

## REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

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TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County

RELEASE: April 5, 2017

REFERENCE: RFQ #17-01

SUBJECT: One-Stop Operator for WorkSource System in Seattle-King County

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### SUMMARY

The Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County (WDC) issues this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) against a backdrop of significant organizational changes in the regional workforce system. These changes, arising under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), will impact how the One-Stop Operator (Operator) for the Seattle-King County WorkSource system is selected, as well its mission and resources, to enhance workforce services and drive partnerships. The WDC anticipates that the role of the Operator will continue to evolve and, as such, it seeks Letters of Intent and RFQ submittals from highly qualified organizations with professional expertise in performing comparable, dynamic work in the workforce development space.

The Operator contract is the first procurement for Program Year 17 (July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018) under new WIOA rules. The full system procurements will begin in the summer of 2017 with the release of Requests for Proposals.

### RFQ PROCESS

In January 2017, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) issued Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGL) 15-16 and 16-16 describing the procurement process for One-Stop Operators and the requirements for WorkSource Centers, nationally branded as “America’s Job Centers.” This RFQ details the process by which the WDC is competitively procuring an Operator for the WorkSource system in Seattle-King County, Washington. The initial Operator contract will be for the duration of Program Year 2017 and may be extended for up to three additional program years (July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2021), at the WDC’s option.

Key RFQ dates to note:

- **Letters of Intent** for all who plan to submit an RFQ are due no later than **Friday, April 21, 2017, 4:00 pm (PST)**, and shall be delivered electronically to: [operations@seakingwdc.org](mailto:operations@seakingwdc.org)
- **RFQ responses** are due no later than **Thursday, May 4, 2017, 4:00 pm (PST)**, and shall be delivered electronically to: [operations@seakingwdc.org](mailto:operations@seakingwdc.org)
- **Questions** about the RFQ and procurement process will be accepted on a rolling basis at [operations@seakingwdc.org](mailto:operations@seakingwdc.org) until **Thursday, April 27, 4:00 pm (PST)**. A weekly Question and Answer digest will be posted on the WDC website under [Funding Opportunities](#)

each Friday from April 7 to April 28, 2017; any updates or changes to the RFQ will also be posted.

## THE SEATTLE-KING COUNTY WORKFORCE SYSTEM

The WDC is a nonprofit workforce grant-making organization whose mission is to support a strong economy and the ability of each person to achieve self-sufficiency. The WDC is responsible for oversight of WorkSource Seattle-King County and ensuring the highest quality services for job seeker and business customers. The WDC designates a WorkSource Operator to provide partnership development and operational oversight for all local WorkSource sites, in accordance with the guidelines established by the WDC.

WorkSource Seattle-King County is the local one-stop system that includes one (1) full-service WorkSource center, six (6) WorkSource affiliate sites, and thirty-one (31) WorkSource connection sites. WorkSource centers and affiliates offer direct access to staff, free workshops, and on-site services. The WorkSource connection sites are non-financial partnerships between community organizations and WorkSource that offer online access to WorkSource services and some in person services, varying by site. Growth in the number of connection site locations is expected.

The WorkSource mission is to connect businesses and job seekers with the necessary resources and tools for successful employment, life-long learning, and business development, and to ensure a strong and vital economy. During Program Year 2015, the WorkSource Seattle-King County center and affiliates served an average of 6,000 job seekers each month, and WorkSource connection sites served an additional average of 2,000 job seekers each month. A list of current WorkSource Seattle-King County site locations is located on the WorkSource website: <http://www.worksourceskc.org/>.

WorkSource Seattle-King County partners comprise a variety of government, non-profit, and private organizations dedicated to addressing local workforce needs. Each partner contributes a unique and valuable service which, when combined under one roof, results in a dynamic “one stop” resource for businesses and job seekers. To see a list of current WorkSource Seattle-King County partners, visit <http://www.worksourceskc.org/worksource-partners>.

## THE ONE-STOP OPERATOR ROLE

The Operator will develop partnerships and coordinate services delivered throughout the WorkSource system, including the WorkSource center, affiliate centers, and the connection sites described above section. The Operator may be a current WDC service provider or workforce partner, a new WDC service provider or workforce partner, or a coalition that includes multiple service providers or partners with an identified fiscal agent and service lead.

Should the entity(s) selected to be the Operator also deliver workforce services within one or more Seattle-King County centers, affiliates or connection sites, a “firewall” must be in place to ensure neutrality and the lack of a conflict of interest. 20 CFR 678.605, the WIOA Final Rule, and TEGL 15-16 both describe the need for a firewall when an entity is the Operator, and it

delivers workforce services to customers. To paraphrase federal guidance, “no person or department which delivers services may oversee itself.” The goal is to hire a neutral system coordinator working for the benefit of all Seattle-King County workforce system service providers and partners. The need for and adequacy of a firewall will be addressed in the Operator selection process.

The WDC is currently negotiating a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with WorkSource system partners. The MOU, when completed, will guide the Operator’s work.

The primary Operator functions are to increase and coordinate partnerships in the Seattle-King County workforce system to enhance workforce services and resource contributions. The focus is upon:

- A. Recruiting new workforce partners;
- B. Integrating service delivery for all partners located at WorkSource sites;
- C. Coordinating workforce system services and relationships between the one-stop centers, affiliates and connection sites, including work with community outreach teams;
- D. Identifying and improving customer service flow, including a seamless referral system;
- E. For partners not located at physical sites, informing WorkSource staff of available services and establishing effective referral processes;
- F. Assessing the need for and providing and facilitating staff training, including further development of the Learning Exchange online training tool as directed by the WDC;
- G. Convening WorkSource leadership meetings;
- H. Convening partnership meetings;
- I. Conducting customer satisfaction evaluations; and
- J. Other responsibilities as identified by the WDC.

Once an Operator is selected, the WDC will develop and will negotiate a set of deliverables for the Operator. The deliverables will focus upon measurable progress in completing the above tasks.

## LETTER OF INTENT

Organizations planning to respond to this RFQ must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) to [operations@seakingwdc.org](mailto:operations@seakingwdc.org) by **Friday, April 21, 2017, 4:00 pm (PST)**. The LOI may be in the body of an email, and must include the organization name, point person name, and contact information.

## RFQ RESPONSE

RFQ responses must be received by **Thursday, May 4, 2017, 4:00 pm (PST)** for consideration, and must contain the following information and enclosures, organized in content order:

## A. Cover Letter

Include a one-page cover letter referencing RFQ #17-01 and describing your organization's background and structure. The cover letter should identify a contact person and contact information for the organization or coalition.

## B. Experience and Qualifications

1. Describe your organization's workforce system experience during the last three years.
2. Describe the professional qualifications of your organization and the staff who will oversee or support the Operator function in Seattle-King County.
3. Describe your organization's experience in managing federal, state, and local contracts and grants.
4. Disclose and include any unresolved audit or monitoring findings; include a copy of your organization's **most recent audit and monitoring reports**.
5. Provide three examples of successful workforce endeavors your organization or your key staff have engaged in across the last three years, and identify the location, performance dates, and deliverables for each example.
6. Provide a minimum of **three business references**, at least one each for the three examples of workforce endeavors identified in number 5 above, and include telephone and email contact information for a representative with personal knowledge of the workforce endeavors.

## C. Proposed Approach

1. Describe how you will carry out the Operator's partner coordination responsibilities listed above
2. Identify how your organization will tailor the Operator role to enhance the WorkSource system in Seattle-King County.
3. Provide an approximate timeline of key activities in each quarter of Program Year 2017, beginning July 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2018.
4. Include a brief, **proposed job description** for a full-time Operator Coordinator for Seattle-King County, and identify the minimum qualifications for this position.
5. Attach an **organizational chart** showing the proposed Coordinator and reporting lines to executive management of the entity.

## RFQ FORMAT

RFQ responses are limited to 5 pages of narrative in a 12-point, Times New Roman font, with double-spaced pages and one-inch margins. RFQ cover letter, audit/monitoring reports, and references are exempt from page limit and format requirements.

## COST AND BUDGET

Cost **will not** be considered in developing a list of qualified organizations from RFQ responses. After one or more organizations are selected based on qualifications, experience, and proposed approach, one or more structured interviews will be held. When a qualified organization is selected for interviewing (see Selection Timeline section below), that entity will be notified by the WDC on Friday, May 12, 2017, and asked to submit the completed **Attachment A – Budget Summary Form**, no later than **Monday, May 15, 4:00 pm (PST)**.

The budget categories identified in this section **should not be included** in an organization's RFQ response. The WDC recommends, however, that interested organizations prepare the Budget Summary Form simultaneously with the RFQ submittal, to be prepared for the next procurement step of structured interviews. Organizations selected for interview will be expected to discuss proposed budget details during the interview.

The Attachment A – Budget Summary Form outlines the following cost details:

1. Annual personnel costs, including wages and fringe benefits, for:
  - a. A full-time Operator Coordinator for Seattle-King County;
  - b. Additional Operator staff (at least two others in addition to the Coordinator);
2. Annual estimated operating costs, including:
  - a. Phone service, technology and communications;
  - b. Organizational indirect and overhead costs, including profit if the organization is organized as a business rather than as a nonprofit or public entity; and
  - c. Any other costs, with itemization and description of each;  
*Note:* Infrastructure costs (e.g., space, furniture, utilities) are expected to be covered outside the Operator contract.
3. Subcontracts, if anticipated, including cost and identification of the subcontractor and services to be provided; and
4. Total summary of anticipated cost for Operator services from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018.

Proposed budget summaries will be discussed during structured interviews. Full budget details will be negotiated prior to making an Operator award. If negotiations are successful, the budget will be included in the Operator's contract with the WDC.

## RATING

Each complete and compliant RFQ response received by the deadline will be scored on a weighted rating model with point values assigned as follows:

### **A. Experience & Qualifications (50/100 points)**

1. Coordinating workforce system services and partner relationships **(20/50)**

2. Providing and facilitating staff training **(10/50)**
3. Recruiting workforce partners and conducting convenings **(5/50)**
4. Integrating service delivery **(5/50)**
5. Improving customer service and conducting evaluations **(5/50)**
6. Coordinating partner referral processes **(5/50)**

**B. Proposed Approach (50/100 points)**

1. Does the proposed approach describe a thoughtful, realistic strategy to augment available WorkSource customer resources? **(10/50)**
2. Will ideas and strategies identified strengthen Seattle-King County workforce partnerships? **(10/50)**
3. Are specific approaches identified to remedy service delivery gaps? **(10/50)**
4. Is the timeline of key activities in each quarter realistic and sufficiently detailed? **(10/50)**
5. Does the Operator Coordinator proposed job description demonstrate an understanding of the Operator role and responsibilities within WorkSource system in Seattle-King County? **(10/50)**

**RFQ TIMELINE**

April 21, 2017, 4:00 PM (PST)	DEADLINE to submit Letter of Intent
April 27, 2017, 4:00 PM (PST)	DEADLINE to submit questions
May 4, 2017, 4:00 PM (PST)	DEADLINE to submit RFQ response
May 15, 2017	Qualified organizations selected for interview will be notified and asked to submit Attachment A – Budget Summary Form
May 16, 2017, 12:00 PM (PST)	Budgets due from organizations selected for interview
May 18 – 19, 2017	Structured interviews to be scheduled over three (3) days at WDC office in Seattle, Washington
June 9, 2017	Organization selected for Operator contract will be announced and non-selected organizations notified

**RFQ RULES**

Late responses will not be accepted or considered. The WDC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to accept or reject any or all items in the proposal, and to award the contract(s) in whole or in part as is deemed to be in the best interests of the WDC. The WDC reserves the right to hold interviews or to request additional information, to negotiate with any or all respondents on modifications to proposals, and/or to integrate components across proposals to achieve maximum efficiency. *All awards are contingent upon available funding. All awards are also subject to modification as federal, state, and WDC policies and procedures evolve.*

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The WDC has a clearly defined Conflict of Interest policy to maintain fairness and equity in procurement, decision-making, award, and allocation of WIOA monies, as well as any other monies received from grants awarded to the WDC. A conflict of interest may exist if an individual or organization has a financial or other interest in or participates in the selection or award of funding for an organization. Financial or other interest can be established either through ownership or employment.

For additional information on conflicts of interest, please refer to WDC Policies #09-2002 (Conflict of Interest) and #03-2002 (Procurement). WDC policies may be found at <http://www.seekingwdc.org/policies-guidelines>.

## APPEALS

Any entity submitting a proposal may appeal an award decision. Appeals must: 1) be in writing; 2) delivered to [operations@seekingwdc.org](mailto:operations@seekingwdc.org) within seven (7) calendar days after notice of an award decision; and, 3) state the reason(s) for the appeal and the desired remedy. The WDC will respond in writing to any appeal within ten (10) calendar days after its receipt. Awards may either go forward or may be held in abeyance pending resolution of any appeals at the sole discretion of the WDC.

The Seattle-King County Workforce Development Council is an equal opportunity employer and provider of employment and training services.  
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.  
Washington Telecommunications Relay Service 7-1-1