

# Northwest Workforce Council

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## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RESULTING IN A CONTRACT PERIOD THROUGH JUNE 30, 2019

## ONE STOP SYSTEM OPERATOR

SERVING THE NORTHWEST WASHINGTON WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA  
(WHATCOM, SKAGIT, SAN JUAN AND ISLAND COUNTIES)

RELEASE DATE: May 14, 2018

**Original DUE DATE: June 13, 2018**

**RELEASE DATE for EXTENDED RFP Period: June 14, 2018**

**NEW (EXTENDED) DUE DATE: JULY 27, 2018**

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## **SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

Northwest Workforce Council (NWC) is requesting proposals from an organization, or consortium of organizations to fill the role of One-Stop System Operator under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for the Northwest Workforce Development Area, comprised of Whatcom, Skagit, San Juan and Island counties. There are three (3) certified one-stop centers, branded WorkSource, in the Northwest region: one each located in Whatcom, Skagit and Island counties. Services in each county are scaled to the relative share of WIOA Title IB formula funding.

This RFP is a re-issue of an RFP issued June 29, 2017 by the Council. The purpose of re-issuing the RFP for the role of One-Stop System Operator is to clarify and be clear to any prospective bidder that the Council does not require nor imply by language in this RFP that an individual must be present at each of the centers on a daily basis.

This RFP is expected to result in one (1) contract awarded to a single successful bidder to perform the One-Stop System Operator role in the Northwest Washington region. Bidders must serve as the One-Stop System Operator for all three WorkSource Centers in the region. Again, the role of Operator does not imply nor require that an individual be present at each of the centers on a daily basis.

The contract period will be July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019, with the potential additional one-year contract periods beyond June 30, 2019, up through June 2022, based on successful performance each prior year, future funding availability, and other factors.

### **2. ELIGIBLE PROPOSERS**

Proposals will be accepted from any eligible entity, or consortium of entities, as specified in the federal regulations, 20 CFR Section 678.600. One Stop System Operators may be a single entity (public, private or non-profit) or a consortium of entities. If a potential consortium of entities seeks to propose, and one of the entities is a one-stop partner, at least two additional one-stop partners must be included in the consortium. The complete list of one stop partners is available on page 11 of the Training Employment and Guidance letter (TEGL) [16-16](#). The types of entities that may be a One-Stop System Operator, and submit a proposal under this RFP include:

- An institution of higher education
- An Employment Service state agency established under the Wagner-Peyser Act
- A community-based organization, non-profit organization, or workforce intermediary
- A private for-profit entity
- A government agency
- A local workforce development board, with approval of the chief elected official and the governor

- Another interested organization or entity, which is capable of carrying out the duties of the one-stop system operator. Examples may include a local chamber of commerce or other business organization, or a labor organization.

The entity serving as the One-Stop System Operator that also serves in a different role within the one-stop delivery system must establish and demonstrate sufficient firewalls and conflict of interest policies and procedures. These policies must be compatible and coordinated with similar NWC policies and procedures and must conform to the specifications of 20 CFR section 679.430.

The content of the proposal from the successful bidder will become the basis for the negotiation of a final contract agreement. Applicants are advised that most documents in the possession of NWC are considered public records and are subject to disclosure under the State Public Records Law.

The successful bidder will be required to agree to the NWC Contract General Terms and Conditions, accessible at <http://nwboard.org>, and agree to comply with any policies created by NWC and any applicable federal or state policies, regulations, or laws. A copy of the General Terms and Conditions for all contracts will be sent to bidders upon request.

### **3. ESTIMATED CONTRACT AMOUNT**

There is a maximum of \$25,000 in WIOA Program funds for the One-Stop Operator function during the initial funding period of July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019.

### **4. PROPOSAL FORMAT REQUIREMENTS (See also Section IV, #2, Submission Requirements)**

Organizations submitting a proposal must follow ALL the following format requirements, and not exceed nine (9) pages:

- **Paper:** 8 ½ by 11 inch
- **Font:** 12 point— Calibri
- **Charts/Tables:** 12 point— Calibri
- **Margins:** 1 inch
- **Spacing:** 1.5 spaced
- **Pages:** Numbered

### **5. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

Proposals and required documents, in final form, must be submitted electronically to: [rdietz@workforcenorthwest.org](mailto:rdietz@workforcenorthwest.org) on or before **4PM (PST) July 27, 2018**. Proposals received after that time will not be accepted.

We encourage all interested parties to submit proposals for consideration.

## 6. REVISED PROCUREMENT TIMELINE

The following is presented to advise all prospective Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act One-Stop System Operator bidders of the timelines for the bid, review and selection process.

Action	Date	Time
Official Release of One-Stop System Operator RFP	May 14, 2018	
Bidders' Conference NWC Conference Room, 101 Prospect Street, Bellingham	May 24, 2018	1:30-2:30 PM
Revised -Submission period for electronically submitted questions	July 5 through July 18	Until July 18, 4PM
New(Extended) Proposal Due Date	July 27, 2018	No later than 4PM
Proposal Review Period	TBD	TBD, Notice to be Posted on nwboard.org
Review and Action by NWC Executive Committee – Selection	TBD	TBD, Notice to be Posted on nwboard.org
Action by Northwest Workforce Council	TBD	TBD, Notice to be Posted on nwboard.org

## ***SECTION II: NORTHWEST WORKFORCE COUNCIL and NORTHWEST WORKFORCE SYSTEM PARTNERSHIP OVERVIEW***

### **NORTHWEST WORKFORCE COUNCIL**

Northwest Workforce Council (NWC) is a policy and oversight Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) responsible for organizing a comprehensive, region-wide response to the challenges of building a highly skilled workforce in its designated service area, comprised of Whatcom, Skagit, San Juan and Island Counties in Washington state. As defined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Public Law 113-128, the Council maintains majority private-sector business representation to ensure the voices of local employers, as key customers of the system, inform policy-setting and decision making. The Council works as an equal partner with local elected officials.

This RFP was created in response to the WIOA legislation. WIOA provides the framework for a national workforce preparation system that is flexible, responsive, customer-focused, and locally managed. Bidders are strongly encouraged to read Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGLs) [04-15](#) and [16-16](#) issued by the Department of Labor that outline the vision and operational guidance for the one-stop system under WIOA.

Of particular focus in the legislation are the following three key driving messages:

- Local employer and job seeker needs drive workforce solutions and service delivery.
- Continuous quality improvement is critical for excellent customer service and performance outcomes.
- The workforce system supports strong regional economies and plays an active role in community and workforce development.

Through its authorizing federal legislation, WIOA, the Council, in partnership with local elected officials, is responsible for oversight of the regional workforce development system, including the one-stop service delivery system. The Council provides leadership and vision for the region's one-stop system, centers and any affiliated site(s). Among Council responsibilities particularly applicable to one-stop system operations are the following:

- Develop the local workforce plan, in partnership with the designated chief local elected official;
- Conduct workforce research and regional labor market analysis;
- Convene, broker and leverage;
- Business and employer engagement;
- Career pathways development;
- Promote proven and promising practices;
- Negotiation of local performance accountability measures;
- Selection and oversight of One-Stop System Operator;
- Budget and administration;

- Assure accessibility for persons with disabilities

The Council retains direct responsibility and authority over the above functions, as well as any other functions not specifically assigned to the One-Stop System Operator.

In addition to selection of the One-Stop Operator, the Council, through its Quality Assurance Committee, actively monitors local performance and quality measures for the system. A quarterly Workforce System Performance Report is prepared by NWC, reviewed by the Committee and forwarded to the full Council membership. The Committee may impose conditions, corrective actions, or provide technical assistance to the System Operator based upon its review and analysis of the Workforce System Performance Report. Additionally, the NWC may request the OSSO contribute to the Quarterly System Report.

WIOA envisions a workforce development system designed to ensure that employment and training services available through multiple service providers are integrated through a one-stop delivery system that supports accessible, high quality services for job seekers and businesses.

Northwest Workforce Council strategically oversees the quality and design of the local workforce development system that accomplishes that vision. The Council, working with local elected officials, oversees a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Council and workforce development partners regarding the operation and shared costs of the integrated workforce delivery system in the local area.

The Council monitors the development and operation of one-stop centers, known as WorkSource Centers in Washington State and nationally as American Job Centers. The sites serve as convenient and recognizable public access points to the workforce development system. Those full-service centers are: WorkSource Whatcom in Bellingham, WorkSource Skagit in Mt. Vernon, and WorkSource Whidbey in Oak Harbor.

Services in the WorkSource Centers, in line with the goals of the WIOA, have fundamental characteristics which:

- Are focused on the customer, while organized to the needs of job seekers, students and other program participants, workers and businesses;
- Are designed so that people can move easily among and between programs and the workplace;
- Meet the needs of learners, including those who have been traditionally under-served in the past due to real or perceived barriers;
- Provide customized support services such as career counseling, and connections to child care and financial aid;
- Are competency-based using Workforce Skill Standards so that all students and other trainees are able to master the skills and knowledge they require in as much or as little time as they need to do so;

- Are coordinated with private sector training programs, public education entities, social and other services, and economic development strategies;
- Rely on accurate and current labor market information so that people acquire the skills and knowledge local employers need to remain competitive and productive and workers with those skills are in demand;
- Provide students and workers with a foundation of basic skills as well as the higher levels of skills and knowledge to equip them to be lifelong learners; and
- Are accountable for results and committed to using outcome measures to continuously improve program and system quality.

## NWC BOARD STRATEGY FOR PROGRAM AND RESOURCE ALIGNMENT THROUGH ONE-STOP SYSTEM PARTNERSHIP

WIOA requires service delivery through partnership of (6) core programs: WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Services), WIOA Title II (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act), WIOA Title III (Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service) and WIOA Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation Program); Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and other key partners including Career and Technical Education (community and technical colleges) and other programs. (Page 11 of TEGL [16-16](#))

Each of these services were established to fulfill certain purposes for specific populations of customers. In most cases, these purposes and eligible populations are specified by state or federal statute. Rules established by agencies provide greater specificity to guide staff in carrying out their programs. Although these program designs may make sense in and of themselves, when viewed in combination, they often create a confusing array of government services to the customers they are intended to serve. The goal of integration of these programs into the *workforce development system* is to improve customer access and to better coordinate the delivery of workforce development services. Integration of services requires a partnership among key agencies that are committed to a shared vision of an integrated, customer-focused service delivery system.

The Northwest Workforce Development Area has had such a functional partnership as envisioned by WIOA in place since 1992 in Whatcom County and since 1994 in Skagit and Island Counties.

The Council's objective for the partnership effort has been the attainment of shared principles, beliefs, and priorities, across programs and across providers as expressed in the Council's [\*Framework for Doing Business.\*](#)

The value of partnership is achieved when each organization finds it can achieve enhanced performance and customer satisfaction through collaborative efforts and shared processes and systems which allow partners to:



- Share information so that the information becomes system knowledge and is used by all for the benefit of the customer;
- Provide an environment of collegiality which supports a culture of doing whatever it takes to deliver quality services to the customer;
- Promote individual agency goals as goals of the collective so as to create strategies which support each partner, which in turn enhances the performance of each partner;
- Coordinates planning across multiple programs;
- Assists in meeting state and federal mandates to coordinate and collaborate; and
- Provides a learning environment and culture for staff to build and practice new skills.

A partnership-based governance structure is established through an inter-agency, cross-functional, team-based management approach. This governance structure is designed to hold partners accountable to the Council's mission and goals, to empower mid-managers and line staff of partner entities with decision-making capacity for the design and management of the system and is intended to manage both the performance and continuous quality improvement of the system.

The remainder of this section describes the partnership governance structure through description of the teams which constitute it, as well as the key documents identifying goals and operating principles.

Three types of teams inform the workforce service delivery system:

1. **Advisory Committee: Regional Access** - Convened by the Council, chaired by a Council member, and consisting of each partner program's representative. Responsible for visioning a unified and integrated system of service delivery that, in part, affords improved access for populations with a wide variety of barriers including: economic, geographic, physical, mental and/or behavioral health. The role of this team is the removal of real or perceived programmatic, process, cultural, and institutional barriers that get in the way of achieving the vision and the realignment of processes within their own agencies to achieve integrated service delivery, both in the Center environment and within the workforce system.
2. **Process Improvement Teams** - A team designated as a process improvement team is responsible and accountable for continuous improvements to a specific process. These teams may have created a product, service, or process or they may be chartered to continue improvement of a product, service or process created by a work team. This type of team is ongoing.
3. **Work Teams** - As work tasks emerge through discussions at the Regional Access Advisory Committee, the Northwest Partnership Management Team or other chartered team, team members and other stakeholders having a vested interest or content expertise volunteer to work in smaller teams to carry out the intent. Work teams may create a needed product, service, and/or process. A work team is disbanded when the product, service, and/or process they are responsible for designing is completed.

### **The Northwest Partnership Management Team**

The Northwest Partnership Management Team, chartered and convened by NWC, is charged with achieving consistency in quality and customer outcomes in the workforce development system's operational performance. It serves as an ongoing process improvement team. The Management Team's broad operational focus transcends the tactical operational focus of other teams. The Management Team, under guidance of NWC leadership, and in coordination with the One-Stop System Operator, has the authority to direct and task the work of partnership teams to achieve system outcomes. The team reports to the system's strategic leadership, both in taking direction and elevating issues of strategic import and/or resource deployment.

The Partnership Management Team membership is comprised of management staff from each full partner organization (NWC MOU signatories), One Stop System Operator, and invited stakeholders. Partner organizations' leadership nominate managers appropriate to serve on the team. The team is self-facilitating and self-managed.

Activities of the Partnership's Management Team include:

- Identify and remove process barriers which impede system alignment
- Identify and improve core processes to attain maximum effectiveness and customer outcomes
- Align internal core processes and procedures across the workforce development system to ensure they are systematic and saturated
- Champion process improvements made to core processes and ensure implantation of the systems, processes, and tools required to implement
- Promote system performance and its customers' satisfaction
- Ensure procedures facilitate a culture of continuous improvement
- Align procedures to Northwest Workforce Council's core values for the workforce development system, WorkSource system operational policies, and WorkSource certification requirements
- Assist in the development and coordination of biannual system strategies to affect anticipated future workforce needs
- Provide the necessary project management to achieve its own work plan and to ensure effective, system-wide implementations
- Identify and foster new relationships with community stakeholders and service providers

### **WorkSource Operations Group**

This subteam of the Northwest Partnership Management Team is responsible for implementing operations within the WorkSource sites in alignment with the Council's guidance and oversight. Each agency is responsible to formally roll-out to their respective staff the operational design and implementation protocols (including subsequent management and performance outcomes). Membership is comprised of the System Operator and managerial representation from each partner organization operating programs from within a WorkSource site. This working group is an effective platform for the System Operator to identify strategy and opportunity in implementing the Council's vision for the system and through the Northwest Regional Workforce Plan.

Members monitor, coach, and otherwise assure system partners are fulfilling and maintaining their respective responsibilities as defined in their Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the NWC and chief local elected official, or other cooperative agreements in place.

### **Center Use Meetings**

All WorkSource site partner staff attend bi-monthly center use meetings to further strengthen quality and integrated service delivery. Center use meetings serve as a primary mechanism for:

- **Staff Engagement:** Providing an opportunity to identify, discuss and resolve issues of staff and/or management concern. Foster effective dialogue and problem resolution skills.
- **Professional Development:** Facilitating cross-training of staff from partner organizations to increase staff knowledge of other partner's programs and services and share expertise related to the needs of specific populations. This serves to increase each staff member's competence, capacity, and efficiency in providing integrated services, and ensures seamless referral linkages to partner programs.
- **Compliance:** Assuring staff understand and follow federal, state and local legislation, policies, procedures and protocols NWC has in place for service delivery within the Centers and across the partnership service delivery system.
- **Safety and Security:** Ensuring staff are familiar with policy, protocol, systems and response which help to ensure a safe and productive environment for customers and staff.

## **KEY NWC DOCUMENTS IDENTIFYING GOALS, VISION AND OPERATING PRINCIPLES**

All bidders are encouraged to review the following documents which further explain NWCs mission, vision, goals and objective, as well as its guidance for WorkSource and partnership as outlined above. All are accessible through the links below and are located on the NWC website at [www.nwboard.org](http://www.nwboard.org).

- [Northwest Regional Workforce Plan 2016-2020](#)
- [Framework for Doing Business](#)
- [Key System Integrators](#)
- [WorkSource Certification Application](#)
- [Regional Business Services Plan](#)

### ***SECTION III: ONE-STOP SYSTEM OPERATOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES***

#### **Background**

The Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides that each local workforce board select, through a competitive procurement process, a One-Stop System Operator to perform duties in support of effective operation of the One-Stop system in the designated service area. The role of “Operator” is defined in federal law as “coordinating service delivery of the required one stop partners and service providers.” Additional duties may be assigned by the local board, but boards are not required to do so.

Responding to the requirements of the WIOA, Northwest Workforce Council (NWC), the local workforce development board, is initiating this competitive process to select a provider to fill the Operator role. In doing so, NWC is not adding additional duties to the Operator role beyond that defined in law, that is, coordinating service delivery among the required partners and service providers. NWC has chosen to retain all functions not specifically assigned to the Operator, and its rationale may be helpful information for those interested in applying to fill the role.

Northwest Workforce Council has been a strategically strong and engaged local workforce development board throughout its long history. The Council, while a strategy-focused board, will maintain its proactive role including assuring market-responsive, quality-driven service delivery throughout the region’s workforce development system and WorkSource Comprehensive Career Centers. NWC intends to oversee workforce system operations in that fashion with its system partners, and retain all functions authorized local workforce development boards under the WIOA.

As described earlier, NWC maintains a partnership-based governance structure established through an inter-agency, cross-functional, team-based management approach. This governance structure is designed to hold partners accountable to the Council’s mission and goals, to empower mid-managers and line staff with decision-making responsibility for the design and management of the system and is intended to manage both the performance and continuous quality improvement of the system.

The Northwest Workforce Development Area has broad geographic reach, encompassing four counties and stretching from Skagit County in the south, north to the Canadian border, east to the Cascades Range and west to the San Juan archipelago. Its population is not dense, at approximately 105 persons per square mile (437, 081 estimated total population in 2016). With the smaller population base, despite its broad and multi- jurisdictional reach, its formula share of federal workforce development funds is significantly lower than highly populated areas of the state.

NWC has taken a proactive and sustained role in the development and oversight of a comprehensive integrated service delivery system since implementing WIOA’s predecessor legislation, the Workforce Investment Act (1998). Under WIA, the Council’s service delivery design elements were developed and institutionalized within the regional workforce system structure. Those same elements, also found in WIOA, are incorporated into the Council’s current service delivery framework. Through its long-standing oversight of the region’s one-stop centers, branded “WorkSource” in Washington State, NWC

and its regional partners have effectively operated an integrated and aligned workforce development service delivery system. Partners are directly involved in the design of the operational features of the centers.

System performance has been achieved through the Council's strategic vision, policy and guidance, and a robust partnership structure created and fostered by the Council. NWC is confident the excellent work of the partnership will continue under WIOA, without creating an expansive role for the One-Stop System Operator. To that end, NWC looks forward to the opportunities under this RFP to develop new and innovative approaches to system and partnership development and in achieving outcome targets and service delivery goals.

NWC maintains a robust process to ensure the WorkSource sites operate in such a fashion as to produce results for both customers and program operators. The Council's WorkSource Certification Application articulates the Council's high-performance expectations for the region's WorkSource Centers and Affiliated sites. Operators and the sites they operate must represent the highest standards of quality in the delivery of employment and training services. Any entity wishing certification must demonstrate processes, practices, and performance outcomes which meet or exceed a set of quality standards based upon the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award criteria. The successful bidder in this RFP will assist in assuring those standards are maintained and will support a structure for partner staff to participate in the certification process.

## **ONE-STOP OPERATOR FUNCTIONS DEFINED**

### **Overview**

The role of the One-Stop System Operator (Operator) is facilitating coordination of service delivery in the one-stop environment among WIOA required partners and service providers.

The System Operator reports to NWC's Regional Manager, who is a direct report to NWC's CEO, who in turn reports to the board and its committees. The Operator does not have a direct role or relationship with the NWC board. (See One-Stop System Operator Organizational Relationship Chart – page 16)

The System Operator supports NWC in fulfilling its role in assuring integration of service delivery throughout the system, including: supporting customer referrals and customer access to assessments and services; collection and evaluation of customer feedback; operationalizing system continuous quality improvement goals and supporting system-wide communication.

Under direction of NWC's Regional Manager, the System Operator coordinates with partners the provision of consistent and high quality technical assistance and training, fully integrating NWC's policies, operational protocols and quality standards, to ensure WorkSource staff are providing the highest and most consistent quality service to a wide array of job seekers and employer customers.

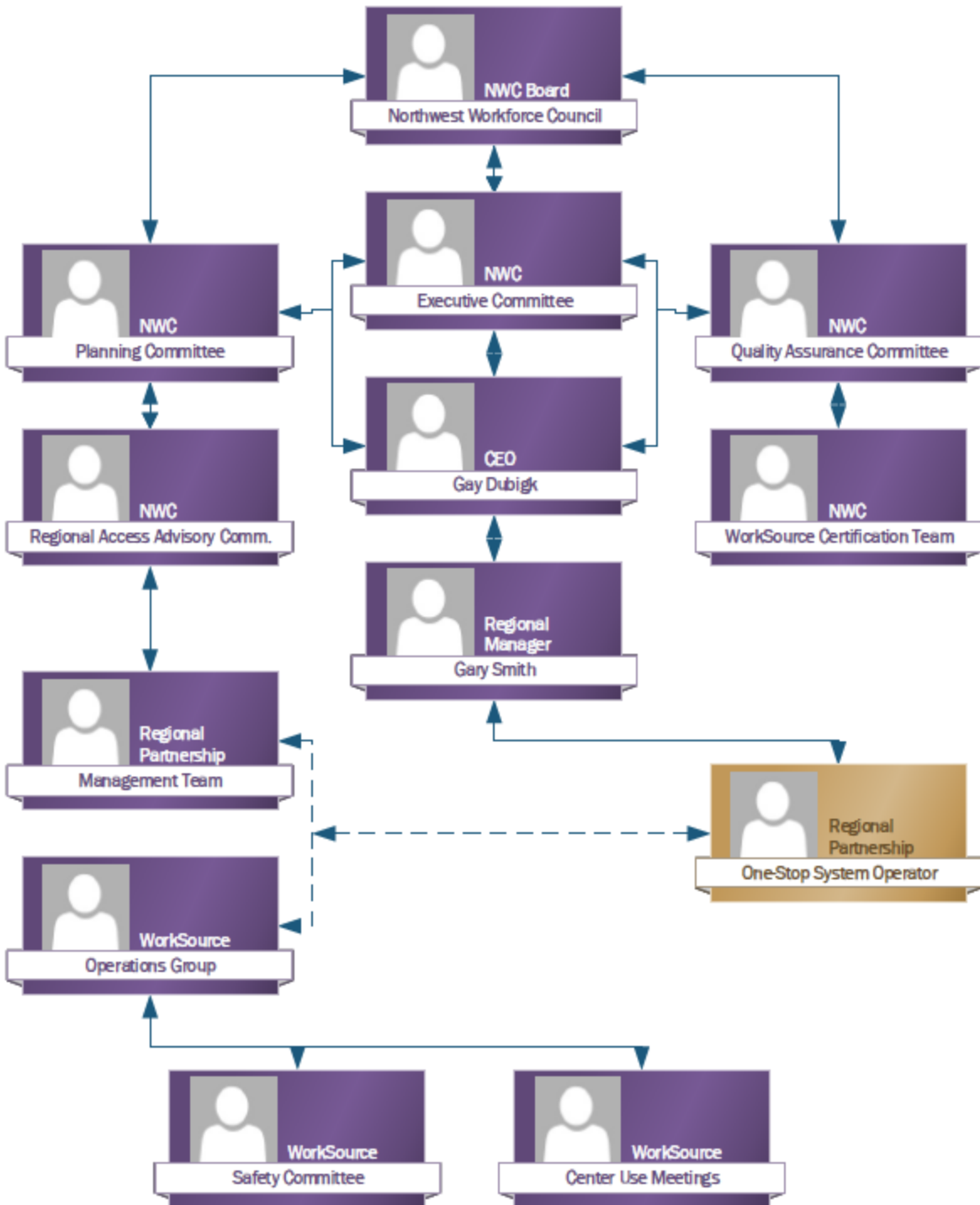
The System Operator will coordinate service delivery issues among one-stop partners on behalf of the NWC. These areas include, but are not limited to:

- A. **Cultivating and sustaining a culture of customer focus and high performance:**
- The Council, through a variety of instruments previously mentioned, articulates its vision and expectations for a high-performance workforce system, inclusive of WorkSource service delivery locations. The System Operator is responsible to instill these values and performance expectations throughout the WorkSource sites while ensuring their operationalization into effective service delivery structures and strategies.
  - Encourage relevant, professional news articles posted on DAWN, the region's knowledge management system at least once per week.
  - Ensure services are coordinated among one-stop partners in Centers, with guidance from NWC
  - Ensures a formal, functioning referral process for services within and outside of the Centers
- B. **Monitor partnership teams and meetings:** (See One-Stop System Operator Organizational Relationship Chart)
- Monitor agendas and progress of the various partnership teams to ensure alignment with system goals and Centers' Quality Plan
  - Facilitate and/or participate in Management Team and WorkSource Operations Group meetings as scheduling allows
  - Report periodic assessments and observations of teams' progress and health to NWC Regional Manager
- C. **Performance management and reporting:**
- Maintain system-wide focus on performance management of WIOA common measures and other individualized performance goals that serve to strengthen the system as a whole.
  - Oversee the timely population of data from system partners for NWC's System Performance Dashboard in accordance with a schedule determined by NWC.
  - Provide reports as required by NWC.
  - Coordinate the WorkSource customer comment card system (and other customer satisfaction initiatives within each Center), data entry, analysis, customer replies, and quarterly reporting.
  - Provide technical assistance to facilitate inclusionary and participatory completion and submittal of NWC's WorkSource Certification Application, ensuring ongoing activities in support of program integration and continuous quality improvement initiatives.
- D. **Coordination and oversight of daily operations:**
- The OSSO, in coordination with the NWC Regional Manager, directly or through designee(s), ensure each Center operates consistent with NWC's quality and performance framework, including but not limited to:
- Ensure a WorkSource environment that is welcoming, productive, and responsive to

customer needs while assuring access to center and system services to a universal population;

- Assist in developing and upholding NWC policy and protocol for WorkSource operations;
- Ensure the region's customer flow model is integrated and functioning at each WorkSource site location;
- Ensure services are adequately staffed and offered appropriately;
- Ensure facilities are managed in such a way as to ensure their highest operating efficiencies, property protection and safety.
- Ensure the function of Customer Concern and Complaint Coordinator is known and performed in accordance with NWC policy and established protocols;
- Maintain the WorkSource Code of Conduct by managing a response system to resolve behavioral incidents or emergencies at the WorkSource sites.

# Northwest Workforce Council One-Stop System Operator Organizational Chart





## **SECTION IV: PRE-SUBMISSION INQUIRIES; SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

### **1. RFP INQUIRIES, QUESTIONS, AND ANSWERS**

The primary mode of communication between NWC and potential bidders participating in this RFP will occur through use of the NWC website, <http://nwboard.org>, beginning May 14, 2018. Interested parties may download the Request for Proposals from the website.

After the Bidders' Conference scheduled for May 24, 2018, a question and answer page will be available on the website. **Revised (Extended Q & A) – Questions may be submitted during the extension period from July 5, 2018, through July 18, 2018, 4PM**), after which no further questions will be accepted. All questions must be submitted via email to: Richard Dietz, [rdietz@workforcenorthwest.org](mailto:rdietz@workforcenorthwest.org). It is the bidder's responsibility to check the web page frequently to stay connected and apprised throughout the process. If questions are received, they will be posted to the website with NWC responses as soon as feasible through **the July 18, Q&A period**.

**Questions will not be answered over the phone or in person.**

### **2. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

All proposals must be received by NWC by **4:00 p.m.** Pacific Daylight Savings Time on **July 27, 2018**. Proposals not received by this time will be automatically disqualified from competition.

***All proposals must be submitted electronically by the above due date. Submit the proposal to: [rdietz@workforcenorthwest.org](mailto:rdietz@workforcenorthwest.org).***

In addition, a hard copy of the completed proposal may also be mailed to NWC, P.O. Box 2009, Bellingham, WA, 98227, or delivered to 101 Prospect Street, Bellingham, WA 98225 before the due date and time.

Submissions, both electronic (required) and by mail or delivery (optional) must include all of the following, in the proposal format described in Section I, #4 (proposal format requirements):

- Proposal Cover Page (appendix 1)
- Proposal Written Narrative (see Section V)
- Letters of recommendation or support will **not** be accepted.
- All proposals are to be submitted in accordance with the terms, conditions and procedures stated in the RFP.
- Any submitted proposal shall remain a valid proposal for 90 days after the closing date of the RFP.

## **Withdrawals**

A submitted application may be withdrawn prior to the application due date. A written request to withdraw the application must be submitted to NWC. If a bidder does not withdraw a proposal by the due date, the proposal becomes the property of NWC and may be subject to public disclosure according to the Freedom of Information Act.

## **Section V: PROPOSAL WRITTEN NARRATIVE, EVALUATION AND SELECTION**

### **1. Proposal Written Narrative**

NWC requests up to 9 written pages, (1.5 spacing) that address the following:

- A. Describe your organizational capacity and any previous experience with providing the services listed in Section III, One-Stop System Operator Roles and Responsibilities. Describe the staff and/or personnel that will be involved in the project. Specify the nature and length of experience you or your organization has working with NWC or other workforce development agencies and describe how this experience is relevant to the One-Stop System Operator Roles and Responsibilities described in this RFP.
- B. Describe your plan and approach for implementing the One-Stop System Operator Roles and Responsibilities, Section III, with particular attention to sections A-D. Provide any other information or potential ideas you'd like to add beyond the One-Stop Operator Roles and Responsibilities.
- C. State your proposed annual cost and estimated time commitment to fulfill all requirements listed in this RFP.

### **2. Proposal Review Criteria**

- A. Experience and Personnel (40%)

The successful bidder must show organizational capacity, including experience in similar activities described in the RFP and working knowledge of Northwest Workforce Council or other workforce development programs/agencies and with the Northwest Workforce Development Area (Whatcom, Skagit, Island & San Juan Counties). Personnel assigned to the contract will be experienced and/or well educated in such endeavors.
- B. Project Approach (40%)

The successful bidder must propose a plan and approach that will demonstrate an understanding of systemic partnership development and coordination. Knowledge and expertise with utilizing a partnership structure and advising and reporting on improving services will be present.

C. Proposed Fees (20%)

The successful bidder will provide proposed fees and an estimated time commitment which are competitive and reasonable.

NWC anticipates the annual cost of the One Stop System Operator not to exceed \$25,000. Bidders must include a line item budget for salaries and benefits, and travel.

**3. Evaluation and Selection Process**

Proposals will undergo the following review:

Northwest Workforce Council staff will first review proposals for technical compliance and completeness with the RFP and confirm that all required sections of the RFP are completed and may prepare a summary of the bidder's qualifying proposal narrative and budget. Non-responsive proposals will not be considered.

Proposals will then be reviewed and rated by an evaluation committee in accordance with Proposal Review Criteria as specified above (#2). Finalists may be interviewed by the committee.

The recommendations of the evaluation committee will be presented to the Executive Committee of NWC for approval. All contract awards will be considered provisional, pending receipt of any additional documentation regarding administrative qualifications and/or any other areas of concern and the successful completion of the contract negotiations.

This RFP does not commit the Northwest Workforce Council to award a contract, to pay any cost in preparation of a proposal in response to this request, or to procure or contract for services or supplies. The NWC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this request, to negotiate with all qualified sources, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP, if it is in the best interest of the board to do so. Further, all requested amounts are subject to reduction based on final award selections and availability of funds.

In addition, NWC retains the right, based on emergent need, changes in federal regulation or state policy, to revise or alter duties and assignments from the exact language in this RFP, without materially altering the Scope of Work defined in this RFP.

**4. Appeals**

Any dispute, claim or protest arising from this procurement shall be made in writing and mailed to the Chair of the Northwest Workforce Council with five (5) working days of the alleged occurrence. Response to filed disputes, claims and protests shall be made in writing within ten (10) working days of receipt of protests. A hearing shall be convened by the Executive Committee as soon as is practicable and within ten (10) days of the written response, if the Executive Committee determines that a procedural error was made in the selection process or that a violation of federal law or implementing regulations has occurred. Decisions made by the Executive Committee shall be issued in writing within five working days.

## ***SECTION VI: NWC PROVISIONS AND DISCLAIMERS***

1. All solicitations are contingent upon availability of funds.
2. This RFP is for one year and is renewable at the discretion of the Northwest Workforce Council through June of 2022.
3. NWC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received.
4. NWC reserves the right to waive minor irregularities in offers received.
5. This RFP does not obligate NWC to award a contract.
6. NWC may accept any item or group of items of any offer, unless the bidder qualified its offer by specific limitations.
7. NWC may select a service provider based on initial offers received, without discussion of such offers with bidder. Accordingly, each offer should be submitted on the most favorable terms from both a price and technical standpoint that the bidder can submit to NWC.
8. Proposals are expected to follow the format set forth in the RFP and adhere to the minimum requirements specified therein.
9. NWC reserves the right to request additional data or oral discussion or documentation in support of written offers.
10. No costs will be paid to cover the expense of preparing a proposal or procuring a contract for services or supplies under WIOA.
11. All data, material, and documentation originated and prepared by the bidder pursuant to the contract shall belong exclusively to NWC and be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.
12. Formal notification to award a contract and the actual execution of a contract are subject to the following: receipt of WIOA funds anticipated, results of negotiations between selected bidders and NWC staff, and continued availability of WIOA funds.
13. Any changes to the WIOA program, performance measures, funding level, or Board direction may result in a change in contracting. In such instances, NWC will not be held liable for what is in the bidder's proposal or this Request for Proposals package.
14. Proposals submitted for funding consideration must be consistent with, and, if funded, operated according to, the federal WIOA legislation, all applicable federal regulations, State of Washington policies, and NWC policies and procedures.
15. Service providers selected for funding must also ensure compliance with the following, as applicable: U.S. DOL regulations 20 CFR Part 652; 29 CFR Parts 96, 93, 37,2, and 98; 48 CFR Part 31; Office of Management and Budget (OMB) 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR 2900..
16. Service providers will be expected to adhere to NWC procedures to collect, verify, and submit data as required and monthly invoices to NWC .
17. NWC may decide not to fund part or all of a proposal even though it is found to be in the competitive range, if, in the opinion of NWC , the services proposed are not needed, or the costs are

higher than NWC finds reasonable in relation to the overall funds available, or if past management concerns lead NWC to believe that the bidder has undertaken more services than it can successfully provide.

18. NWC has a right to fund a lower-ranked proposal over a higher-ranked proposal because of valid policy considerations, including but not limited to, organizational experience, geographical considerations, leveraging of outside resources, and target populations.
19. NWC is required to abide by all WIOA legislation and regulations. Therefore, NWC reserves the right to modify or alter the requirements and standards set forth in this RFP based on program requirements mandated by state or federal agencies.
20. All bidders must ensure equal opportunity to all individuals. No individual shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any WIOA-funded program or activity because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief.
21. All bidders must ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
22. The contract award will not be final until NWC and the bidder have executed a mutually satisfactory contractual agreement. NWC reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposal submitted. No program activity may begin prior to final NWC approval of the award and execution of a contractual agreement between the successful bidder and NWC.
23. NWC reserves the right to cancel an award immediately if new state or federal regulations or policy makes it necessary to change the purpose or content substantially, or other such prohibitions.
24. NWC reserves the right to determine the funding levels of contracts finally awarded. Such determination will depend upon overall fund availability and other factors arising during the proposal review process. Submitted bids in excess of the maximum amount of funds specified for this RFP will be rejected.
25. The proposal warrants that the costs quoted for services in response to the RFP are not in excess of those that would be charged any other individual for the same services performed by the bidder.
26. NWC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received and to negotiate with any and all bidders on modifications to proposals.
27. Applicants are advised that most documents in the possession of NWC are considered public records and subject to disclosure under the State of Washington's Public Records Law.
28. The funding decisions resulting from this RFP are final. The NWC will not give proposal feedback to successful or unsuccessful bidders.
29. All contractors shall obtain annually an organization-wide audit, and provide a copy to the NWC. If the organization receives more than \$750,000 annually in federal funding, the audit must comply with standards set forth in OMB 2 CFR200, Subpart F.

# PROPOSAL COVER PAGE

## NORTHWEST WORKFORCE COUNCIL ONE-STOP SYSTEM OPERATOR RFP (RFP)

### A. Application Cover Sheet

Proposer Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Total Request \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
US Dollar Amount

### B. Certification

I certify that above named proposer is legally authorized to submit this application requesting funding through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The information contained in this proposal fairly represents the proposer’s agency, organization, or business and its proposed operating plans. I acknowledge that I have read and understand the requirements of the RFP and am prepared to implement services as specified in this proposal. I certify that the proposed program services have been designed in compliance with the RFP requirements and WIOA regulations. I also certify that I am authorized to sign this proposal. This proposal is firm for a period of at least ninety (90) days from the deadline for RFP submission.

I affirm that no employee and/or Northwest Workforce Council Member or officer of any governmental agency has any financial or other interest in this organization.

I affirm that this organization, if selected as One-Stop System Operator through this RFP, will consistently maintain a proactive separation of duties, and avoid all conflicts of interest, between the One-Stop System Operator role, and any other role this organization may perform.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Typed Name and Title \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Internet Links and Resources:**

**Federal Law and Guidance**

- [WIOA, Public Law 113-128](#)
- [WIOA, Final Federal Rules](#)
- [WIOA Operating Guidance to Date – Department of Labor](#)