

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: 19-005

Solicitation For: Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant Marketing

11/28/2018

Response Due Date: 12/28/2018

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SECTION ONE GENERAL INFORMATION AND REQUESTED PRODUCTS/SERVICES

1.1 INTRODUCTION

It is the intent of the Indiana Commission for Higher Education (ICHE) to solicit responses to this Request for Information (RFI) in accordance with the statement of work, proposal preparation section, and specifications contained in this document. This RFI is being posted to the ICHE's website. Neither this RFI nor any response submitted hereto are to be construed as a legal offer.

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE RFI

This RFI aims to gain information from vendors about how they would expand, innovate and scale marketing and outreach efforts to promote the state's Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant to increase enrollments and completions in high-demand, high-value workforce certificate programs.

With an initial marketing investment of about \$700,000 with \$400,000 more planned to-date, 11,000+ Hoosiers have enrolled in these certificate programs and about 4,000 have completed since August 2017. These early results are promising and demonstrate growing momentum around the state's Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant program.

This RFI asks vendors to offer their vision for how a substantially larger marketing budget could be used to drive even greater results with key populations at three different budget levels: \$2.5 million, \$5 million and \$10 million.

1.2 BACKGROUND

Indiana has adopted a bold goal for 60 percent of its working-age population to have some type of credential beyond a high school diploma by 2025. Currently, about 43.4 percent of Hoosiers have earned some credential beyond a diploma. Gov. Holcomb's Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant puts a sharp focus on helping Indiana meet that 60 percent goal by helping connect working-age Hoosier adults and recent high school graduates to high-demand certificate programs that will lead to better paying jobs.

How it Works:

The NextLevelJobs.org online portal asks job seekers five simple questions, collects information about their job interests and connects them directly with Ivy Tech Community College, Vincennes University or another approved training provider. Those who submit their information on the portal receive a follow-up email immediately and a call from someone at an education or training provider within two to three days.

Eligible adults receive the Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant, which covers full tuition costs for working-age Hoosiers to enroll in high-demand, high-value certificate programs. Beyond the Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant, the NextLevelJobs.org online portal connects Hoosiers to other available workforce and postsecondary grants and opportunities.

Target Populations for Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant:

- Those who have visited the NextLevelJobs.org online portal but have not submitted their information for follow-up (About 300,000)
- High school students who are not following a graduation pathway that leads to a four- or two-year degree program (About 36,000)

- High school students pursuing Career & Technical Education (CTE) pathways (About 25,000)
- Parents of Indiana financial aid recipients, who may be eligible for the workforce ready grant (Estimated 545,000)
- High school graduates who did not enroll in a postsecondary education or training program (About 28,016)
- Early career high school graduates who need to increase their pay (About 100,000)
- Mid-career adults with a high school diploma who need to adapt to a changing economy that demands education beyond high school (1,000,000+)
- Regional communities and populations with different workforce needs

1.3 SUMMARY SCOPE OF WORK

Responses should be no more than five pages outlining potential communications and outreach strategies and tactics broadly at each funding level.

- RFI responses must address all three funding levels, be no more than five pages and include the following:
 - Focus on motivating target populations and changing behavior to drive future enrollment and completion in education and training programs through the Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant
 - Innovative marketing, media and outreach strategies and tactics with the ability to measure and evaluate what works
 - Clear goals and targets for enrollment and completion, including marginal cost of securing each new enrollment in a Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant certificate program
 - Similar past projects with costs, goals and success metrics

1.4 DUE DATE FOR PROPOSALS

All proposals must be received at the email address in section 1.9 below no later than 5 p.m. Friday, December 28. Responses are limited to no more than five pages—excluding cover letter and examples of similar projects—and must include description of the entity interested in providing the services, including:

- Cover Letter
- Submitted Plan

The following timeline is only an illustration of the RFI process. The dates associated with each step are not to be considered binding. Due to the unpredictable nature of the evaluation period, these dates are commonly subject to change. At the conclusion of the evaluation process, all Respondents will be informed of the evaluation team’s findings.

Key RFI Dates

Activity	Date
Issue of RFI	Nov. 28, 2018
Deadline to Submit Intent to Respond	Dec. 7, 2018
Submission of Responses	Dec. 28, 2018

No more than one proposal per Respondent may be submitted.

The State accepts no obligations for costs incurred by Respondents in anticipation of being awarded a contract.

1.5 COMMUNICATION WITH ICHE

All communication, including responses, questions concerning the services being sought, or the response requirements, should be directed to:

Stephanie Wilson
swilson@che.in.gov
317-232-1060

-- End of Request for Information --