Career Mentoring Program

Questions and Answers
This information may be edited for clarity

Please direct all inquiries to rfp@worksystems.org with the subject line “Career Mentoring Inquiry”

November 21, 2017
Q1 Are there any specific guidelines for the printed documents required as part of this RFP to have a special binding, or can they be stapled copies?
A1 Proposal documents may be stapled, clipped, or otherwise bound together. There are no special requirements for binding.

November 17, 2017
Q1 The chart on page 13 of the Request for Proposals does not list an Executive Summary as one of the proposal documents, though it is listed in Part VI, Section A. Do we submit both the 1-page Executive Summary and the 10-page Proposal Narrative?
A1 Yes, complete proposals will include the signed Proposal Cover Sheet, the 1-page Executive Summary, the 10-page Proposal Narrative, Budget Workbook, Administrative Capacity Cover/Checklist, Administrative Capacity Response, and Administrative Capacity Documents.

November 16, 2017
Q1 Our organization does not have an Approved Federal Cost Rate Agreement or Organization Indirect Cost Allocation. Should our qualified indirect costs be reflected on the Operations tab of the Budget Workbook?
A1 If your organization has never secured an Approved Federal Indirect Cost Rate before, you are not required to have one. You may charge (or leverage) up to 10% for indirect costs that are part of the allocation plan and can be tied back to the organization’s general ledger. Worksystems can provide assistance if the selected contractor is in this situation, to make sure that the budget and approved expenses meet the Federal requirement, but securing an Indirect Cost Rate is not required in order to be awarded a Career Mentoring contract.

November 14, 2017
Q1 The workbook states the contract period is three years, but the funding columns appear to calculate for one year. We plan on incurring more leveraged costs in years two and three. How would you advise us to complete the workbook?
A1 Column C should indicate “1” for an FTE, and the funding column can show, for example, “3” if that employee will be serving the contract for all three years. You can include multiple lines for the same employee if you need to change the funding between Contract Services and Leveraged Funds through the course of the three-year period. A phased approach to services and budget should also be addressed in RFP Part VI, Section D, Item C and Part VI, Section D, Item J where proposals lay out an implementation timeline with key milestones and where proposals describe proposed leverage.

November 7, 2017
Q1 Can we submit charts and graphics in 10-point font?
A1 Yes.

Q2 Will mentees and participants be recruited/referred only or primarily from Health Careers NW (HCNW) and TechRise programs, or will they be from a broader pool such as a CNA coming through a WorkSource Center with an ITA?
A2 Mentees / participants will initially be recruited / referred only from TechRise PDX and NW Promise, which includes dual-enrolled HCNW customers. Depending on the capacity of the mentoring program and demand by these target customers, it is possible the program may be offered to other WorkSource customers in the future.

Q3 For mentees in HCNW and TechRise, how is the mentor role different than that of the Career Coach?
A3 The mentoring program is intended to connect diverse job seekers with culturally-competent, industry-based career mentoring services. Career Coaches are dedicated to their customers’ success, help customers to map their skills and experience, access a variety of resources including training, work-readiness preparation, and job search activities, and develop career and training plans. Career Coaches will likely refer customers to the mentoring program. Mentors are intended to be industry-based experts who are current or recent employees.
in the tech sector. These mentors will be able to provide expert advice as mentees find and retain tech jobs, and navigate the industry.

Q4 Can existing Health Care and IT programs be leveraged to provide retention services?
A4 Existing programs and Career Coaches will continue to provide support to customers throughout their engagement in the WorkSource program, which may include support during the 3-6 months following employment. Mentees will also receive mentoring support during this period that will help the mentees to successfully navigate the tech culture and responsibilities. It is intended that these efforts will, together, support the retention of mentees in tech employment.

Q5 Who are the business partners who would receive technical assistance? What sort of technical assistance is envisioned?
A5 Proposals should describe potential strategies for providing technical assistance to business partners and/or incorporating networking opportunities into the mentoring program. These technical assistance strategies should be designed to enhance the basic mentoring services. The business partners receiving technical assistance could be business partners who employ participating mentors or business partners looking to enhance internal efforts to build an inclusive and welcoming culture, etc. Technical assistance could include trainings, TA coaching, guides and other resources.

Q6 We would like to request that the due date for the RFP be extended by one week.
A6 We’re sorry, due dates are established and are not flexible. To be considered, all proposals must be submitted according to the published timelines.

November 6, 2017
Q1 Can you please make a copy of the RFP available in Word or unrestrict the PDF?
A1 No, an unrestricted Request for Proposals will not be made available to ensure the integrity of the document and requirements laid out therein.

November 3, 2017
Q1 What constitutes a “successful” mentoring experience?
A1 Applicants should provide a program design that addresses what they determine are the key components of a successful mentoring experience as part of their proposal.

Q2 What is the maximum funding over the three years, assuming costs are necessary and related outcomes?
A2 A maximum amount has not been established, but we do not have unlimited funding to support the program.

Q3 Can there be some lead time to build industry partnerships, or does that need to be in place for an organization to be competitive?
A3 Respondents are expected to include information that demonstrates engagement with local businesses and employees in target industries and demonstrates the capacity to engage new businesses in the target industries. A proposal may be successful if it only demonstrates the capacity to engage new businesses in the target industries and provides a clear plan to do so.

Q4 Can we use stipends?
A4 Applicants may propose a variety of strategies they believe will be successful in engaging mentors. Proposals should include related expenses in the budget workbook, and indicate whether the expenses will be covered through program funds or leveraged funds. We will negotiate final budgets and budget elements with the successful respondent. Added 11/07/17: All expenses must be allowable to the Federal funding source, and be managed in a manner that is compliant with 2 CFR 200.

Q5 What is the ramp-up for new programs with respect to recruiting mentors and executing on deliverables? Would proposing a glide path to meet the 300 total be acceptable, as long as it was reasonable and justified with realistic milestones?
A5 As with any new program, we expect that there will be a ramp-up of services over time. Proposers should include a timeline and milestones, which may include a phased implementation of mentoring services (including the recruitment of mentors). We expect that some mentoring services will be piloted in spring 2018.

Q6 Will the RFP allow us to leverage our existing network of retired professionals along with building a network of near peer or volunteers currently working in the relevant industries?
A6 Proposals that leverage existing partnerships and resources will be viewed favorably. Proposals may include a variety of possible sources for mentors, and should address how different types of mentors might engage in the program. All mentors are expected to have a current working knowledge of a target industry.

Q7 Please further define what sectors of health service industries from which the majority of mentees are seeking mentorship?

A7 Mentees seeking and/or retaining employment in the healthcare industry will generally be on the following tracks: Nursing, Medical Laboratory, Medical Office, Allied Health, and Computer and Information Systems.

October 30, 2017

Q1 Are the 70 mentors counted by year of participation, or by unique individual? For example, if you had 30 mentors in year 1 and 30 mentors in year two, does that count as 60 mentors, even if some participants are mentored in both years?

A1 We estimate that 70 unique mentors will be required to serve approximately 300 participants over three years. The exact number of mentors may vary based on the proposed services (such as group, near peer, and/or one-on-one mentoring) and service levels.