 5:00 p.m.**

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**Serving the Texas Counties of Bell, Coryell, Lampasas, Milam, Mills,  
Hamilton, and San Saba.**

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## Section 1 – Introduction

Workforce Solutions of Central Texas (WSCT) appreciates your interest in providing services to the Central Texas Region. To facilitate the development of this proposal, potential Bidders will have the opportunity to submit questions regarding this Request for Proposals (RFP) and its process. Questions must be submitted in writing via email no later than 12:00 noon on January 29, 2021 to Workforce Solutions Bids ([wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com](mailto:wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com)). A mandatory bidder's conference will be on February 3, 2021, all interested Proposers may join the conference by emailing for log in information.

### Overview

WSCT is a publicly funded, not-for-profit organization. WSCT's funds for services are received through formula-based allocations from the U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and U.S. Department of Agriculture. Funds are distributed through the Texas Workforce Commission to WSCT.

WSCT serves the Texas Counties of Bell, Coryell, Lampasas, Milam, Mills, Hamilton, and San Saba. The local Workforce System employees provide services that:

- Connect businesses with skilled employees, and
- Assist job seekers by ensuring they have the skills, abilities and resources necessary to be competitive in the global job market.

WSCT creates futures by bringing people and jobs together. Its mission is to provide quality education, training and labor market services which give employers and job seekers of the region competitive advantage in the global economy.

WSCT is under the leadership of a local Workforce Board. The 27-member Board includes representatives from local businesses, education agencies and community-based organizations. The Board is made up of 51% business representation including local large, medium, and small business members. Governor George W. Bush certified the local Workforce Board on July 22, 1996. The Workforce Board received not-for-profit, 501(c)(3), designation in 1997.

In Central Texas, targeted populations are those with barriers that require additional assistance to prepare for employment, find a job, advance in a career, and/or retain employment. Central Texas provides coordinated service options for the following targeted populations:

- Veterans and Military Spouses (service priority),
- Low Income Adults,
- Dislocated Workers,
- Disadvantaged Youth,
- Unemployment Insurance Claimants,
- Individuals on Public Assistance,
- Individuals with Disabilities, and
- Individuals with Low Literacy and Limited English Proficiency.

## **Section 2 – General Requirements and Purpose for the Proposal**

### **Purpose of the Request for Proposal (RFP)**

The WSCT Board is soliciting proposals from eligible, qualified and experienced entities to effectively manage and operate the Workforce Centers in the Central Texas Workforce Area. Specifically, the RFP is soliciting proposals to manage and staff the four Workforce Centers located in Central Texas. Proposer's staff will provide direct job seeker and business services for Workforce programs funded through the local Workforce Board.

As a result of this RFP, the Board expects to enter into a contractual relationship with a single entity for the operation and management of its Workforce Centers and services. The contractor will be responsible for the management and staffing of the Workforce Center system and all programs and services accessed through the system. The contractor will also be expected to coordinate with other agencies/programs co-located in the Workforce Centers, including but not limited to, Veterans Employment Services, Adult Education and Literacy, and Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

Services solicited under this RFP are procured under the competitive negotiation method of procurement. It is WSCT's intent to negotiate a subaward with the successful proposer. The resulting subaward will establish a subrecipient relationship that involves fiscal, administrative, monitoring and programmatic responsibilities for the workforce development programs in our region. The Board expects to award one contract for the management of the Workforce Centers. Changes to the scope of work and/or resultant contract shall be subject to the availability of funds, successful contract negotiations, applicable procurement standards, and the laws, rules, regulations and policies governing the programs funded under this RFP.

### **Scope of Work**

Prospective proposers should carefully review the following information in order to gain a better understanding and appreciation of what the Board expects from a contractor. Workforce Center operations will include, but are not limited to, the delivery of allowable services and activities under the following programs funded by the Board:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adults, Youth, and Dislocated Workers (including Rapid Response activities),
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) – Choices,
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T),
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA),
- Wagner-Peyser Employment Services,
- Non-Custodial Parent (NCP),
- Child Care Services,
- Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA),
- Summer Earn and Learn (SEAL) and Student Hireability,
- Business Services Assistance,

- National Dislocated Worker (NDW) and Military Families Grants,
- Registered Apprenticeship Programs, and
- Additional programs as received.

\*Note: Wagner-Peyser Employment Services (ES) are provided by staff located at our Workforce Centers who are employed by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). The contractor will be responsible for the integration of ES services and the day-to-day direction of ES program staff as prescribed under the Texas Model.

The selected contractor must contribute to the achievement of the Board's mission, vision, and goals, as well as TWC contracted performance measures (See Supplemental Information).

The Board seeks providers who are capable of designing a seamless service delivery system that maximizes customer satisfaction and promotes ease of access to services for all Workforce Solutions customers. Proposing entities should describe an integrated service delivery system designed to achieve this purpose.

### **Eligible Proposers**

Eligible providers may include the following:

- Government agencies or governmental units, such as: Local, County, Regional governments;
- Indian Tribes, Tribal organizations, Alaska Native entities, Indian-controlled organizations serving Indians, or Native Hawaiian organizations (collectively referred to herein as "Indian Tribes");
- Community-based organizations, not-for-profit entities, or workforce intermediaries;
- Other interested organizations that are capable of carrying out the duties of the one-stop operator, such as a local chamber of commerce, other business organization, or labor organization;
- Private for-profit entities;

To be fully inclusive and promote open competition, WSCT notes that the above proposer definitions can include:

- Partnerships, consortiums or joint ventures may submit a proposal. All parties must be eligible proposers and a signed certification (Attachment D – Certification of Bidder) must be obtained from each party attesting to their agreement to all terms of the proposal and any resulting contract, if awarded.  
Proposals from partnerships, consortiums or joint ventures must clearly identify the lead entity that will be responsible for overall operations, financial accountability, legal obligations, and all reporting requirements. A copy of the partnership/consortium/joint venture agreement must be submitted as part of the proposal. The agreement must detail the roles and responsibilities of each party to the agreement. WSCT reserves the right to have such arrangements reviewed by legal counsel to ensure that they are legally binding.

- Proposals may be submitted using a Managing Director/Professional Employer Organization Model (MD/PEO). A contract awarded under this model will be between the Board and the entity employing the Managing Director only. It is the sole responsibility of the proposing MD/PEO entity to provide workforce center staff using a PEO or staff leasing companies.  
If submitting a proposal using a MD/PEO model and there is an existing agreement, a copy of the agreement must be included in the proposal. If an agreement is not currently in place, please describe the plan to obtain one including the timeline and potential staffing companies.

### **Ineligible Proposers**

- Individuals are not eligible proposers.
- Entities that are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation in any procurement of non-procurement programs by any Federal department or agency are not eligible to respond to this RFP.
- Any entity that has an outstanding Unemployment Insurance overpayment balance payable to the State of Texas or any for-profit corporation that is delinquent in its franchise tax payments to the State of Texas is ineligible to respond to this RFP.
- Entities that directly provide developmental services (training or education services) are ineligible to respond to this RFP.
- Elementary and other secondary schools are not eligible to become a Workforce Center operator.

### **Proposer Competency**

The selected contractor must have the technical competence, knowledge and expertise, management and administrative capabilities and capacity, professional staff, financial resources and stability, and administrative and fiscal systems to carry-out the work described in this RFP. Proposers must meet high standards of public service and fiduciary responsibility.

The Board requires assurance that the proposer's performance of the terms and conditions of the contract will be undertaken in accordance with the highest-level of integrity and business ethics. The selected contractor must be capable of implementing a system of self-monitoring, including the review of key data related to performance, quality assurance, financial integrity and accuracy, and management of Workforce Center operations.

Proposers are responsible for being knowledgeable of all laws, regulations, rules, and policies of the funding sources identified in this RFP. WSCT will provide training on any Board-specific documents, policies and procedures, as necessary, to the selected contractor. A copy of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and regulations may be found on the U.S. Department of Labor web page at <http://www.doleta.gov/wioa/>. Copies of other pertinent statutes and regulations may be found through the Texas Workforce Commission web page at <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/partners/laws-rules>.

If the Board determines, at its sole discretion, that the potential awardee of a contract is not responsible, that it does not possess the administrative, fiscal, and/or technical resources and capabilities necessary to successfully perform under the terms and conditions of a contract, it shall not enter into a contract and will terminate any contract immediately if already in place.

### **Activities and Services Solicited in this RFP**

The services solicited in this RFP include operation and management of WSCT Workforce Centers. The operation of the Workforce Centers includes, but is not limited to, the provision of allowable services and activities funded by the Board as listed on page 3, under Scope of Work.

Other program services may be included based upon availability of funds for use at the Workforce Center level. WSCT reserves the right to assign the selected contractor responsibility for managing additional workforce programs/services based on additional funds that may be awarded or made available to the Board.

### **Activities and Services Not Solicited In This RFP**

The following programs, functions, activities, and services are not solicited under this RFP:

- Planning, general administration, and general oversight of programs and contractors,
- Occupational training,
- Facilities to house operations,
- Equipment for operation of the Workforce Centers, including fax machines, telephones, copiers, printers, furniture, and computer systems (desktops/laptops/servers),
- General IT services including IT personnel to assist with break/fix tasks, general service requests, infrastructure capacity planning, and maintenance, and
- Child Care Quality Activities, including Child Care Training, Texas School Ready, and Texas Rising Star activities, local match agreements, and child care provider payments.

### **Benefits**

The Board is committed to maintaining a program of quality and exceptional performance, as demonstrated through its being named a Texas Award for Performance Excellence Recipient and being listed as one of the Best Companies to Work for in Texas for 13 years. Therefore, WSCT requires a stable staffing structure that gives preference to current Workforce center staff including, as one example of staff stability, the opportunity to retain employment during the initial six-month probationary period of the contract with their current salaries and benefits.

Proposers are expected to provide benefits comparable to those currently provided to Workforce Center staff. If an alternative benefit structure is proposed, please describe variations. Current benefits include:

- Medical, Life and Dental Insurance – Regular full-time employees receive paid insurance benefits.
- Retirement Plan – All regular full-time employees are required to participate in the Retirement Plan. Employees contribute 3% of their salary and the MD/PEO contributes 7%.
- Workers’ Compensation – Employees are covered by the Workers' Compensation Insurance Program with the premium paid through a MD/PEO model. This coverage provides medical and salary continuation payments to employees who receive bona fide, on-the-job, work-related injuries.
- Social Security – All employees are covered by Social Security.
- Unemployment Insurance – All employees are covered under the Texas Unemployment Compensation Insurance Program and the MD/PEO pays for this benefit. This program provides payments for unemployed workers in certain circumstances.
- Holidays – Holidays are days designated by the Board during which WSCT offices are closed on what would otherwise be regular business days. Employees are paid their normal rate of pay for the designated holidays.
- Annual leave – All regular employees are eligible to accrue paid annual leave. Employees are encouraged to take regular vacations at least annually. Regular full-time employees earn annual leave as follows:
  - Less than five year of service – 9 hours per month, 108 hours annually.
  - Five but less than 10 years of service – 12 hours per month, 144 hours annually.
  - Ten years or more of service – 17 hours per month, 204 hours annually.

Employees may carry over the unused annual leave up to 240 hours to the next calendar year. Unused annual leave will be paid to the employee upon separation. Temporary full-time or part-time employees do not earn annual leave.

- Sick Leave – Regular full-time employees earn twelve hours of paid sick leave per month. Sick leave is credited to an employee's account on the last day of each month, and is therefore available for use in the subsequent month. Sick leave not used in a calendar year may be carried over to the next calendar year, up to 720 hours. Unused sick leave is canceled upon termination of employment, without compensation to the employee.
- Annual Employee Appraisals, Incentives, and One-Time Merit Payments – The staff incentive plan is based on maintaining an approved classification plan, current and accurate job descriptions for all staff, a performance appraisal system consistently applied, and available financial resources in the budget. To receive incentive payment, the employee’s annually appraisal and overall job performance and productivity must be consistently at or above normally expected or required standards with no adverse personal actions the preceding 12 months from the appraisal date. The employee must have been employed for at least 12 continuous months prior to the award of the incentive.
  - An employee with “meets standards” on their annual appraisal may receive a corresponding base pay increase (per approved Classification Plan). No additional merit performance incentive is authorized.
  - An employee with “exceeds standards” on the annual performance appraisal may receive a base pay increase and a one-time performance incentive in an amount determined by the Chief Operating Officer based on budget.



- An employee with “demonstrated excellence” on the annual performance appraisal may receive a base pay increase and a one-time performance incentive in an amount determined by the Chief Operating Officer based on budget.

Performance incentives are earned annually and are renewable based on the performance appraisal rating. If the employee is promoted within 60 days of the date that an annual appraisal would have been given for the job they are leaving, the employee may receive an earned incentive following the salary adjustment for the promotion. Part-time employees are eligible on a pro-rata basis per number of hours worked. Incentives are subject to change due to budget or other factors determined by the Chief Operating Officer.

One Time Merit Provisions: Employees at the top of their pay range for their classification may receive a one-time merit increase. A one-time merit increase is a lump sum payment in the month they would be eligible for a salary adjustment. They can also be eligible for a one-time performance incentive depending on their performance rating.

## Staff Development

The development of all employees within WSCT’s organization is very important to the Board. WSCT is a Registered DOL Apprenticeship site in which all employees are expected to continuously develop themselves in their area of expertise within our registered apprentice program, Workforce Professional Apprenticeship. WSCT has a robust training program utilizing an online learning management system in which WSCT covers all costs. Therefore, the Proposer should not include staff development in the proposal. Participation in the Registered DOL Apprenticeship is linked to the performance incentives that the employees may receive during their annual performance appraisal rating. Employees are mentored throughout their Apprenticeship as they develop and show competency on predetermined attributes. When an employee has completed the DOL Apprenticeship, they will have earned an industry recognized Journeymen Level DOL Certificate as a Workforce Professional.

## Performance Measures

Annually, WSCT receives proposed targets from the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). Targets are generally (a) based on past performance, or (b) set exactly the same for every Workforce Area in Texas. Central Texas is a high-performing, award-winning Workforce Area. Therefore, when targets vary, Central Texas’ targets tend to be higher than many other Workforce Areas in Texas. For the current performance year, the following contracted performance measures were set in accordance with applicable laws, including but not limited to WIOA § 116(c):

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Target</b>
• Adult Employed Q2 Post Exit	76.5%
• Adult Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit	\$6,500
• Adult Employed Q4 Post Exit	76.2%

• Adult Credential Rate	87.7%
• Dislocated Worker Employed Q2 Post Exit	82.3%
• Dislocated Worker Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit	\$8,600
• Dislocated Worker Employed Q4 Post Exit	82.1%
• Dislocated Worker Credential Rate	82.8%
• Youth Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit	76.8%
• Youth Employed/Enrolled Q4 Post Exit	65.1%
• Youth Credential Rate	62.5%
• # of Employers Receiving Workforce Assistance	2,195
• Choices Full Work Rate	50%
• Average # of Children in Care	2,690

The selected proposer must have a thorough knowledge of workforce programs and their performance requirements. The selected contractor is responsible for achieving performance standards and providing quality services to workforce system customers. At a minimum the selected contractor must meet assigned TWC contracted performance measures and be competitive with other Workforce Boards in Texas. The Board will assign to the proposer additional performance measures or changes as received by TWC. The Board reserves the right to adjust, change and/or add additional measures as deemed appropriate. Performance measures are subject to change based on TWC and/or Board action.

### **Customer Served**

For the 2019 Performance Year, the following reflects total customers served by WSCT:

- Employers: 2,191
- Job Seekers: 12,436
- Unemployment Insurance Claimants: 5,744
- Veterans: 2,963
- Job Seekers Sponsored in Training: 340
- Transitioning from Public Assistance (Choices + SNAP): 1,607
- Ex-Offenders: 294
- Youth: 4,384
- Out of School Youth: 160
- Children Sponsored in Child Care: 2,815

### **Contract Timeline**

The contract resulting from this procurement will begin August 1, 2021 and shall not extend beyond a total of Four (4) years. Contract extensions will be considered in one year increments and based on contractor's satisfactory performance as well as availability of funds.

Complete operations will begin August 1, 2021 with a four-week transitional period with costs allowed from July 1, 2021 to July 31, 2021. WSCT may vary the programs and/or contract

period as necessary and shall ensure compliance with all program requirements and conditions in doing so. The contract will be monitored for performance on a monthly basis and may be amended or terminated if performance does not meet WSCT standards. Contracts may be expanded to include any other programs that WSCT deems necessary and appropriate.

### **Information Technology (IT) Requirements**

The selected contractor, including all employees, must comply with all Information Technology access and user and security policies and requirements of the Board and/or the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). Required IT platforms include:

- The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST) – used for intake, eligibility determination, assessment, service, tracking, and reporting system for Child Care, SNAP, Choices, WIOA, and TAA programs.
- TWIST Web – Used to track and manage Claims and Allocations for Child Care programs.
- TWIST Web Reports – used to access canned reports for performance tracking and management for all Workforce programs. Both State-approved and Statewide reports are available and extracts can be run to download client-level data for performance management purposes.
- Work-In-Texas – used as the statewide job matching network. Allows employers to post jobs with advanced job matching capabilities. Allows job seekers to match jobs in the system, build a resume and provides access to career tools.
- VOIS Greeter – used to register all customers visiting each workforce center. VOIS Greeter matches customers up with TWIST and WIT information, allows customers to check in for appointments, and creates an intake common record for new customers. Counts of customer visits can be extracted from this system.
- Health and Human Services' Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS) – provides Workforce with read only access to eligibility and benefit information for Choices and SNAP E&T customers.
- CCAA Administrative Terminal – Allows review of children's attendance for anomalies, missed attendance, etc.
- CCAA Provider Portal – Allows child care providers to access information on children who have swiped in/out of child care centers. Providers use this system to monitor children's attendance.

The proposer should not budget funds related to technology except for cell phones for staff, if the proposer desires to provide these. Technology-related expenses are included in the Board's budget and the Board will make necessary technology purchases, including licensing, software upgrades, replacement parts, and contracting. Workforce center staff currently have Internet and e-mail access through the Workforce Solutions of Central Texas Board. Employment of IT staff will be determined during contract negotiations.

## **Transition Planning**

If selected, proposers must develop a Transition Plan that will support provision of services and related activities with a start date of August 1, 2021. The Board requires that any entity awarded a contract resulting from this RFP:

- Provide current employees with the opportunity to retain employment during the initial six-month probationary period of the contract with their current salaries and benefits;
- Give priority consideration in employment to current employees providing services in the Workforce Centers who may be displaced as a result of this procurement;
- Provide for open enrollment into insurance/benefits for staff transitioned from the previous contractor with coverage available on the first day of employment (August 1, 2021); and
- Subject to negotiation with the Board, agrees to accept rollover of accrued, unused leave time as allowed under the previous contractor's policies for transitioned staff.

## **Equal Opportunity/Nondiscrimination**

As a condition to the award of financial assistance from the Department of Labor under Title I of WIOA, the grant applicant must comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions.

## **Funding**

Funding for all activities and services is contingent upon the receipt of sufficient programs funds from the Texas Workforce Commission and other funding sources of WSCT.

## **Budget**

The proposed budget must support the proposal narrative and include only those costs related to the operation and management of Workforce Centers in the Central Texas area. All costs and budgets must be necessary, reasonable, allowable, and allocable under a federal or state award and meet the general allowability criteria established by the Office of Management and Budget Circulars and/or the Uniform Grant Management Standards, as applicable. Please refer to the TWC Financial Manual for Grants and Contracts for detailed information. Cost reasonableness will be determined by comparing each Proposer's proposed cost to other proposals received and to existing market rates. Other areas of review will include: cost allocation methodology, competitive indirect rate or management fees, overhead costs, profit, budget narrative, and justification of costs. If successful, the proposed budget will serve as a basis for contract negotiations.

For purposes of this procurement, the proposed budget should be limited to administrative and operational costs, including but not limited to: personnel wages; fringe benefits; insurance and bonding; audit services; professional services; indirect costs; management fees; and profit or

performance bonus. Any contract resulting from this procurement shall include a cost allocation plan for any shared costs.

Training, youth work experience, and supportive services will be paid for by the Board and should not be included in the budget. The anticipated costs for these items during the contract will be approximately \$1,200,000.

The cost of facilities, including rent, utilities, phones, copiers, fax machines, technology, maintenance and repair are NOT to be included in the budget. Costs associated with marketing activities related to customer outreach and recruitment are NOT to be included in the budget. These costs are covered by the Board. Training Services and Support Services are not included in the budget. Budgets fluctuate based upon allocated and received grants.

As described in Supplemental Information, The cost of insurance may be included in the proposal budgets. Insurance coverage will be required for:

- Professional Liability \$1,000,000 limit; \$1,000 deductible;
- Employee Bonding \$400,000 limit; \$1,000 deductible;
- General Liability \$3,000,000 general aggregate limit; \$1,000,000 per occurrence to automobile coverage for employees and volunteers using automobiles for work;
- Statutory Workers Compensation and Employers Liability;
- Fidelity Bonding in an amount sufficient to cover the largest cumulative amount of all cash requests submitted on a given day or the cumulative amount of funds on hand at any given point; and
- Errors and Omission Insurance

### **Budget Expectations and Limitations**

When preparing the budget, keep in mind the Board conducts procurement for all workforce equipment, supplies, and facilities. The following costs are NOT to be included in the proposed budget:

- Workforce Center facilities (i.e. rent, utilities, repair and maintenance, janitorial services, security, phone, data systems, servers, copiers, computers, etc.) and
- Marketing activities (i.e. marketing/advertising related to customer outreach and recruitment).

Budgets must include as applicable, but not limited to; salaries, benefits, insurance and bonding, audit services, professional services, indirect costs, profit, performance incentives, fees and all pass through funds.

### **Quality Assurance**

The Board supplies all major programmatic reviews and monitoring activities. The proposer should not budget funds for traditional monitoring reviews. Rather, the proposer should build on-

going, real-time review of staff output and procedures into the staffing plan, perhaps at the supervisory or specialist level, to ensure that errors are minimized and that when errors do occur, they are found quickly and corrected before any formal Quality Assurance reviews occur at the Board, State, or Federal levels.

### **Outstanding Monitoring, Audit or Legal Concerns**

Proposer must disclose and satisfactorily resolve any and all outstanding monitoring and/or audit concerns from any of the proposer's other contracts. Additionally, proposer must disclose any legal judgments, claims, arbitration proceedings, lawsuits or other legal proceedings pending or outstanding (unresolved) against the organization, its owners, officers, and/or principals. Such disclosures must be provided under Attachment G, Question 14 and listed in Attachment P – Listing of Grievances and Legal Actions.

### **Debrief, Grievances, and Appeals Process**

Policy Statement – WSCT Board is the responsible authority for handling complaints, disputes or protests regarding the procurement and proposal selection process at the local level. No protest shall be submitted to the grantor (State) until all administrative remedies at the Grantee (Board) level have been exhausted. This includes, but is not limited to: disputes, claims, protests of selection or non-selection for award, source evaluation or other matters of a contractual or procurement nature. Matters concerning violations of law shall be referred to such authority as may have proper jurisdiction. All proposers will be notified by email of the final results of the procurement process within fifteen (15) working days following the final decision of the Board.

Policy/Procedure for Submitting Appeals – This policy shall apply to appeals by service providers that have applied for an award of grant funds from the Board pursuant to any federal, state or local funded program or activity.

Issues Subject to Appeal – Vendors/proposers/bidders (“Proposer”) affected by procurement actions or decisions of the Board may appeal pursuant to this policy and procedures as to the following issues:

- The action or decision of WSCT is alleged by the Proposer to be in violation of applicable federal and/or state law, regulation or policy regarding procurement and selection; or
- The action or decision of WSCT is alleged by the Proposer to be based upon an error of material and relevant fact(s); or
- The action or decision of WSCT is alleged by the Proposer to be invalid because of an alleged denial of procedural due process (i.e. failure to review a complaint or protest).

Issues NOT Subject to Appeal – Unless substantiated by material and relevant fact(s), the scoring and ranking of proposals is not subject to appeal.

An appeal cannot be submitted based solely on the belief that the appealing party believes their proposal is better than the one selected for contract award.

Proposers who wish to appeal a decision must utilize the following process:

**STEP 1: Request for Debriefing** - Proposers not selected by this procurement process may appeal the decision by submitting, within 10 working days of the receipt of WSCT notification of the procurement decision, a written Request for Debriefing to obtain information on the procurement process and how their proposal or offer was received and ranked. The Request for Debriefing must be sent by emailed to:

Workforce Solutions Bids ([wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com](mailto:wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com))  
Subject line: RFP Management and Operations Request for Debriefing [Proposer's Name]

WSCT shall acknowledge receipt of the Request for Debriefing within 5 working days of receipt, along with the date and time of the scheduled Debriefing. The Debriefing shall be scheduled as soon as possible and no later than 15 working days from the receipt of the Request for Debriefing.

**STEP 2: Debriefing** - The purpose of the debriefing is to promote the exchange of information, explain the proposal evaluation system, and help unsuccessful proposers understand why they were not selected. Debriefings serve an important educational function for new proposers. Debriefings will help to improve the quality of future proposals. Additionally, staff receives direct feedback to help improve future procurements.

**STEP 3: Written Notice of Appeal** - If, after the debriefing, the appealing party wishes to continue with the appeals process, they must submit to WSCT a Notice of Appeal. This written notice must clearly state that it is an appeal and identify the decision being appealed and the name, address, and phone number of appealing party; and the grounds of the appeal. The Notice of Appeal must be received by the WSCT Hearing Officer within 15 working days of the date of the debriefing. The Notice of Appeal must be sent by email to:

Workforce Solutions Bids ([wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com](mailto:wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com))  
Subject line: RFP Management and Operations Notice of Appeal [Proposer's Name]

**STEP 4: Formal Hearing** - Upon receipt of the Notice of Appeal, the WSCT Hearing Officer will contact the proposer to arrange for a Formal Hearing to be held within 15 working days of receipt of the Notice of Appeal. The Formal Hearing will be held either virtually or at a designated place and at a date and time to be mutually acceptable to both parties. The WSCT Hearing Officer shall issue a written final decision resulting from the Formal Hearing within 60 calendar days of receipt of the Notice of Appeal.

**STEP 5: Appeal to State** - If the appeal is not resolved at the WSCT Formal Hearing, the proposer may appeal to Texas Workforce Commission within 14 calendar days of the mailing date of the WSCT Hearing Officer's final decision.

### **Section 3: Submission of the RFP Information**

#### **Proposal Requirements**

Proposers must complete the entire Application Packet and any attachments included must follow the designated format. All attachments must be typed, single spaced, and 12-point font. Colored displays and promotional materials are prohibited. Each page of the attachments should be numbered as "page \_\_ of \_\_" with the name of the bidder on each page.

Emphasis must be placed on addressing all of the requirements of this RFP in a clear and concise manner, and in the exact order as requested, see Attachment C – Response Checklist/Order Submission.

#### **Proposal Submission**

Proposals must be submitted as a complete proposal packet. Proposals cannot be a scanned copy, but an original document saved as a PDF, with the possible exception of the pages that require signatures. Signatures can be digital or hand signed and the page added to the packet emailed. Consideration of proposals which are submitted after the RFP deadline is prohibited. Any modifications or amendments to a proposal already submitted must also comply with the submittal instructions and the response deadline. Any proposals or amendments delivered/received after the deadline will not be considered, and will be deemed late and non-responsive to this RFP and procurement process.

All proposals must be received on time in the format indicated and must be responsive to all RFP instructions. The Board will not be held responsible for late submissions or non-delivery of email.

#### **Confidentiality: Notice regarding the inclusion of confidential, proprietary, trade secret or privileged information in an application**

Any confidential or proprietary information and data contained within a proposal must be clearly marked and labeled as such. Confidential/proprietary information submitted in response to this RFP will be handled in accordance with State law. WSCT is subject to the Texas Open Records Act. Proprietary information will be kept confidential by WSCT to the extent that State law permits. Proposals become the property of WSCT.

If the Proposer includes proprietary or otherwise confidential information in its proposal or other submitted documents, the Proposer must clearly mark and label all confidential, proprietary, trade secret or privileged material in 14 point or higher bold font on each page where the information appears, and identify the specific exception to disclosure in the Texas Public Information Act (PIA) for each specific piece of confidential, proprietary, trade secret or



privileged information. Additionally, all confidential, proprietary, trade secret or privileged information must be segregated in a separate and discrete section of the proposal, which must be able to be conveniently separated and detached from the other sections of the proposal.

Failure to properly label, identify, and segregate any confidential, proprietary, trade secret or other privileged information in the proposal, may result in all such information or material being disclosed as public information. Merely making a blanket claim that the entire proposal is protected from disclosure because it contains any amount of confidential, proprietary, trade secret or privileged information is not acceptable, and may make the entire proposal subject to release under the PIA.

**Submission Order**

The proposal must be submitted with all required elements of the Application Packet and assembled in accordance with Attachment C - Response Checklist and Order of Submission.

All proposals must be received no later than 5:00 pm on February 26, 2021. Proposals not received at the designated place by the specified date and time will not be accepted.

Incomplete proposals and proposals not in adherence to any RFP guidelines, specifications, and requests put forth in this RFP, and proposals missing required signatures will be disqualified for award consideration.

**RFP Timetable**

The following timetable of events is subject to change at the discretion of the Board. All requestors of this RFP will be notified of all changes. All times shown in the RFP timetable are Central Standard Time (CST).

Information	Date	Time
Release of RFP	January 15, 2021	5:00 p.m.
Deadline for Submitting Mandatory Letter of Intent to Bid	January 29, 2021	5:00 p.m.
Deadline for Submitting Bidders Questions	January 29, 2021	5:00 p.m.
Bidder’s Conference Call	February 3, 2021	2:00 p.m.
Bidder’s Question/Answer E-Response	February 5, 2021	5:00 p.m.
Proposal Due Date	February 26, 2021	5:00 p.m.
Begin Proposal Evaluation Process	March 1-5, 2021	
Begin Potential Interviews	March 8, 2021	
Complete Board Action	March 25, 2021	
Contract Negotiation and Transition Time Begins	March 26, 2021	
Contract Start Date	August 1, 2021	

This RFP is issued at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, January 15, 2021, by the Workforce Solutions of Central Texas Workforce Board, under the direction of Susan Kamas, Executive Director.

Copies of the RFP are available from the following sources:

- Preferred: On-line: [www.workforcesolutionsctx.com](http://www.workforcesolutionsctx.com);
- E-mail a request to [wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com](mailto:wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com). Request must include the following information: name of organization, contact person, mailing address, phone number, and email address.

### **Mandatory Letter of Intent**

Attachment A, the letter stating the proposer's Intent to Bid is **mandatory**. The Letter of Intent to Bid must be submitted and received by WSCT by 5:00 p.m., January 29, 2021. Proposals will NOT be accepted from proposers who did not submit the required letter by the established deadline. The Letter of Intent to Bid must be sent by e-mailed to:

Workforce Solutions Bids ([wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com](mailto:wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com))  
Subject line: RFP Management and Operations Letter of Intent [Proposer's Name]

The proposer is solely responsible for the timely delivery of the Letter of Intent to Bid and the Proposal Application. WSCT is not responsible for any failures, errors, omissions, or other issues that result in disqualification. Disputes concerning late or non-delivered letters cannot be appealed.

### **Bidders Conference**

In an effort to answer technical questions and review this Request for Proposal package with Proposers, as it relates to this procurement, a Proposers' conference call is scheduled for 2:00 p.m., February 3, 2021. All Proposers that submit a Letter of Intent will receive a video conference link via your e-mail contact address. **RFP respondents' participation in the conference call is mandatory. Proposals will not be accepted from proposers who do not participate in the conference call.** Questions posed at the conference call will be answered to the extent possible and allowable, at that time. Answers to all questions asked during the conference call and/or submitted in writing will be documented in a Question and Answer (Q&A) document and posted on the WSCT web-site [www.workforckesolutionsctx.com](http://www.workforckesolutionsctx.com) on February 5, 2021. Questions concerning this procurement will not be accepted after the Bidder's Conference on February 3, 2021.

All questions should be emailed to:

Workforce Solutions Bids ([wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com](mailto:wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com))  
Subject line: RFP Management and Operations Q&A [Proposer's Name]

## **Required Documents – Application Packet**

The proposer should respond to the questions and forms provided in the Application Document. Responses should:

- Provide a complete description of the proposed management and operation of local Workforce Centers and quality customer services in narrative form.
- Respond to every question.
- Be clear and concise. Be presented in the exact order provided.
- Restate the question with the response immediately following the question.
- Use the same numbers and reference letters that appear in this RFP. Note: Evaluators will not be able to find your responses if you change the reference system.
- Respond to questions without cross-referencing to another response.

## **General Instructions and Submittal**

Proposals must be emailed to Workforce Solutions Bids ([wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com](mailto:wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com)) and be received prior to the proposal submission deadline. Proposals that are received after the deadline will not be accepted.

WSCT will only accept emailed proposals. If a hard copy of the proposal is submitted, it will not be screened for this RFP and will not be returned unless the sender makes arrangements for return costs prior to return.

WSCT is not responsible for proposals emailed late, illegible, incomplete, or otherwise considered disqualified or late due to failure of electronic equipment or operator error.

Email proposals to:

Workforce Solutions Bids ([wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com](mailto:wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com))  
Subject line: RFP Management and Operations Proposal [Proposer's Name]

Authorized WSCT Contact: Horace Dicks, Director of Administration

No additional material may be submitted after the due date and time. Proposals may be withdrawn upon written request if made before the RFP response deadline. Once the response deadline is passed, all proposals will become the property of WSCT.

## **Questions and Answers**

Written questions regarding this RFP may be emailed ([wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com](mailto:wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com)) until 2:00p.m. on February 3, 2021. No questions may be submitted via telephone or in-person communication. A question and answer publication will be released by the Board as per the Procurement Timeline. The question and answer document will be provided electronically to all entities who have submitted a letter of Intent to Bid and attended the mandatory bidders

conference. It will also be posted on our website ([www.workforcesolutionsctx.com](http://www.workforcesolutionsctx.com)). All questions should be directed to:

Workforce Solutions Bids ([wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com](mailto:wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com))  
Subject line: RFP Management and Operations Q&A [Proposer's Name]

Authorized WSCT Contact: Horace Dicks, Director of Administration

Other than questions submitted as directed above, WSCT Board members and staff are precluded from answering questions concerning this RFP or the procurement process. Contact with Board members or staff of the Board or the current Subrecipient from the date that this RFP is released until the contract is awarded is strictly prohibited. Violations of this prohibition will result in the automatic disqualification of the proposal.

### **Withdrawal of Application.**

An Application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the selection announcement date by writing to the WSCT Contact at:

Workforce Solutions Bids ([wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com](mailto:wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com))  
Subject line: RFP Management and Operations Withdrawal [Proposer's Name]

Authorized WSCT Contact: Horace Dicks, Director of Administration

A withdrawn Application will not be considered for award but will be retained by WSCT in accordance with the Application Information Confidentiality and Records Retention provisions in this RFP.

### **Amendment of Application.**

An Application may be amended in writing at any time after submission, but prior to the Application submission deadline. An amended Application must be submitted to the WSCT Contact at:

Workforce Solutions Bids ([wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com](mailto:wsb@workforcesolutionsctx.com))  
Subject line: RFP Management and Operations Amendment [Proposer's Name]

Authorized WSCT Contact: Horace Dicks, Director of Administration

An Application may be amended after the Application submission deadline only at the direction of WSCT. Unless specifically requested by WSCT, material submitted after the Application submission deadline will not be considered.

## **Section 4: Selection Process**

The selection and award of a contract resulting from this RFP will be made to a responsible Proposer who has the demonstrated competence and qualifications only including but not limited to a satisfactory record of past performance, integrity and business ethics, fiscal accountability, sufficient financial and technical resources, established management and monitoring/quality assurance systems, and ability to meet the requirements and expectations of this RFP.

### **Evaluation Process**

Responsive proposals submitted by the deadline will be evaluated using the objective criteria within the Application Packet. A review committee, which may consist of staff, Board members, outside reviewers, or a combination of these, will evaluate proposals. The review committee will independently evaluate each proposal. The committee will meet, discuss Proposals and develop recommendations. The review committee may request additional information from any proposer prior to developing a recommendation for consideration by the Board. In selecting proposals for award of contract, the Board reserves the right to depart from the strict ranking by evaluation scores whenever it deems such departure will better serve the best interests of the Board and its constituents.

Upon conclusion of the review process, the review committee in conjunction with Board staff will develop a recommendation for the Board's Executive Committee. The Board's Executive Committee will review and comment on the committee's recommendation prior to presentation to the full Board. At the discretion of the Board Chair, the proposed Project Director may be interviewed by the Executive Committee. The full Board intends to make the selection decision during a regularly Board Business Meeting. All Proposers will be notified of the time and location of the Board meeting and are welcome to attend.

Evaluation of responses is conducted as follows:

1. All proposals received by the submission deadline will be reviewed by a proposal review team.

The review committee will begin by assessing proposals' responsiveness and compliance with the technical specifications and requirements contained in the RFP.

2. All responsive proposals will be subject to review and scoring by the proposal review committee. Proposals will be scored independently by each evaluator based on the criteria identified in this RFP using a standardized instrument. The final scores will be the average of the independent scores of all evaluators.
3. Board staff will conduct a verification of references in the proposals.
4. The top scoring Proposers will be asked to send the proposed Project Director to interview with a subset of members of the WSCT Board. Proposers to be interviewed will

be notified by phone and e-mail. Unless held virtually all travel costs for attending the interview are the responsibility of the bidder.

The proposed project director and/or on-site managing director must be present at the interview. The interview will consist of a series of standardized questions posed to the individual by Board members.

Board members will score each proposer’s oral responses in the interview based on the knowledge, skills and abilities demonstrated by individual at the interview. The combined score for proposal review and interview will be the proposer’s final score. The proposer receiving the highest total score will be recommended to the WSCT Board for consideration.

5. Combined recommendations of the Board members participating in the interview will be presented to the Board for final action.
6. Action by the Board in selecting a proposal for contract award will be subject to successful contract negotiations.

NOTE: The WSCT Board is not required to contract with the entity receiving the highest score/ranking as a result of the evaluation process. The Board reserves the right to depart from the scoring/ranking if it deems such departure better serves the interests of the Board and WSCT customers.

**Evaluation Criteria**

Proposals must achieve an overall average score of at least 70% (210 points) to be considered for selection and award. Proposals will be evaluated based on Proposer’s responses to questions asked and information requested in Attachments to this RFP. The evaluation criteria and point values are as follows:

Criteria 1: Organizational Capacity and Capability	60 Points
Organizational history and structure, unique qualifications and experience. Overall approach and philosophy to managing and operating Workforce Centers and delivering customer services. Management and Measurements of Contracted Results.	
Criteria 2: Workforce Center Services	100 Points
Overall approach, design, strategies, and processes for managing staff who are providing Employer/Business Services, Job Seeker Services, and Child Care Services.	
Criteria 3: Demonstrated Experience/Effectiveness	55 Points
History of successfully providing the same or similar services to those specified in the RFP, specifically relating to the types of activities, targeted populations, performance outcomes (measures/targets), expenditure benchmarks, and contractual compliance. Such entities can include a business enterprise with similar management demands, including but not limited to Chambers of Commerce, Labor Organizations, Economic Development Corporations, Community Based	

Organizations, or other entities as described in Department of Labor guidance regarding eligible providers.	
Criteria 4: Financial Management	35 Points
Sound financial condition, effective fiscal and administrative management systems, fiscal organizational structures, financial resources, financial capacity, and knowledge in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures.	
Criteria 5: Cost Analysis/Cost Reasonableness	50 Points
Costs are reasonable, necessary, allocable and allowable. Other areas of review include: cost allocation methodology, competitive indirect rate or management fees, overhead costs, profit, in-kind or matching funds.	
<b>Total Possible Points For Proposal Response:</b>	<b>300 Points</b>

#### Additional Possible Points

Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Bonus Points	10 Points
Interview	100 Points

Detailed explanation of the criteria listed above is located in the Application Packet.

#### **Selection and Award Announcement**

Evaluators will review and score Applications based on the evaluation criteria in the RFP using only the information provided in the written Application. The final scores will serve as the primary basis for selection of the potential contractor. The panel results are advisory in nature and not binding to WSCT. WSCT reserves the right to make selections based solely on the final scores or to consider other factors determined by WSCT to be relevant to its decision.

WSCT may elect to award the contract with or without discussions with the Proposer. Should a contract be awarded without discussions, the contract will be based on the Proposer's Application submission, which constitutes a binding offer by the Proposer. To receive a contract, the Proposer must accept any additional or special terms and conditions listed in the contract and any proposed and accepted changes to the Proposal Application as submitted.

No public disclosures or news releases pertaining to the RFP or any resulting contract shall be made without the prior written approval of WSCT.