

Request for Proposals (RFP)
Empire State Development (ESD)
Operation of Western New York Workforce Training Center (WTC)
Buffalo, New York

Addendum 3:
2nd Round of Responses to Questions on the RFP
via email and at the May 11, 2016 Pre-Proposal Meeting

Q8. We are very interested in the training aspect but the way the RFP reads is that it is asking for submittal to operate the center. Do you know if we can just submit a bid for the training piece and if so what would you need from us?

A8: Unfortunately, the request for proposals is specifically for the full operation of the WNY Workforce Training Center, so you cannot submit a proposal for one component of the operation. Please also be advised that the actual training to be provided at the Center (involving advanced manufacturing and utilities certificate/degree programs) will be staffed via three State University of New York (SUNY) partners -- Buffalo State College, Alfred State College, and Erie Community College. While there may be opportunities for certain training-related wraparound services that you may provide, such services may only be included as part of a team proposal on all aspects of the Operation.

Q9. It is mentioned in the business plan that the educational partners are all SUNY providers. Can the operator utilize other educational providers at the Center? Such as BOCES, CTE/BPS Adult Education, etc.

A9. ESD is open to these training partners at the Center, but there could be issues with offering non-credit coursework as it may not be eligible for federal student aid. The goal is to put the student through training at minimal to no cost to the student, and to provide credit bearing courses to provide a stackable credential for the student to have future options to expand on their education at a higher degree level. There may also be an opportunity for other training providers to participate in "custom" training opportunities that are funded by industry, i.e. up-skilling of current employees.

Q10. Will construction trade unions provide training at the Center?

A10. At this time, ESD is focused on launching the Center with training offered in the areas of Advanced Manufacturing and Energy. However other areas of training could be offered at the Center in the future.

Q11. Who are we allowed to contact regarding the RFP and who are we not allowed to contact?

A11. All questions related to the RFP should be directed to ESD's designated RFP contact, Paul Tronolone at paul.tronolone@esd.ny.gov. Respondents are fully permitted and encouraged to contact each other on potential partnerships and/or collaboration on joint proposals.

Q12. Will contact information for those who have submitted Registration Letters/Letters of Intent be posted via addendum on the Contract Reporter website?

A12. No, the list of respondents that intend to submit a proposal will not be disclosed until the ESD Directors select a preferred contractor.

Q13. Are we required to identify our partners in the letter of intent and are all parties required to submit a letter?

A13. The lead organization (i.e. "prime" contractor) should submit the letter of intent noting the potential partners that have been identified. ESD understands that these partners are subject to change.

Q14. If a letter of intent has been submitted prior to this meeting, are we required to submit another letter?

A14. No; if you received a confirmation email from ESD acknowledging the receipt of your letter of intent, no further action is required.

Q15. Will any training be provided to the colleges/universities that may not be familiar or comfortable with the challenges of the target population of the Center? How will the colleges/universities adapt to this unique population?

A15. The operator would be responsible for coordinating this type of training, if required. If a respondent has unique experience in this area, or feels that this is a unique discriminating factor for their approach, they should include it in their proposal.

Q16. Will minority/women-owned business establishments (M/WBEs) registered in Erie County qualify for the M/WBE goal, or must you also be registered with the State?

A16. In order to be counted toward your M/WBE contracting goal, an M/WBE contractor or vendor must be certified by New York State.

Q17. The business plan includes a reliance on non-NYS funding, i.e. foundations, etc. Has ESD received any indication that these other funding sources are realistic?

A17. At this time the business plan is considered a draft document; thus, we do not have hard commitments. However, discussions with these organizations during the formulation of the draft business plan have been very positive. The selected operator would be responsible for actually applying for such assistance. However, respondents should use these estimates as a baseline for their financial plan submission.

Q18. What is the timing on the architectural design work and will the operator be included in this process?

A18. The Buffalo Urban Development Corporation (BUDC), the developer of the Center and the larger Northland Redevelopment Corridor, is just starting their architectural design process. BUDC has hired a team led by Watts Architecture and Engineering, P.C. to undertake this effort, and initial space planning and programming will start over the next few months with the SUNY partners. There will be an opportunity for the selected operator to participate in this process as construction is planned to begin in early 2017.

Q19. Since many of the individuals of the community have children, will there be any provision in the plan to accommodate onsite child care at the Center?

A19. This potential need was noted in the draft business plan. There is a plan to make room somewhere in the Northland complex for child care and other amenities such as food service. There are also multiple opportunities to partner with another local organization, i.e. local church, etc. to offer amenities such as child care nearby. These amenities are intended to serve students, the neighborhood, and other businesses in the area.

Q20. The initial contract term outlined in the RFP is two years. Will there be a soft-launch phase to accommodate construction and other ramp ups to ensure that the Center is operating efficiently and effectively?

A20. The contract term is listed at two years, with three one-year extensions. This is largely based on the timing of the ESD funding and to allow for a look-back early in the agreement term, considering this will be a new facility. A ramp-up period could be taken into consideration and it's possible that ESD would enter into a pre-operating agreement with the selected operator to accommodate the ramp-up period of design, construction, student pipeline development, etc.

Q21. Is the term of the contract negotiable?

A21. Respondents may propose a different contract term if desired. Final terms of the contract would be negotiated upon selection of the operator.

Q22. Are the Buffalo Billion support dollars outlined in the draft business plan estimates, or are those final numbers?

A22. The budget outlined in the business plan is an estimate of the ESD subsidy for the project. This should be used as a baseline for your response to the RFP, including M/WBE contracting goals.