



**WORKFORCE***Solutions*  
S O U T H P L A I N S

*Bringing opportunity and people together*

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS  
for**

***SHORT-TERM, PREVOCATIONAL TRAINING SERVICES***

***Issued by***

**Workforce Solutions of the South Plains**

Issue Date:  
Monday, February 15, 2010

Response Deadline:  
Continuous Open Enrollment  
Beginning Monday, February 15, 2010

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## I. Introduction

The South Plains Regional Workforce Development Board, dba Workforce Solutions South Plains, (hereinafter, "the Board") is a 501C3 Non-profit Corporation that administers Workforce development services authorized by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) for the 15-county South Plains Regional Workforce Development Area (SPRWDA). The Board's service area consists of Bailey, Cochran, Crosby, Dickens, Floyd, Garza, Hale, Hockley, King, Lamb, Lubbock, Lynn, Motley, Terry and Yoakum Counties. The Board enters into agreements with Workforce system operators and training providers for the delivery of necessary Workforce development services. Among the services provided by Workforce system operators are group and individual activities designed to improve the employability and earnings capability of program participants. The Workforce Solutions system operator (hereinafter, "Workforce Solutions") maintains five full-service Workforce Solutions Career Centers<sup>1</sup> and three satellite offices located throughout the 15-county South Plains Region.

Through this Request for Applications (RFA), the Board is soliciting applications from interested bidders to provide short-term non-occupational, pre-vocational, training services allowable under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) and other federal programs operated by Workforce Solutions.

## II. Statement of Work

### 1. Purpose:

The purpose of this RFA is to compile a list of approved vendors of allowable training services that target adult or dislocated workers and:

- ❖ enhance the participant's opportunity to obtain employment by establishing fundamental skills;
- ❖ promote job retention that leads to increased earnings and self-sufficiency; and,
- ❖ build towards a career pathway.

As a result of this RFA, the Board will compile and maintain a list of approved vendors, along with their eligible short-term pre-vocational training service offerings, for use by Workforce Solutions Career Centers. Program participants who are in need of training services in order to upgrade their skills, complete or enhance their educational goals and/or secure or retain employment will be referred to approved vendors for appropriate services on an 'as needed' basis. The Workforce Solutions Center Career Counselors will follow the participant's progress throughout the activity.

Bidders may propose to offer one or more service offerings and must complete the requested application form (Attachment 1) for each. A description of the allowable training services for these target groups is provided in this RFA.

### 2. Eligible Providers:

Eligible providers are public or private not-for-profit or private for-profit, faith-based, and community-based organizations, school districts, colleges, and universities, as well as other organizations. Entities that are subject to the Texas Proprietary School Laws or other State regulatory requirements must be in compliance with applicable laws to be eligible. Minority-owned, disadvantaged and woman-owned businesses are encouraged to respond.

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<sup>1</sup> See the Workforce Solutions South Plains website at <http://www.spWorkforce.org> for Workforce Solutions Career Center locations.

Service providers must have at least one year of demonstrated performance in the provision of the types of services.

Applications submitted in response to this RFA will be evaluated on an established point system and successful providers meeting the minimum requirements will become approved vendors. See section entitled, "Evaluation".

3. Type of Agreement:

An agreement will be established with each approved vendor based on reimbursable fixed unit cost amounts stated in the response to this RFA. Total reimbursement amounts will be based on actual Workforce Solutions Career Center referrals and funding availability. Workforce Solutions does not guarantee the referral of any participant to any selected provider. Participants will be given a choice of service provider based on need, availability and proximity to their community.

Once approved, agreements will be effective for a period of one year. Agreements will be evaluated on a yearly basis for compliance with RFA specifications and may be renewed annually based upon successful attainment of performance standards and availability of funds. Workforce Solutions reserves the right to cease referrals of participants if the vendor does not demonstrate that participants are mastering the intended skills.

4. Contracts:

Prior to the provision of services, contracts will be executed between the service provider and Workforce Solutions based on the cost per participant. These contracts will incorporate this RFA and its provisions by reference and will incorporate the information on service offerings as described in the Attachment 1, "Provider Application", submitted by respondents to this RFA. Contracts will include any additional provisions regarding reporting requirements, payment and performance necessary to ensure the welfare of participants.

Providers may submit invoices upon completion of services as called for in each individual contract. Payments will be made to the service provider by Workforce Solutions within 30 days of invoice date.

5. Program Requirements:

Programs must not duplicate services which already exist within the service area free of charge to the general public. All programs and services must be available to the general public at the same or lesser cost as charged to Workforce Solutions participants. Special discounts and matching of funds for Workforce Solutions referrals are encouraged.

Training services should be limited to more general, short-term pre-vocational services which are NOT tied to a specific occupation. The duration of training must be no longer than 6 months to be considered for approval. Courses should cost no more than \$1,000 per course.

6. Service Offerings:

Short-term prevocational services include training courses, services or activities that promote the development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct, in order to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training.

Short-term, prevocational services include, but are not limited to:

- basic computer literacy/skills, courses on computer software applications such as Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, and similar software products (not tied to a specific occupation)
- workplace literacy
- entry level skills development
- English as a second language
- academic remediation,
- GED preparation,
- basic education,
- literacy services

Workforce Solutions is seeking services in these categories that expand or enhance existing services and/or address any gaps in service to particular target groups or communities.

#### 7. Evaluation:

Workforce Solutions monitors the delivery of Workforce development services on an ongoing basis in order to ensure the achievement of program goals. The core indicators of performance for employment and training activities authorized under the WIA include:

- ❖ Entry into unsubsidized employment;
- ❖ Retention in unsubsidized employment 6 months after entry into the employment
- ❖ Earnings received in unsubsidized employment 6 month after entry into the employment
- ❖ Attainment of a recognized credential relating to achievement of educational skills, which may include attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or occupational skills, by participants who enter unsubsidized employment, or by participants who are eligible youth age 19 through 21 who enter postsecondary education, advanced training, or unsubsidized employment.

Short-term prevocational training services will be evaluated on an ongoing basis to determine the contribution made to the overall goals of the Workforce Solutions program. In addition, customer satisfaction with particular service offerings may be measured through surveys conducted after the conclusion of participation in the program, course or activity.

Agreements entered into with service providers will incorporate measurable standards and objective assessment methods by which performance outcomes will be evaluated. Bidders are asked to include this information as part of the Provider Application submitted in response to this RFA.

Results of an individual participant's performance evaluations are to be provided to Workforce Solutions at completion of training or upon request. Specific reporting requirements will be included as part of any contract executed as a result of this RFA.

### **III. Selection of Service Providers**

## 1. Application Selection Process

Successful respondents to this RFA will be placed on an approved Vendor's List in order to receive individual referrals for services and will be required to enter into a written agreement for a one-year period. Workforce Solutions does not guarantee the referral of any participants to any selected provider. The following considerations apply to the selection process:

- a. Only applications that are responsive to the RFA instructions (i.e. include all required components) will be considered.
- b. Workforce Solutions will base selection on the application evaluation criteria outlined below.
- c. In accordance with the 73rd Texas Legislature, Workforce Solutions will make a good faith effort to award contracts to Historically Underutilized Business (HUB's). It is the policy of this organization to pursue HUB business. However the final decision as to the award of this contract will be contingent upon weighted evaluation criteria.

## 2. Application Evaluation Criteria

The review and selection process will include the following criteria and value system:

### Demonstrated Performance – 30 Points

This criterion examines the past experience and demonstrated effectiveness (competence and qualifications) in providing the proposed educational or training service in a timely manner. Professional recommendations from reliable sources and/or an onsite review may be required.

### Program Design – 30 Points

This criterion examines the quality and innovativeness of the program activity and the outcomes desired, as well as whether program activities are consistent with the eligible activities as described in the section, "Program Requirements", and the section, "Service Offerings". Quality programs will provide services and/or activities that assist Workforce Solutions in attaining mandated performance measures on the core indicators of performance as described in the section entitled, "Evaluation".

If applicable, applications will be evaluated on the innovative method the organization will employ to coordinate proposed services with other providers in the community based on existing service gaps or overlaps to ensure that there is no duplication of services. For those providers that propose to offer services already available in the community, the provider must demonstrate that the service or activity is either directed at a special population, or provided in an area that does not currently offer these services.

### Reasonableness of Cost – 20 Points

This criterion examines the cost of services being purchased. The costs for services must be reasonable and in line with the stated maximum cost of \$1,000 per student per course.

### Financial Stability – 20 Points

This criterion examines whether the selected provider has adequate financial resources to achieve contract performance requirements. The application will be reviewed carefully for evidence of the bidder's ability to account for funds in accordance with TWC fiscal requirements. Training providers whose programs are regulated by the Texas Higher Education Board or the Texas Workforce Commission Career Schools and Colleges Division are not required to submit financial information.

## 3. Scoring Threshold

Any application with a total score of less than 70 points will be considered as non-responsive and will be disqualified from further consideration.

#### **4. Debriefing**

Workforce Solutions will provide a debriefing for bidders scoring below a 70 upon request. The purpose of the debriefing is to promote the exchange of information, explain the evaluation system, and help unsuccessful bidders understand why they were not selected. Debriefings serve an important educational function for new providers of Workforce services. A fundamental objective is to aid these new providers in improving the quality of any future applications. In the debriefing, Workforce Solutions will provide information on the procurement process and how the bidder's application was scored.

Bidders who desire a debriefing must submit their request in writing, within fourteen (14) calendar days of the mailing date of determination/notification of non-selection, and include the party's proper mailing address. Workforce Solutions will acknowledge receipt of the request for debriefing in writing within 5 business days of receipt and provide notification of the date and time of the scheduled debriefing which shall be scheduled as soon as possible, but will no later than 10 business days of receipt of the request.

#### **IV. Submission of Applications**

This RFA is open and continuous and applications may be submitted beginning February 15, 2010.

Workforce Solutions will issue written notification of selection for inclusion on the Approved Vendor list, or of non-selection, within 30 days of the date of receipt of the application by Workforce Solutions. Successful respondents will be placed on the Workforce Solutions Short-term Prevocational Services Approved Vendor list for the applicable Program Year - effective as of the date of approval - for a period not to exceed twelve months from the date of placement on the list.

Questions about the RFA may be sent via fax to: Maria Keenmon at (806) 744-1987 or email to: Workforce Solutions [maria.keenmon@spWorkforce.org](mailto:maria.keenmon@spWorkforce.org). Two copies with original signatures of each application must be submitted to Workforce Solutions at the address below. In addition to the two hard copies, submission of the application electronically (via email) can expedite the review process and is encouraged.

Applications shall be submitted to:

By Mail or Hand Delivery

Workforce Solutions South Plains  
Attention: Maria Keenmon  
1301 Broadway, Ste. 201  
Lubbock, Texas 79401

Submit two original, signed copies of the Application form (Exhibit A) for each proposed program or service offering. In order to expedite the review process, you may submit an additional copy via email to [maria.keenmon@spWorkforce.org](mailto:maria.keenmon@spWorkforce.org).

**V. CONDITIONS AND LIMITATIONS**

- A. The only purpose of this Request for Quote (RFA) is to ensure uniform information in the solicitation of proposals and procurement of services. This RFA is not to be construed as a purchase agreement or contract or as a commitment of any kind; nor does it commit the Board to pay for costs incurred prior to the execution of a formal contract unless such costs are specifically authorized in writing by Board.
- B. The Board reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received, to cancel or reissue this RFA in part or its entirety.
- C. The Board reserves the right to negotiate the final terms of any and all contracts or agreements with bidder(s) selected.
- D. Misrepresentation of the bidder's ability to perform as stated in the proposal may result in cancellation of any contract or agreement awarded.
- E. Bidders shall not, under penalty of law, offer or provide any gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value to any officer, member, employee, or agent of the Board for the purpose of having an influencing effect toward their own proposal or any other proposal submitted hereunder.
- F. No employee, officer, member or agent of the Board shall participate in the selection, award or administration of a contract if a conflict of interest, or potential conflict, would be involved.
- G. Bidders shall not engage in any activity that will restrict or eliminate competition. Violation of this provision may cause a bidder's bid to be rejected. This does not preclude joint ventures or subcontracts.
- H. Any bidder may withdraw his bid either in person or by written request by a duly authorized representative at any time prior to the scheduled closing time for receipt of bids.
- I. No contract may be awarded until the bidder has complied with Executive Order 12549, 29CFR, Part 98 by submitting to the Board a signed Certification of Debarment, which states that neither the bidders, nor any of its principals, are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation in a procurement by any Federal department or agency.
- J. The Board's Director of Operations is the responsible authority for handling complaints or protests regarding the procurement and proposal selection process. No protest shall be accepted by the State until all administrative remedies at the Board level have been exhausted.
- K. Bidders not selected by this process may appeal the Board decision by submitting in writing a formal letter of appeal addressed EO Officer, **Workforce Solutions South Plains**, 1301 Broadway, Ste 201, Lubbock, Texas, 79401. This appeal must be sent by registered mail and identified on the envelope as an appeal with the grounds of the appeal clearly stated in the letter, within fourteen calendar days of decision notification (the date on the notification letter). The EO Officer shall review the appeal and review applicable laws, and request determination if appeal is valid and shall make decisions. If persons are not satisfied with the decision they may pursue all other avenues of appeal provided by law.
- L. Proposals must be manually signed by a person having the authority to bind the organization in a contract.
- M. Any material that is to be considered as confidential in nature must be clearly marked as such and will be treated as confidential by the Board to the extent allowable in the Public Information Act.
- O. Funding for goods or services requested in this RFA is contingent upon the Board's actual receipt and availability of funds from the Texas Workforce Commission.
- P. **Workforce Solutions South Plains** is an equal opportunity employer and complies fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws: Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), which prohibits discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States or participation in any WIA Title I- financially assisted program or activity; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color and national origin; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs.
- Q. **Workforce Solutions** contractors must abide by all conflict of interest policies issued by the Board, Texas Workforce Commission, State of Texas and the U. S. Department of Labor.
- R. Contracts will contain a section prohibiting sectarian involvement, and the Board will ensure that no funds under the contract are used, either directly or indirectly, in the support of any religious or anti-religious activity, worship or instruction.
- S. Contracts will contain a provision that no participant is directly or indirectly charged a fee as a condition for participation in any TWC funded program.
- T. Contracts will include a Certification of Debarment and Drug Free Workplace Certification.
- U. Contract Reporting Requirements: The Service Provider agrees to complete and submit such forms and reports as **Workforce Solutions** requires on individuals referred to and participating in its program and to do so according to

the instructions and definitions prescribed by the Workforce Solutions. The Service Provider will be held liable for completeness, accuracy, and consistency of participant data. The Service Provider agrees to provide participant performance reports no later than 10 business days of any request. The Service Provider agrees to submit such other reports, data, and information on the operation and performance of this contract as may be required of the Board. The Service Provider agrees to maintain program records and financial management records which support and document the expenditures of funds made under this contract. The Service Provider shall retain all fiscal records and supporting documents for a minimum of three (3) years after final contract closeout. In the event there is an unresolved audit discrepancy at the end of such retention period, the records will be retained until the discrepancy is resolved.

- V. Confidentiality: The Service Provider agrees to maintain the confidentiality of any information, regarding program participants and the immediate family of any applicant or participant, that identifies or may be used to identify them and which may be obtained through application forms, interviews, tests, reports from public agencies or counselors or any other source. The Service Provider agrees not to divulge such information without the written permission of the participant, except that such information which is necessary as determined by the Board for purposes related to the performance or evaluation of the contract may be divulged to the Board or such other parties as they may designate having responsibilities under the contract for monitoring or evaluating the services and having responsibilities under the contract, or to governmental authorities to the extent necessary for the proper administration of the law. All unauthorized release of information shall be construed as a breach of this section.

**ATTACHMENT 1**

**For Workforce Solutions Board Use Only**

Received By:	Date:	Time:
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**Service Provider Application  
Short-term Prevocational Services**

**Vendor's Information**

<b>Full Legal Name of Vendor:</b>	
<b>Mailing Address:</b>	
<b>Street Address (if different):</b>	
<b>City/State/Zip:</b>	

**Vendor's Authorized Representative**

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	
<b>Fax Number:</b>	
<b>E-mail Address:</b>	

**Vendor's Contact Person:**

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	
<b>Fax Number:</b>	
<b>E-mail Address:</b>	

**Vendor's Federal Employer Identification Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Is this a Historically Underutilized Business (HUB)?**                       YES     NO

Is your program regulated by a State Agency such as the Texas Workforce Commission Career Schools and Colleges or the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board?     YES     NO

**NOTE: If you answered NO to the question above, please attach a copy of your most recently audited financial statement.**

**Vendor Type – please check all that apply**

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charitable/Faith Based Org. | <input type="checkbox"/> Proprietary School              | <input type="checkbox"/> Community College |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Based Org.        | <input type="checkbox"/> University ___Public ___Private | <input type="checkbox"/> Other             |

Nature of Organization

- |  |                                      |                                     |
|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporation         | <input type="checkbox"/> For Profit  | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sole Proprietorship | <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership |                                     |

**Type of Service Offering – please check all that apply**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basic Skills Instruction       | <input type="checkbox"/> English as a Second Language             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Skills Instruction    | <input type="checkbox"/> GED                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Workplace Literacy             | <input type="checkbox"/> Literacy and Adult Basic Education (ABE) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entry-level Skills Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job Readiness                  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Remediation           |   |

**Program Information**

***A separate application must be submitted for each program or service offering.***

Provider Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Address/Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Business Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Web Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Does your facility meet the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act?  YES  NO  
 Are the facilities easily accessible by bus?  YES  NO

Do you maintain liability insurance? \_\_\_\_\_ Amount of Insurance: \_\_\_\_\_

**If not will you provide?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Provider Background / Experience**

Has your organization been providing the stated educational/training services for at least one year?  
 YES  NO

**Proposed Program**

1. PLEASE COMPLETE APPLICABLE LINES for the program, course or activity:

Title	CIP Code <sup>2</sup>	Total Hours of instruction		Avg Class Size	Instructor to Student Ratio	No. of Participants in past 12 months	No. of Completers in past 12 months
		Classroom	Lab				

2. Attach documentation to include the following:

- a. The type of certificate or other credential issued upon completion of the program, course or activity.
- b. A statement as to methods and venues used to make others aware of your programs and activities.
- c. A syllabus, course or program catalog, or brochure describing the program including a description of the books, supplies, tools, equipment or specialized clothing or other items used in the program for which costs are included in the budget.
- d. Outline of entry level requirements and/or characteristics of the population served, especially in regards to special populations with multiple barriers and/or disadvantaged populations.
- e. Expected outcomes and how these are documented or measured (for example, pre- and post-testing).
- f. Teacher’s Credentials and Resume (Not applicable for institutions subject to State regulatory authorities such as the Texas Workforce Commission Career Schools and Colleges Division or the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Others should complete and include a completed certification form provided in this RFP as Attachment 2, Certification Regarding Instructor Certificates.)
- g. Copy of refund policy including procedures in place in the event that a participant drops out of the program prior to completion. Policy may be in a tiered format to indicate refundable or non-refundable charges by time or category.
- h. Attendance Policy

**Cost Information**

1. Proposed costs including budget details on how the cost was determined. The following are sample budget categories, but costs are not limited to these:

REQUIRED PROGRAM FEES			
Total Cost Per Participant	\$	Additional Costs	
		Books	\$
		Equipment	\$
		Supplies	\$
		Tools	\$

<sup>2</sup> If applicable, provide the Classification of Instructional Program Code. CIP codes are published by the National Center for Education Statistics and additional information can be found at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/cip2000/>.

		<b>Other</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>OPTIONAL FEES:</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>
	<b>\$</b>		<b>\$</b>
	<b>\$</b>		<b>\$</b>

**All books, equipment, supplies, tools & uniforms purchased by Workforce Solutions for customers will either become the property of Workforce Solutions or the customer, not the training provider.**

**NOTE: Workforce Solutions cannot pay for counseling that is administered by a medical professional in a medical setting.**

**Certification of Applicant**

**1. Some organizations may need to have an on-site quality assurance review prior to approval. Workforce Solutions staff may need to conduct quality assurance reviews after a provider is approved to insure compliance with applicable State and Federal grant requirements.**

**By signing this application, the signatory authorizes Workforce Solutions to conduct an on-site quality assurance review.**

**The Applicant/Service Provider hereby submits an application to Workforce Solutions of the South Plains. This is an offer to provide the stated education and training services for eligible participants funded under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and other State and federal programs administered by Workforce Solutions.**

**Authorized Signatory Name and Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_**

**2. FINANCIAL DOCUMENTATION**

**Applicants that are not regulated by a State Regulatory Agency such as the Texas Workforce Career Schools and Colleges or the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board are required to provide evidence of financial stability prepared by a certified public accountant. Is documentation of financial stability attached?**

Yes  No

*A separate application must be submitted for each program, service or activity proposed.*

**ATTACHMENT 2  
CERTIFICATION REGARDING INSTRUCTOR'S CERTIFICATES**

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his/her knowledge and belief, that the certifications of the applicant's instructor's by TEA or other approved accrediting agency or board for instruction related to the programs offered herein are on file at the school or training facility and are available for inspection.

Name of Applicant Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title of Authorized Signer: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_