PARTNER 4 WORK
The Workforce Development Board for the Pittsburgh Area

Questions & Answers

Request For Proposals: WIOA Career & Business Services RFP 2026

Updated: 10/26/26

Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in accordance with the instructions and deadlines in the RFP. Partner4Work will make reasonable efforts to provide clear and accurate responses based on the information available at the time.

Partner4Work may group similar questions, rephrase questions for clarity, and omit duplicative content. Responses are for clarification purposes and do not limit Partner4Work's rights under the RFP. Final requirements, scope, funding, or other award terms may change based on proposals received, discussions or negotiations, program needs, and the terms of any resulting agreement. In the event of a conflict, the RFP and any formally issued addenda will control.

1. Proposal Submission, Formatting & Evaluation

Q2. For applicants proposing multiple bidding options, should the Executive Summary, Organization Description, attachments (organizational chart, resumes, letters of commitment), and other organizational information be submitted once as part of a single proposal package, with only the Program Narrative and Budget/Budget Narrative provided separately for each option? Or does Partner4Work expect a complete set of proposal components for each option proposed?
A2. Submit one proposal package regardless of how many options you are proposing. Organizational components (Executive Summary, Organization Description, and attachments such as the organizational chart, resumes, and letters of commitment) are submitted once. A separate Program Narrative and a separate Budget and Budget Narrative are required for each option proposed. If any part of your Executive Summary or Organization Description is specific to one option (for example, funding requested), please identify it clearly by option.

Q3. For applicants proposing only selected options, should Program Narrative sections that are not applicable to the proposed option(s) be omitted, or should applicants include the section headings and indicate "Not Applicable"? For example: If proposing only Options 1 and 2, may the bidder omit Service Delivery - Businesses? If proposing only Option 3, may the bidder omit Service Delivery - Jobseekers, ITA Model, Dislocated Worker Recruitment Strategy, and Youth Engagement? Please clarify how Partner4Work would like applicants to address narrative sections that do not apply to the option(s) being proposed.
A3. Address only the Program Narrative elements that apply to the option(s) you are proposing. Keep the element heading and mark it "Not applicable to Option [#]" so reviewers can confirm the omission was intentional. Because Option 1 is the full Adult/DW model and includes business services, an Option 1 narrative must include Service Delivery – Businesses even when proposed alongside Option 2. An Option 3 narrative may mark Service Delivery – Jobseekers, ITA Model, Dislocated Worker Recruitment Strategy, and Youth Engagement

as not applicable. Option 2 bidders should briefly address business services to the extent needed to support Dislocated Workers (responding to layoffs, connecting participants to employers hiring their skills).

Q4. Will proposals be evaluated by workforce development professionals, business services professionals, procurement staff, community stakeholders, board members, or a combination of reviewers? To what extent should narrative responses be written for technical workforce practitioners versus a broader evaluation audience?
A4. Proposals will be scored by qualified evaluators with relevant expertise. Bidders should write for a reader who understands WIOA and the PA CareerLink® system but does not know your organization be specific about what you will do, who will do it, and how it connects to the outcomes in the RFP.

Q5. Are exhibits, process maps, workflow diagrams, sample forms, customer journey maps, and other supporting materials permitted in addition to the required attachments? Are these exhibits counted toward the applicable page limits?
Q6. May charts, graphics, tables, organizational charts, flowcharts, and other visual elements utilize formatting different from the required narrative format (11-point Calibri, double-spaced), including alternative font sizes, single spacing, and page layouts necessary for readability?
Q7. The RFP requests that proposals address all criteria in the same general order. May applicants consolidate or reorganize responses to avoid repetition across narrative sections, provided all required topics are clearly addressed and identifiable?
Q8. The Service Delivery - Jobseekers section requires a flow chart depicting the participant experience. Is this flow chart included within the eight-page Program Narrative limit, or may it be submitted as an exhibit or appendix outside the page limit?
Q28. Can narrative questions be truncated?
Q29. Are additional attachments allowed outside of required attachments?
A5-8,28-29. The Program Narrative is limited to 8 pages per option, in 11-point Calibri, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins. The jobseeker flow chart is an attachment and does not count toward the page limit. The required attachments are the letters of commitment, program organizational chart, key staff resumes or minimum qualifications, and the jobseeker flow chart. Other exhibits (process maps, sample forms, customer journey maps) are not required and will not be scored separately; content intended for scoring should appear in the narrative. Charts, tables, and organizational charts submitted as attachments may use formatting needed for readability. Tables or graphics placed inside the narrative count toward the page limit and should remain legible (no smaller than 10-point font). Responses must follow the general order of the Proposal Elements, with each element clearly labeled. Bidders may cross-reference another section to avoid repetition, as long as every required element is clearly identifiable under its own heading.

2. Bidding Options, Awards & Financial Terms

Q9. If an organization submits a proposal for Option 1, does that include the dislocated worker services and business services that are broken out in Option 2 and Option 3? Would we only submit proposals for Option 2

and Option 3 if we were interested in providing those services as stand-alone programs (i.e. if we were not awarded a contract under Option 1)?

Q17. Does Partner4Work anticipate a single award or multiple awards for Options 1, 2 and 3 (understanding that options 2 and 3 are not guaranteed)?

A9,17. Option 1 is the full Adult and Dislocated Worker model and includes career, training, supportive, follow-up, and business services at both PA CareerLink® comprehensive centers. An Option 1 proposal covers Dislocated Worker services and business services as part of that model. Options 2 and 3 are separate, stand-alone awards, not backups to Option 1. Propose them only if you want to be considered for those distinct contracts. Proposals for each option are reviewed separately, and an organization proposing multiple options may be selected for one, more than one, or none. Partner4Work anticipates one Option 1 award. Funding for Options 2 and 3 is available if Partner4Work chooses to make any awards in this category. Partner4Work reserves the right to make one award, multiple awards, a partial award, or no award (see Appendix A).

Q14. For for-profit entities, how will allowable profit be determined, and what portion of profit, if any, is expected to be contingent upon achievement of performance outcomes?

A14. Profit is determined during contract negotiation, subject to applicable federal, state, funding-source, and Partner4Work requirements. Any proposed profit must be separately identified in the budget and budget narrative. Partner4Work may condition payment of a portion of an approved profit amount on the awardee's achievement of specified performance requirements. The percentage withheld, measures, thresholds, and payment timing will be set in the executed agreement. See General Information, For-Profit Awardees

3. Partnerships, Subcontractors & Teaming

Q1. Could you clarify whether a specialized training provider can participate as a subcontractor or service-delivery partner alongside an eligible local lead applicant, and whether such partners should register separately for the October 14 bidders' conference?

Q25. May a proposer under Option 2 or Option 3 include an out-of-state specialist subcontractor for defined career-readiness instruction, employer-facing training, or outcomes-reporting work, provided the prime meets all local service-delivery and WIOA requirements?

Q27. Are any published minimum local staffing, physical-presence, or direct WIOA-service experience requirements applicable to subcontractors providing a narrowly defined component rather than to the prime bidder?

Q34. Does the three-year operating-history requirement apply to specialist subcontractors, and may a Virginia-based provider deliver approved virtual résumé and interview labs under an eligible lead?

A1,25,27,34. Applicants may propose independently or as part of a partnership or consortium, including specialized subcontractors or service-delivery partners. One organization must be identified as lead applicant and fiscal agent. Partner4Work contracts with the lead, which is responsible for all performance and for oversight of its subcontractors. Any subcontracts entered under a resulting agreement must follow applicable federal and state guidelines related to the type of agreement.

The RFP does not set separate local-presence, staffing, or experience minimums for subcontractors delivering a defined component. However, the lead remains accountable for all RFP requirements, including CWDS data entry, WIOA compliance, and performance. Proposals should clearly describe each partner's role, how the lead will manage it, and how the arrangement serves Allegheny County and Pittsburgh residents and employers.

The three-year operating history requirement applies to the applicant/lead entity. The RFP does not establish a separate three-year operating history requirement for proposed subcontractors.

The bidders' conference was held October 14 and was open to all interested parties. A recording will be posted on the Partner4Work webpage for this RFP

Q16. The RFP requires letters of commitment from a referral partner, an employer partner, and an additional program partner. Would Partner4Work consider a WIOA-mandated partner organization to satisfy the additional program partner requirement, or is there a preference for a different type of partner (e.g., training provider, community-based organization, industry intermediary, or other workforce system partner)?
Q18. If applying for multiple options, can a letter of commitment support more than one option?
A16,18. Yes. A WIOA-mandated partner may serve as the additional program partner. The RFP does not limit this category to a particular partner type. The strongest letters come from partners contributing significantly to the design or delivery of your proposed program, and each letter should describe the specific commitments the partner is making. A single letter may support more than one option if it clearly describes the partner's commitment to each option it supports.

Q26. Does Partner4Work maintain a formal interested proposer/teaming list, or is there a permitted public channel for prospective subcontractors to connect with qualified lead bidders?
A26. Partner4Work does not maintain a formal teaming list for this RFP.

4. Current Operations, Baseline Information & Transition

Q10. Please provide current staffing levels (FTEs) by position for each option, including management, career services, business services, and administrative staff.
Q30. Please provide a current staffing chart.
A10, 30. Partner4Work will not be providing current staffing levels or a staffing chart. Bidders should propose the staffing structure they believe is needed to deliver the services in the option(s) they are bidding on, based on their own program design and the requirements described in the RFP. Proposals should include the positions, FTEs, and responsibilities for each role, including management, career services, business services, and administrative staff as applicable, along with an organizational chart showing how the proposed staff will be structured. Partner4Work will evaluate staffing plans based on how well they support the proposed services and outcomes, not on how closely they match current staffing.

Q13. Please provide the current annual budget allocation by major cost category for each option (e.g., staffing, fringe, supportive services, operating costs, and other direct costs).
A13. Partner4Work does not prescribe current cost-category allocations, and bidders should propose their own budget using the required template and Appendix C.
https://www.partner4work.org/document/wioacareerbusinessservices/

Q15. If a new provider is selected, what participant records, case files, employer relationships, equipment, and operational assets will be transferred to the successful bidder as part of contract transition?
Q33. Is any equipment included?
A15, 33. CWDS is the system of record for participants and employer activity. Records in CWDS remain in the system and continue to be available to the incoming provider. In a transition, the outgoing provider must work with Partner4Work to ensure a smooth handoff, including providing requested information and documentation to the new provider. Partner4Work may negotiate a period during which incoming and outgoing providers work concurrently. The selected bidder must fully serve participants already enrolled as of July 1, 2027, and Partner4Work asks that the selected bidder give first consideration in hiring outgoing provider staff already working in PA CareerLink®. Partner4Work holds site control and leases at both comprehensive centers.

Q11. Please provide current annual participant volumes and enrollment levels for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Business Services activities under each option.
Q31. Please provide past performance outcomes, including the number of participants that attended training through ITAs, OJTs, etc.
Q32. Please provide previous enrollment numbers.
A11, 31-32. Partner4Work is working on this request and will update soon.

5. Staffing, Qualifications & CWDS Requirements

Q21. Is there a minimum number of staff required at each location, a mandatory number of on-site days or hours per week, or a prescribed schedule for each position? What minimum coverage must be maintained during regular operating hours, and are remote or shared staffing arrangements acceptable?
A21. The RFP does not prescribe a minimum number of staff, on-site days, or fixed schedules. Bidders should propose the staffing structure they believe will best meet the requirements. Option 1 bidders must deliver services at both PA CareerLink® comprehensive centers during operating hours (currently 8:30am–4:00pm), indicate which positions are dedicated to each center, and provide staff to assist customers in the Career Resource Centers in coordination with the One-Stop Operator. Remote, virtual, and shared staffing arrangements may be proposed if the bidder explains how they maintain in-person coverage and service quality.

Q23. What minimum qualifications constitute acceptable expertise in career counseling, CWDS, labor market information, and culturally competent service delivery? Are formal certifications, college degrees, specific years of experience, or documented training required? May staff who have strong workforce-development experience but limited prior CWDS exposure qualify if they complete system training before service delivery?

Q24. Is prior hands-on CWDS experience a prerequisite for hiring staff, or will Partner4Work and/or Pennsylvania's Department of Labor & Industry provide onboarding and system training? If training is available, what is its duration, format, cost, and expected completion timeline? Will sandbox access, user guides, and technical support be provided before the July 1, 2027 contract start.
A23-24. Partner4Work does not require specific degrees, certifications, or years of experience. Bidders should describe the qualifications of key staff (through resumes or minimum qualifications) and explain how their staff will meet the expertise expectations in Statement of Work, Section 16. Prior hands-on CWDS experience is not required at hire. Staff with strong workforce development experience may qualify, provided they are fully competent in CWDS, including querying and producing reports, before delivering services. Bidders should describe their onboarding and training plan.

6. Service Delivery, Employer Engagement & Performance

Q12. Please provide current employer engagement volume, including the number of active employers served annually, job orders, hiring events, work-based learning opportunities, and other business services engagements.
A12. Partner4Work does not intend to release this information.

Q19. What minimum employer benefits and advancement criteria must a job meet to qualify as a "good job"? Must advancement be documented through a formal career ladder, employer-provided training, industry-recognized credentials, or a defined wage progression?
A19. Partner4Work's priority is employment that meets or exceeds Partner4Work's self-sufficiency wage, offers benefits, and provides a pathway for advancement. The self-sufficiency wage is the measured standard; see Partner4Work's Self-Sufficiency Policy for the current wage. The RFP does not set a required benefits package or require a specific form of advancement documentation. Bidders should describe how they will identify and prioritize jobs with these features, and placements below the self-sufficiency wage should be the exception and explainable within the participant's plan.

Q20. What minimum number of outreach attempts, contact methods, and time intervals, are expected before an unresponsive participant may be classified as unreachable or inactive? Is there a required follow-up protocol, and how will unsuccessful contact attempts be evaluated in provider performance?
A20. The RFP does not prescribe a specific outreach protocol. SUBRECIPIENTs must follow Partner4Work's WIOA Title I Adult/Dislocated Worker Policy Guide and applicable state policy for participant contact, follow-up, and exit, and must document contact attempts in CWDS. Bidders should describe their engagement and re-engagement approach, including use of phone, text, and email during non-traditional hours.

Q22. What specific actions qualify as a completed "Candidate Referred to Job Opportunities" for performance-reporting purposes? Does the measure require: A staff member to match a participant to a specific opening? A formal referral submitted to the employer through CWDS or another approved method? The participant's consent and confirmation of interest? The participant to submit an application? Employer acknowledgment or

confirmation that the referral was received? Additionally, how are referrals counted when a participant receives a referral but does not apply, cannot be reached, or declines the opportunity?

A22. The RFP defines this measure as the number of participants formally referred to a specific employment opportunity with an employer. A qualifying referral requires a match to a specific opening and a formal referral to the employer, documented in CWDS as the system of record. Detailed counting rules will be finalized at contract negotiation along with numeric targets.