



**Request for Quotes
Business Services Consultant Strategy
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
Employment Advancement and Retention Network (EARN)**

Request for Quotes Issue Date 10/18/2024

Proposals Due 11/18/2024

Evaluations 11/22/2024-11/26/2024

Anticipated Award Notification 12/17/2024

Anticipated Contract Start 01/01/2025

Federal funds will finance 100% of the project.
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with
disabilities.

SCPa Works and its contracted consultants reflect Equal Opportunity
Employers/Programs.

Project Overview

SCPa Works, South Central PA's local workforce development board, seeks a consultant to develop a three-year Business Services Strategy. This strategy will include an action plan to enhance business engagement, foster industry partnerships, and create a sustainable talent pipeline for regional employers to support South Central Pennsylvania's overall workforce development system. This RFQ solicits proposals for consultants with a proven track record in driving business engagement and layoff aversion initiatives beyond existing Business Services activities. SCPa Works is dedicated to addressing the needs of specific industry sectors and the identified workforce challenges unique to the SCPa Works region. The Business Services Consultant strategy will complement and support the region's existing workforce development teams. SCPa Works seeks a creative and innovative individual or team to conceptualize an outcome-driven approach to developing and implementing a three-year, all-encompassing Business Services plan to expand and enhance business service delivery across all aspects of workforce development systems. All work performed by this solicitation will be under the direction of the SCPa Works Programs Director to enhance relationship management between the high-performing Programs team members and the existing Business Services Representatives.

The following entities are eligible to serve as lead bidders as long as the conditions described below are met:

- Qualified consulting firms and individuals
- Business consortia and associations, including entities such as chambers of commerce, economic development departments
- Economic development authorities, agencies, or private organizations
- Non-profit organizations or associations serving as regional or local workforce intermediaries
- Educational and workforce development agencies
- Local government organizations

SCPa Works Vision and Background

The South Central Workforce Development Board (SCPa Works) comprises the counties of Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Juniata, Lebanon, Perry, and York in South Central Pennsylvania. SCPa Works has branded a region where all residents have the opportunity for prosperity through the cultivation and establishment of nationally recognized initiatives across all aspects of workforce development. SCPa Works' mission is to unlock the human talent that drives the development of businesses and individuals to achieve common goals.

SCPa Works serves as the fiscal agent in funding results-driven employment and training programs across the eight-county region that increase the scope of job seekers in obtaining new skills and career opportunities while enabling employers to accelerate business growth potential through the structure of effective talent pipelines that meet workforce demands. SCPa Works operates six PA CareerLink® sites that serve tens of thousands of Pennsylvania residents each year, representing an annual workforce investment of nearly \$14M into employment and training programs for youth and adults across South Central PA.

SCPa Works identifies diverse job seekers who match employment and training opportunities most effectively through maintaining a dedicated commitment to several key values that guide the administration of workforce development systems. The following values are embedded in SCPa Works' integrated programming, investments, services, people, and processes, as well as the values that SCPa Works endeavors to have partners and consultants emulate:

1. Performance
2. Equity
3. Flexibility
4. Collaboration
5. Accountability

SCPa Works is dedicated to the development of effective strategies that result in the provision of services to those most in need and prioritizes the following in all programs:

- **Employer Engagement**—Build relationships with regional businesses, develop strong partnerships, and align strategies with internal Business Services providers, local employers, and economic development organizations to better link job seekers with available resources and services.
- **Individual Investment**—Connect job seekers to career pathways and ladders, aligning education with job opportunities and lifelong learning through the PA CareerLink® system.
- **People and Process** – Support and foster a healthy environment where all team members can pursue excellence with accountability, openness and transparency, career growth, and professional development while maintaining the values of equity and respect across workforce development initiatives. Incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusive (DEI) frameworks into every aspect of SCPa Works' business model and investments.

Strategic Goals

- Develop a Business Services strategy for effective employer engagement.
- Create partnerships with industry sectors to align workforce development.
- Build learning and development solutions that address business challenges.
- Empower PA CareerLink® teams with knowledge-sharing opportunities.

Consultant Qualifications

Bidders are expected to conduct culturally responsive programming tailored to the service region's needs. This will require the bidder to demonstrate an understanding of the SCPa Works service region and the individual communities within the region. SCPa Works is interested in bidders who develop service strategies based on the needs of those served through strategy development, innovative approaches to challenges, and flexible approaches to restructuring existing processes and procedures.

SCPa Works seeks an individual or an entity to serve as a dynamic Business Services Consultant that meets the following qualifications:

- Experience in developing multiple public sector and private economic development plans and projects, with a detailed history of developing sector-based partnerships;
- Knowledge of South Central PA regional industries and employers;
- Demonstrated experience attracting private and public investment within the workforce development arena;
- Possesses a strong business acumen and professional presence;
- Ability to work with various demographics, workforce development, and education/training partners within the designated eight-county region;
- Knowledge of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA);
- Knowledge of the local eight-county region that includes demographic, economic, political, and social factors;
- Knowledge of disaster and emergency rapid response activities concerning the role of the local and state workforce development systems;
- Proven track record of successful business service strategy development and execution;
- Expertise in workforce development, talent pipelines, and employer engagement; and
- Familiarity with the South Central PA regional workforce and economic landscape.

Bidders under this RFQ should align proposals toward implementing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) issues Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGLs), which direct employment and training system activities. Bidders should address the following expectations when bidding on this RFQ.

Scope of Work; Business Services Consultant Expectations:

Business Services Assessment

- Evaluate the current Business Services strategy and identify gaps and opportunities for business growth and regional development;
- Analyze business engagement metrics, industry partnerships, and talent pipeline effectiveness; and
- Review current initiatives within the PA CareerLink® sites in South Central PA.

Employer Engagement Strategy

- Design a quantifiable action plan to enhance business engagement and partner relationships with regional employers;
- Outline roles and responsibilities for the Business Services Team, focusing on outreach, business growth, and establishing sector-based partnerships; and
- Recommend best practices for employer engagement and solutions for aligning workforce development with employer needs.

Industry Sector Partnership Development

- Identify key industries in the region with talent pipeline needs (e.g., healthcare, manufacturing, IT);
- Create a framework for establishing and maintaining sector-based partnerships; and
- Develop solution-driven initiatives for businesses to collaborate with local workforce and training programs.

Learning & Development Solutions

- Design in-house learning and career development opportunities that address business challenges unique to the South Central PA region and improve Business Services effectiveness;
- Provide strategies for knowledge sharing across the PA CareerLink® Business Services Team to standardize best practices, establish congruent processes, and guarantee quantified outcomes; and
- Recommend tools and resources for continuous professional development of the Business Services Team.

Action Plan

- Develop a three-year action plan for the Business Services Team to manage business engagement and grow industry partnerships through the implementation of team training, standard operating procedures, and process expectations, ensuring smooth and uninterrupted Business Services delivery;
- Include key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the success of the strategy and action plan; and
- Provide a timeline and milestones for the rollout and assessment of the new strategy.

Expected Outcomes

Improved Business Engagement

- Increased participation of regional employers in workforce development initiatives.
- Strengthened relationships between businesses and the local workforce ecosystem.

Industry-Aligned Workforce Development

- Sector partnerships that deliver consistent and high-quality talent pipelines.
- Improved alignment between business needs and workforce development efforts.

Enhanced Business Services Team Capabilities

- A more agile and informed PA CareerLink® Business Services Team capable of addressing employer challenges.
- Continuous professional development and knowledge-sharing practices embedded in the Business Services strategy.

Deterrence to Bidding

If the individual or entity bidding on this RFQ has been disbarred, suspended, or otherwise determined to be ineligible to receive funds by the action of any governmental agency, or the individual or entity has not complied with an official order of any agency of the State of California or the United States Department of Labor to repay disallowed costs, as outlined in 2 CFR 200, incurred during conducted projects or services; or the entity's previous contract(s) with SCPa Works have been terminated for cause; the entity will not be considered and should not submit a proposal.

Timeline and Milestones

Phase 1: Discovery and Assessment (0-2 months)

- Conduct interviews and gather data on current business engagement practices.
- Deliver assessment report identifying key gaps and opportunities.

Phase 2: Strategy Development (2-4 months)

- Develop a comprehensive Business Services Strategy, including the action plan and learning development recommendations.
- Share the strategy draft with SCPa Works for review and feedback.

Phase 3: Implementation Planning (4-6 months)

- Finalize the Business Services Strategy and action plan.
- Create the system implementation roadmap with clear timelines, expectations, projections, and milestones for rollout.

Submission Requirements

Bidders must adhere to the submission guidelines outlined below to ensure a fair and transparent process to avoid disqualification.

A. How to Submit

- Quotes must be submitted electronically, in PDF format, in Responsive. Hard-copy proposals will not be accepted. The deadline for submission is the end of the day on November 18, 2024.
- To be considered, a proposal must meet all of the criteria outlined in Responsive. Failure to address all requirements of this RFQ, provide required signatures, or follow the instructions provided in this RFQ may result in the proposal not being accepted for consideration.

B. Helpful Tips for Developing a Successful Proposal

- Demonstrate the bidder's understanding of the scope of services and requirements outlined in the RFQ.
- Provide detailed information on the bidder's experience, qualifications, and capacity to deliver the required services.
- Offer innovative solutions and strategies to address the needs of the Business Services Team in the South Central PA Workforce Development Area.
- Be concise and well-organized, and ensure the proposal is free of grammatical errors.

C. Procedures for Submitting Questions

- Bidders may submit questions regarding the RFQ via email to info@scpaworks.org.
- All questions must be submitted within ten (10) business days of the RFQ deadline.
- Answers to submitted questions will be compiled and shared with bidders via Responsive.

Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process

Evaluation Criteria: The consultant selection will be based on the following criteria outlined in the proposal.

Service Delivery: The consultant will exhibit the capacity to serve the SCPa Works region through the strategic development of system implementation to enhance, improve, and elevate the performance of existing Business Services Teams. The consultant will demonstrate an innovative and dynamic approach to delivering strategic workforce system initiatives that serve marginalized adult populations within the South Central PA region. The consultant will forge beneficial relationships with businesses and employers within the region to establish long-term, sustainable resources for job seekers.

Method of Approach: The consultant will document a proven track record in achieving objectives through a persistent and competitive drive to meet the standards of serving underserved adult populations. The consultant will be expected to create and implement practical and viable solutions within the existing Business Services system. The consultant must exhibit proven success in creating exemplary service-based programming, effective relationship management, superior business acumen, and the capacity to lead full-spectrum program design from conception to launch. In addition, the consultant will demonstrate a dedicated commitment to optimizing processes and identifying new ways of solving existing problems.

Equity and Economic Mobility Approach: The consultant will play a critical role in bridging talent with opportunity through an expanded awareness of workforce system demands. The consultant will include validation of an equity-based approach and provide examples through which culturally diverse employers and job seekers can be matched within underserved communities. The consultant will illustrate a capacity to partner with diversified and multicultural community organizations, businesses, and local employers to holistically serve the targeted adult populations throughout the South Central PA region. When confronted with potential changes to programming or service delivery issued by federal, state, or local guidance, the consultant will describe how feedback is received and how appropriate changes are made to benefit those served.

Budget and Resource Allocation: The consultant will demonstrate a history of managing budgetary allocations and overseeing the fiscal management of federal and state-funded programs. The consultant will illustrate the capacity to maximize funding through astute attention to efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability when administering business operations.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	% ALLOCATION
<p><u>Service Delivery</u></p> <p>Describe the consultant's approach to engaging and supporting Business Services systems embedded into workforce development initiatives. Highlight a proven track record of creating innovative strategies and programs tailored to building a Business Services framework that supports all-encompassing workforce development systems and initiatives.</p>	<p>15%</p>

<p>Provided detailed experience in designing and implementing a Business Services model that caters to both the employer and job seekers, focusing on the alignment of training with local labor market demands and facilitating career advancement opportunities.</p> <p>How does the consultant integrate internal departmental coordination and collaboration in relation to meeting the demands of the job market while addressing the all-encompassing needs of impoverished job seekers? Share examples of comprehensive support models that have yielded positive outcomes.</p>	
<p><u>Method of Approach</u></p> <p>Describe the consultant's capability to address the precise challenges unique to serving job seekers within diverse communities as outlined in the RFQ. How does the consultant intend to augment relationships within a historically challenging demographic to match businesses with job seekers? In what innovative and strategic ways does the consultant navigate the development, launch, and completion of on-the-job training opportunities? How will the consultant conduct outreach initiatives targeting rural areas within the region? How does the consultant propose confronting educational and employment barriers while meeting programmatic performance metrics? Provide instances of prior achievements and performance history in service-driven operations.</p> <p>Describe how the consultant will develop culturally responsive programming. Be specific and detail how the consultant plans to serve specific populations representative of the SCPa Works community.</p> <p>Explain how the consultant intends to collaborate with SCPa Works to ensure alignment with local workforce priorities and maximize the impact of services delivered. Include details on communication channels, coordination efforts, and joint planning processes.</p> <p>Discuss the consultant's ability to adapt to changing circumstances and the evolving needs of workforce systems. How does the consultant maintain flexibility when facing program design and service delivery model changes? Highlight experiences where the consultant has successfully adjusted strategies in response to unforeseen challenges in day-to-day administrative and operational initiatives.</p>	<p>35%</p>

<p><u>Equity and Economic Mobility Approach</u></p> <p>How does the consultant integrate equity principles into designing and implementing programs and Business Services? Provide examples of strategies or initiatives aimed at reducing disparities and promoting inclusivity.</p> <p>Describe the consultant’s approach to understanding and addressing the diverse needs of the target population, including culturally and linguistically appropriate services. How does the consultant ensure cultural competence among Business Services staff and partnered operations? What system models does the consultant have in place to locate and accommodate culturally diverse populations through a Business Services approach?</p> <p>Explain how the consultant solicits and incorporates feedback from the target population and community stakeholders to impact program planning and decision-making processes. How does the consultant prioritize the voices of marginalized or underrepresented employer groups in these efforts?</p>	<p>15%</p>
<p><u>Budget and Resource Allocation</u></p> <p>Summarize the consultant’s proposed financial resource allocation plan for conceiving, constructing, and launching a three-year Business Services strategy. Outline the intention to include anticipated project components such as staff education and training, job-matching methodologies, materials development, system implementation, staff hours, and administrative costs.</p> <p>Does the consultant have a strategy for leveraging outside or in-kind support to supplement the allocated financial resources? Collaboration may include partnerships with community organizations or other non-monetary assistance that lend to the conception, creation, and launch of a three-year Business Services strategy.</p> <p>Explain how the consultant plans to monitor and ensure cost-effectiveness and sustainability when developing the Buiness Service start-up model.</p>	<p>35%</p>

Contract Award

SCPa Works shall award a contract to the responsible bidder whose proposal provides the best overall value to SCPa Works regarding the ability to perform the required services and experience within the designated cost allocation.

The bidders must provide details in the proposal regarding the reasons for objection to any part of these terms and conditions and provide alternate language. Time is of the essence when awarding a contract. A hindrance to the award process due to the extent of a bidder’s proposed modifications may negatively impact SCPa Works’ assessment of that proposal.

No portion of these services may be subcontracted without prior SCPa Works approval. The contract resulting from the award of this RFQ will consist of this RFQ (which includes SCPa Works and Fiscal Agents General Conditions), the proposal, and any additional information deemed necessary due to the negotiations held with the successful bidder.

The successful bidder will be required to enter an agreement with SCPa Works to ensure compliance with the provisions of WIOA, its regulations, applicable laws and regulations promulgated by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and SCPa Works policies, which shall comprise the terms and conditions of the award.

Budget Proposal

At the time of consultant approval, a detailed budgetary allowance of up to \$120,000.000 will be provided based on the agreed-upon scope of work.

Timeline

Event	Dates
RFQ Issue Date:	October 17, 2024
Proposals Due:	November 18, 2024
Proposal Evaluations:	November 22 - 26
Anticipated Contract Award Notification:	December 17
Contract Execution Date	January 1, 2025
Period of Performance	January 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026