

**MOUNTAIN AREA
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**



**TECH/IT CAREER PATHWAYS OUTREACH
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

RFP Release Date: 2/27/23

**Proposal Deadline: 3/31/23
4:00 PM**

*The WNC Career Expo is partially funded by Title 1 WIOA federal funds as part of an award from the Employment and Training Administration, US Department of Labor totaling **\$2,254,453**. The total cost for this outreach is up to \$50,000 with 0% financed from non-governmental sources. Mountain Area Workforce Development Board is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer and Provider of Employment and Training Services*

I. INVITATION TO BID

To: All Potential Tech/IT Career Pathways Outreach Contractors

From: Nathan Ramey, Director, Mountain Area Workforce Development Board

Request for Proposals – Outreach for Tech/IT Career Pathways

The enclosed Request for Proposal (RFP) package contains the application instructions, specifications describing the services sought, budgeting requirements and format criteria for proposal review. While every effort has been made to include all necessary information, specifications and examples, the possible need for clarification, interpretation and other detail is recognized. **Bids must be received by March 31, 2023 by 4:00 PM** at Mountain Area Workforce Development Board, Land of Sky Regional Council, 339 New Leicester Highway, Suite 140, Asheville, NC 28806. ANY PROPOSALS RECEIVED AFTER THE DUE DATE AND TIME, REGARDLESS OF POSTMARK OR MAILING RECEIPT DATE OR WITHOUT THE SPECIFIED NUMBER OF **3 (three)** COPIES, CLEARLY MARKED, WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR SELECTION.

II. SOLICITATION PROCESS AND TERMS INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION

Proposals are being solicited for Tech/IT Career Pathways Outreach for the Local Area which includes Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania Counties. The Tech/IT sector in the Local Area have organized to develop a promotional workforce recruitment campaign to inform on Tech/IT career path opportunities. The campaign will include the development of various marketing assets such as videos, and postcards. Photography and video content will feature real world workplace environments and employees' own stories.

All forms should be completed with all information requested and executed properly. Proposals that fail to include all applicable forms and information will not be considered. Proposals for Tech/IT Career Pathways Outreach must conform to the draft Tech/IT Career Pathways for the Local Area which is attached and incorporated by reference into this RFP.

III. Assurances mandated by the bidder(s)

1. The bidder(s) shall provide affirmative action assurance that it (they) will comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the Non-traditional Employment for Women Act of 1991; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments

of 1972, as amended; and with all applicable requirements imposed by or pursuant to regulations implementing those laws, including but not limited to 29 CFR Part 34.

2. Pursuant to G.S. 143-48.5 and G.S. 147-33.95(g), the bidder shall certify that the bidder and the bidder's subcontractors, complies with the requirements of Article 2 of Chapter 64 of the NC General Statutes, including the requirement for each employer with **more than 25 employees** in North Carolina to verify the work authorization of its employees through the federal E-Verify system." E-Verify System Link: www.uscis.gov
3. The bidder shall conform to the following pursuant to G.S. 147-86.59, any person identified as engaging in investment activities in Iran, determined by appearing on the Final Divestment List created by the State Treasurer pursuant to G.S. 147-86.58, is ineligible to contract with the State of North Carolina or any political subdivision of the State. The Iran Divestment Act of 2015, G.S. 147-86.55 *et seq.** requires that each vendor, prior to contracting with the State certify, and the undersigned on behalf of the Vendor does hereby certify, to the following: 1. that the vendor is not identified on the Final Divestment List of entities that the State Treasurer has determined engages in investment activities in Iran; 2. that the vendor shall not utilize on any contract with the State agency any subcontractor that is identified on the Final Divestment List; and 3. that the undersigned is authorized by the Vendor to make this Certification.
4. The bidder shall comply with the Copeland Anti-kickback Act (40 USC 276c and 18 USC 874) as prescribed by 29 CFR 5.5 (a)(5); the Copeland Act prohibits illegal deductions or kickbacks of wages to which employees are otherwise entitled.
5. That bidder shall certify that there will be full compliance with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the Nontraditional Employment for Women Act of 1991; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1964, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended; and with all applicable requirements imposed by or pursuant to regulations implementing those laws, including but not limited to 29 CFR Part 34. The United States has the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance.
6. The bidder shall comply with the Buy American Act (41 USC 10a et seq) by purchasing only American-made equipment and products pursuant to WIOA Section 502.
7. The bidder, if awarded this contract, shall not require a laborer or mechanic employed in the performance of the contract to work in surroundings or under

working conditions which are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to health and safety pursuant to CFR 29-70.21613(c)(3).

8. The bidder shall comply with Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 USC 327-332) specifically (c)(3)(iii).

IV. Timeline

Action Item	Date	Location
RFP Notice of Release Date	February 27, 2023	
RFP Advertisement	March 1, 2, 3, 2023	Mountain Xpress, Land of Sky Regional Council website, Mountain Area Workforce Development Board website
RFP Release Date, Notice Date of Intent to Bid, Bidders Conference/Pre-Award Technical Assistance	Thursday, March 16, 2023 10:00 a.m.	Land of Sky Regional Council Office 339 New Leicester Highway, Suite 104 Asheville, NC 28806
Due Date for Proposals	No later than 4:00 pm, Friday, March 31, 2023	Nathan Ramsey Mountain Area WDB Director 339 New Leicester Highway, Suite 104 Asheville, NC 28806
Contract Award Date	No later than Monday, April 21, 2023	
Projected Completion Date	Monday, June 26, 2023	

Any questions regarding this RFP shall be sent via electronic mail to nathan@landofsky.org. The bidders conference on Thursday, March 16, 2023 at 10:00 am at the Land of Sky Regional Council office will provide bidders the opportunity to ask any questions regarding this RFP.

V. Specifications

The Tech/IT Career Pathways Outreach shall be targeted towards “Dislocated Workers” as defined by the Workforce & Innovation Opportunity Act of 2014 (hereinafter referred to as “WIOA”). The outreach can be available for other target populations but the focus should be “Dislocated Workers.”

“Dislocated Workers” are defined by WIOA as:

1. An individual who was terminated, laid off, or received a notice of termination or layoff; and Is determined unlikely to return to previous industry or occupations, and either one of the following: is eligible for or has exhausted entitlement to unemployment compensation or is not eligible for unemployment compensation but can show attachment to the workforce of sufficient duration.

2. An individual who was terminated, laid off, or received a notice of layoff from employment at a plant, facility, or enterprise as a result of: permanent closure or substantial layoff; or an individual employed at a facility at which the employer has made a general announcement that such facility will close within 180 days.
3. Was self-employed (including employment as a farmer, rancher or a fisherman) but is unemployed as result of general economic conditions in the community in which the individual resides or because of a natural disaster.
4. An individual who was dependent on the income of another family member and is no longer supported by the income of that family member; or is the dependent spouse of a member of the armed forces on active duty and whose family income is significantly reduced because of a deployment, a call or order to active duty, or service connected death or disability of the service member; and is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.
5. A non-retiree military service member who was discharged or released from service under conditions other than dishonorable, or has received a notice of military separation.
6. The spouse of a member of the armed forces on active duty, and who has experienced the loss of employment as a direct result of relocation to accommodate a permanent change in duty station of such member; or the spouse of a member of the armed forces on active duty and who is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.
7. In addition to the federal definitions of dislocated worker, an individual who has been laid off and is currently employed in a stop gap/temporary/or part-time position that is not earning a self-sufficient wage and is continuing to seek full time employment can be considered a dislocated worker.
8. In addition to the federal definitions of dislocated worker, an individual who has been unemployed for 13 consecutive weeks and is currently unemployed and seeking full time work can be considered a dislocated worker.

The Local Area which comprises Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania Counties has developed, with employer leadership and direction, draft IT/Tech Career Pathways. These draft pathways are incorporated by reference into this Request for Proposals.

The Mountain Area Workforce Development Board is seeking proposals to reach “Dislocated Workers” to encourage them to consider a career in Tech/IT Trades in our Local Area. The outreach materials that should be considered in proposals include the following:

1. Brochure handout: These materials which describe the Tech/IT Career Pathways in the Local Area, the Local Area refers to Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania Counties, will be used at career centers, human service agencies, job fairs, community colleges, universities, and other venues to reach Dislocated Workers. The brochure should be designed consistent with the existing “Mountain Area

Careers” brochures for the Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare and Hospitality & Tourism sector.

2. Videos: Development of short videos, between one minute and 90 seconds in length, which can include virtual job shadowing, worker testimonials, overview of Tech/IT employers in the Local Area, which illustrate the Tech/IT Career Pathways in the Local Area.
3. Website: Development of content for the existing “Mountain Area Careers” website that will demonstrate the Tech/IT Career Pathways in the Local Area. The website will be integrated into the existing “Mountain Area Careers” website which is designed in a Word Press format. The website should be capable of being integrated with other sector career pathways in the Local Area so dislocated workers can find all sector career pathways on one platform which is “Mountain Area Careers.” Website for “Mountain Area Careers” can be accessed at www.MountainAreaCareers.org or www.MountainAreaCareers.com.
4. Tech/IT Career Pathways brand – Developing a proven message to help Dislocated Workers better understand the Tech/IT Career Pathways available to them in the Local Area. Said brand shall be consistent with the “Mountain Area Careers” brand which will integrate Tech/IT with Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare and Hospitality & Tourism.
5. Key Messaging components include:
 - Tech/IT employers offer careers that make a difference in our community and world
 - Upward mobility is available and attainable for employees in the Tech/IT industry
 - Tech/IT employers pay very well and job security is better or comparable to most other industries
6. Deliverables:
 - Ten Videos: Ten videos between one minute and 90 seconds along with photography featuring ten healthcare employees in the Local Area. The ten videos should include multiple construction/skilled trades employers and to the extent possible shall include employers from all four counties in the Local Area.
 - Tri-Fold Brochure (1000 copies) design consistent in design with the “Mountain Area Careers” brochures for Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare and Hospitality & Tourism. Said brochure shall incorporate all of the region’s career pathways.
 - Website for “Mountain Area Careers” (which can be accessed at www.MountainAreaCareers.org or www.MountainAreaCareers.com) shall integrate the “Earn and Learn” opportunities available for Tech/IT careers in the Local Area including videos, photography and written testimonials similar to existing “Mountain Area Careers” outreach for the Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare and Hospitality & Tourism sectors.

Nothing in this RFP shall be considered as an offer to effect a contractual agreement. The Mountain Area Workforce Development Board reserves the right to reject all proposals. Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria: Effectiveness of messaging, quality of outreach materials, cost, quantity of outreach materials, innovative brand messaging based on data and Dislocated Worker feedback, including but not limited to focus groups and scientifically based surveys, ability of messaging to reach a broad audience of different demographic groups in the Local Area who could become Dislocated Workers, and targeted messaging to Dislocated Workers based on generational values.

The bid can select from or serve all of the deliverables listed above and must incorporate a description of the process of creative development and the asset collection. Costs to obtain assets, travel and other ancillary expenses must be included in the final bid proposal. A contingency expense line item will not be accepted.

The Mountain Area Workforce Development Board projects a budget of up to \$50,000.00 for Construction/Skilled Trades Career Pathways outreach initiatives. The projected budget is based on available funding and Board priorities to effectively engage in outreach to Dislocated Workers. This RFP does not commit the Board for any financial obligation and for any proposal that is selected, the amount of funding is not fixed and is within the entire and solely unreviewable discretion of the Board.