

WORKSYSTEMS, INC.
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS ASSESSMENT

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In July 2007, the State of Oregon received a \$5 million, three-year grant under the US Department of Labor's WIRED program (Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development). The State designated Worksystems, Inc. (WSI) as the administrator and fiscal agent for the grant. Our WIRED region includes Multnomah, Washington, Clackamas, Columbia, Marion, Yamhill, and Polk counties in Oregon and Clark, Cowlitz, and Wahkiakum counties in Washington. The goal of the WIRED grant is to transform the regional economy through several talent development strategies that involve a partnership of business, workforce and economic development, and education. One of the grant deliverables is a global competitiveness assessment.

SCOPE OF WORK

1. Regional Identity. Our WIRED initiative has identified a 10-county region on the basis of commuting patterns, transportation infrastructure, and industry clusters. We have been working together over the last year to implement a regional approach to workforce development and the collaborations are promising. However, it would be timely to consider the future of this approach. The successful bidder will be expected to deliver a presentation to the WIRED Regional Workforce Council on regionalism in workforce and economic development. The discussion should include a full analysis of the benefits, trade-offs, and compromises involved in regional models using examples from peer regions whenever possible. This discussion will be expanded upon in a subsequent written report which also examines the suitability of the currently defined WIRED region to serve as a unit for economic and workforce development.

2. Global Competitiveness. Considering such areas as talent, education and training, infrastructure, quality of place, investment, and partnerships (this list is not definitive or exclusive), the successful bidder will be expected to provide a written report and presentations to stakeholders that analyze the WIRED region's economic strengths and weaknesses in comparison to at least 5 (preferably more) peer regions. Peer or comparable regions may be national or international, as appropriate for the analysis, and must be justified. The analysis should include and justify a set of benchmarks by which workforce and economic developers can continue to monitor our region's progress and status in the global marketplace. The analysis should conclude with strategic recommendations for regional economic and workforce development planners based on our competitive strengths.

DELIVERABLES

1. Regional Identity
 - Presentation to the WIRED Regional Workforce Council on regionalism in workforce and economic development, as described above. This presentation is scheduled for 3:00 PM on January 26, 2009.

- Written report on regional models for workforce and economic development and the suitability of the currently defined WIRED region to serve as a unit for economic and workforce development. This report is required by May 29, 2009.

2. Global Competitiveness

- Written report including analysis of our WIRED region's competitive strengths and weaknesses, benchmarks by which we can continue to monitor our region's progress and status in the global marketplace, and strategic recommendations for regional economic and workforce development planners based on our competitive strengths. This report is required by September 30, 2009.
- Up to 3 presentations to stakeholder groups based on the contents of the Global Competitiveness report. Presentations are required by September 30, 2009.

AVAILABLE FUNDS

Up to \$40,000 is available for this project. These funds were awarded to the State of Oregon through the U.S. Department of Labor's Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development program.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

- Proposal response must be single spaced, on 8-½ inch x 11-inch pages, with font size 12 or larger and submitted electronically. Proposal responses must include the following:
 1. Cover letter identifying the independent contractor or agency, with contact information and indication of legal capacity to do business in the State of Oregon. Describe your experience conducting similar analyses. Include 3 client references. *(20 points - not more than 1 page)*
 2. Work plan describing your strategy and methods for collecting, assembling, and presenting the required information. Discuss the data sources, key informants, and analytical methods you will use. *(35 points - not more than 5 pages)*
 3. Timeline showing major milestones and delivery of the specified deliverables. *(15 points - not more than 1 page)*
 4. Individual resume or summary of qualifications for the person or persons to be assigned to this project, addressing their abilities to prepare and present the required deliverables. *(10 points - not more than 1 page for each person)*.
 5. Bid amount and budget, including justification of all necessary costs, including hours of effort, rates, disbursements, and overhead *(20 points - not more than 1 page)*.
- Proposals must be received by 4:00 PM on Friday, January 2, 2009.
- Send proposals via email to Cary Harkaway, charkaway@worksystems.org.
- Late proposals will not be considered.
- Questions should be sent to Mr. Harkaway via email: charkaway@worksystems.org. Questions must be received by 4:00 PM on Wednesday, December 10, 2008. Answers will be posted on the Worksystems web site: www.worksystems.org.

Proposal Evaluation

- Proposals will be evaluated by a committee. The successful bidder will be selected based on the scoring of the proposals using the criteria and point allocation described above under Proposal Submission. During the evaluation process, the committee may, at its discretion, request any or all respondents to make oral presentations, which will be considered in making the decision.
- Upon receipt of proposal, WSI will open documents to ensure they can be read and then e-mail bidder confirmation of proposal receipt.
- A decision will be made by Friday, January 9, 2009, and all respondents will be notified of the results by the end of the following week.

Right to Reject Proposals

Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the respondent of the conditions contained in this RFP. Worksystems reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Costs for developing the proposals are solely the responsibility of the bidders. WSI will not provide reimbursement for such costs.
- A submitted proposal may be withdrawn prior to the proposal due date. A written request to withdraw the proposal must be submitted electronically to charkaway@worksystems.org.
- Applicants are advised that most documents in the possession of WSI are considered public records and subject to disclosure under the State Public Records Law (ORS 192.410 -192.505).
- Bidders who have submitted a proposal have the right to protest the award. WSI's process for addressing protests is available upon request.

Worksystems, Inc. is an equal opportunity employer/program.

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

To place a free relay call in Oregon dial 711.

This project is 100% funded with a **\$5,000,000 WIRED** grant through the State of Oregon and U. S. Department of Labor.