Request for Qualifications: Curriculum Developer: Workforce Program Redesign and Implementation

Release Date: June 23, 2017
Submissions Due: July 24, 2017

Purpose

Philadelphia Works invites competitive proposals for a curriculum developer to support program redesign and implementation of the Employment and Retention Network (EARN) program – a workforce program for parents receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). The curriculum developer will create lessons and modules to assist in the redesign of the EARN program so more participants succeed in the next step on their career path of education and/or work. The program is currently a two-week orientation period, during which basic life-skills and career-readiness workshops are presented to all participants. The redesign will include the development of four learning tracks, based on previous program participation, education and past work experience and could be up to three weeks for 30 hours per week depending on the needs of the participants in a particular track. The curriculum developer will be responsible for writing, piloting, revising and finalizing these new lessons and modules along creating an instructors’ manual and training the EARN program instructors.

Organizational Background

Philadelphia Works is the workforce development board for Philadelphia charged by the Mayor to lead the city’s broadly-defined workforce system. Our mission is to connect employers to a skilled workforce and to help individuals develop the skills needed to thrive in the workplace. Philadelphia Works is supported by federal and state workforce development funds, as well as privately-raised funds to support our mission.

Philadelphia Works:

- Sets policy for the workforce development system and strategic investment of workforce development funds.
• Conducts research on employment and workforce trends and shares findings with businesses, policy makers, service providers and the media.
• Promotes public policy that meets the needs of jobseekers and employers.
• Creates innovative partnerships and services to upgrade the skills of Philadelphians and meet employers’ needs.
• Funds and provides technical assistance on career guidance, job training, and job placement services to Philadelphia jobseekers.

Philadelphia Works oversees four American Job Centers called PA CareerLink® throughout Philadelphia. These centers provide integrated workforce development services to individuals seeking work and employers who wish to hire. Services provided at the PA CareerLink® centers are open to the public; however, career seekers who receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) are referred to PA CareerLink® for skill building, job readiness, job search, and job retention services through the EARN Program. Job seekers receiving services through the EARN program must participate for a prescribed number of hours per week (ranging from 20-30 hours) based on their family composition, or risk losing their benefits.

Project Description

Philadelphia Works is in the process of engaging a number of consultants to support the EARN program redesign in order to improve outcomes and experience related to the program. The curriculum developer will be expected to work directly with the lead consultant and Philadelphia Works’ staff to create, implement and manage the development of curriculum for the newly designed program.

Deliverables and Scope of Work

Philadelphia Works anticipates that the curriculum developer will gain a comprehensive understanding of the organization’s current capacity and goals, while managing the development of new lessons for 4 learning tracks. The lessons would be delivered by existing EARN program instructors to a group of approximately 5 to 25 EARN participants per track over a 2 to 3 week period. There is an expectation that an instructor’s manual will be developed and the EARN program instructors would be trained on the new curriculum.

An innovative and evidence-based approach to the curriculum development would be to have both the academic standards associated with College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education (CCRS) (https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/CCRStandardsAdultEd.pdf); and the foundational workforce skills (http://www.paadultedresources.org/workforce-career-pathways/cp-program-resources/foundation-skills-framework) embedded seamlessly in the lessons. The instructional map will outline how the basic skills contextualized in a vocational setting are integrated with the workforce skills. Lesson activities should build academic skills and improve workforce skills. Over the course of 10 months for the total project Philadelphia Works expects the successful candidate to:
• Develop, pilot, revise and finalize a curriculum (instructional map) with aligned lessons and/or learning modules for current EARN customers; this will consist of 4 learning tracks with 1 instructional map and 12 lessons per track. Each lesson is intended to represent a workshop of a minimum of 1 hour, able to be delivered by an experienced instructor in a group setting with 5 to 25 EARN participants.

• Include within each lesson a learning assessment, standard-based (CCRS) platform and identified workforce skills using a Foundation Skills Framework http://www.paadultedresources.org/workforce-career-pathways/cp-program-resources/foundation-skills-framework/.

• Present the curriculum to Philadelphia Works management for approval;

• Facilitate discussions with Philadelphia Works staff and key external stakeholders to review the recommended curriculum;

• Develop a timeline for the development, pilot and one revision for each instructional map and 12 associated lessons; (4 maps and 48 lessons in total)

• Be responsible for working closely with the consultant and Philadelphia Works staff to manage and coordinate the deliverables and the staff responsible for them.

Additional Requirements
In addition to executing the project implementation as outlined above, the successful candidate will be required to:

• Provide all deliverables in written form along with flashdrive;

• Participate in scheduled meetings and/or conference calls with Philadelphia Works;

• Maintain file copies of all documents pertaining to this project;

• Secure all information obtained (including electronic documents) in a location accessible only to authorized employees on the contract;

• Assign dedicated staff to act as point of communication for Philadelphia Works throughout the entirety of this contract.

Philadelphia Works will:

• Provide all current documentation and manuals for the EARN Program;

• Provide information related to the proposed redesign and the 4 tracks that will be embedded within the program;

• Provide information on the learners in the 4 tracks related to demographics, education levels, work experience and typical life challenges and strengths;

• Provide specific numbers and targets that we hope to achieve by redesigning the model;

• Facilitate meeting arrangements with consultants, EARN staff and program administrators;

• Provide timely feedback during each step of the process in writing.
Budget and Timeline

The curriculum development project must take place between September 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. The total budget for the curriculum development services is $60,000 inclusive of all fees and expenses. Philadelphia Works requests that applicants provide a comprehensive budget and payment schedule based on the scope of work and deliverables above. Proposed cost for services will help inform the final selection.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Estimated Dates</th>
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<tr>
<td>Philadelphia Works solicits submissions from prospective consultants</td>
<td>June 23, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deadline for submission of questions</td>
<td>July 7, 2017</td>
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<td>Applications due to Philadelphia Works</td>
<td>July 24, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philadelphia Works review of applications and selection of developer</td>
<td>August 11, 2017</td>
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<td>Contract negotiated and signed</td>
<td>August 31, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project term</td>
<td>Sept 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018</td>
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Qualifications

- Master’s Degree in Education or Curriculum Development or Certificate in Instructional Design or Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
- Experienced in adult learning principles and concepts – andragogy
- Knowledgeable of instructional theories and principles, including online and instructor led programs
- Skilled in developing creative, engaging materials that are appropriate for all learning styles and for those reading English at the 4th-8th grade levels and higher
- Minimum of five years of demonstrated proficiency in designing, building, and deploying curriculum
- Lead projects that involved instructional design and evaluation
- Demonstrated technical writing skills, including the consistent and correct use of verb tense, grammar/spelling, and relevant terminology
- Able to be flexible and solve problems
- Able to collaborate with key groups to assist in informing the development of curriculum
- Ability to identify resources to develop and deliver training
- Possess strong research and organization skills
- Respondents must be in good financial standing with federal agencies, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the City of Philadelphia.
Selection and Evaluation

Submissions will be evaluated by a team consisting of fair and impartial Philadelphia Works’ staff members, board members and/or other partners, who will provide a final recommendation for selection. The evaluation team reserves the right to:

- Contact any applicant to clarify responses.
- Contact current or past customers of the applicant.
- Reject any submission that the evaluation team believes is not in the best interests of Philadelphia Works.
- Waive any defects in an applicant’s proposal if it is in the best interests of Philadelphia Works to do so, and that action will not cause any material unfairness to other applicants.
- Accept or reject all or any part of any response, waive minor technicalities, and select an applicant that best serves the goals of the project.
- Ask selected finalists to make presentations to staff.

The team will initially evaluate submissions to determine compliance with the RFQ requirements. Any submission failing to meet the compliance criteria will be deemed unresponsive and may be excluded from further consideration. Submissions may be judged nonresponsive and removed from further consideration if any of the following occur:

1) the application is not received timely in accordance with the terms of this RFQ;
2) the application does not follow the specified format; and/or
3) the application does not include all required information

All accepted submissions will be evaluated based on the quality of the applicant’s response according to the criteria listed below. The range of points for each category is listed below as well as the maximum number of points available. The applicant with the highest average score will be recommended for selection (barring any unforeseen circumstances).

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<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Points Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cost (not to exceed $60,000)</td>
<td>0-5</td>
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<td>Organizational Mission &amp; Staff Expertise</td>
<td>0-20</td>
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<td>Project Approach and Work Plan</td>
<td>0-45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evidence of capacity to deliver Major Projects</td>
<td>0-30</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum Points:</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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How to Apply

Applicants must submit a narrative no more than 7 (seven) pages long, not including the timeline, budget, budget narrative, and biographies/resumes. The narrative must include the following components:

I. General Information:
   - Organizational mission, a description of the firm’s expertise, and how these mesh with the mission of Philadelphia Works.
   - A listing of some of the applicant’s clients, along with references from Local Workforce Areas or other non-profit organizations with whom similar work has been completed. At least one reference must be from one of the top ten largest cities comparable in population to Philadelphia.
   - A brief description of major project staff along with their biographies and/or resumes.
   - Contact name, phone number, email address and mailing address of the lead staff responsible for filing the application.

II. Scope of Work:
   A detailed work plan, demonstrating a clear understanding of the work requested and an explanation of the firm’s suggested approach. The work plan should include:
   - An initial request for information needed from Philadelphia Works to start the project;
   - Detailed service delivery proposal for activities outlined in Scope of Work;
   - A proposed timeline indicating start and end dates, initial meetings, and briefings to meet deadlines imposed by Philadelphia Works.

III. Financial Information:
   Candidates must include a comprehensive budget not to exceed $60,000. A short narrative should accompany the budget as well as any details regarding services available at a discount or pro bono.

Send requests for additional information to Patricia Blumenauer, Manager of Integrated Centers, at pblumenauer@philaworks.org. We will accept questions via e-mail until 5:00 p.m. EST on July 7, 2017.

The deadline for receipt of submissions is July 24, 2017. All application packages should be submitted electronically to pblumenauer@philaworks.org with the subject line “EARN Curriculum Developer.”

Philadelphia Works anticipates making the final selection for this position by August 11, 2017. Philadelphia Works will negotiate all contract terms upon selection.