

**West Central Arkansas
Workforce Development Board**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

for

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
ONE-STOP OPERATOR**

**Period of Performance
November 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022**

*Release Date: August 22, 2021
RFP Due Electronically: September 30, 2021, by 4:00 p.m. central time
to mdearmon@wcapdd.org or dmoore@wcapdd.org*

Introduction to the Local Area

The Workforce Development Board of West Central Arkansas is a ten-county local area made up of Clark, Conway, Garland, Hot Spring, Johnson, Montgomery, Perry, Pike, Pope and Yell County leaders from business, education, labor and government, with the majority of its board members representing the private business sector.

The mission of the Workforce Development Board is to set the vision, policy direction and performance expectations for the West Central Arkansas workforce system.

West Central Arkansas Planning and Development District (WCAPDD) is the Fiscal Agent and Administrative Entity for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). WCAPDD's workforce division is the service provider for WIOA Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth Programs within the local area beginning July 1, 2019. WCAPDD also serves as staff for the West Central Workforce Development Board. To ensure a firewall is in place, the Board is requiring a separate One-Stop Operator. WCAPDD will not be bidding to serve in that capacity.

The Workforce Development Board of West Central Arkansas is committed to:

- Helping West Central Arkansas win the skills race, today and in the future.
- Assisting area employers to attract and retain skilled and productive workers.
- Working with area education and training leaders to provide curriculum and programs that meet employer needs for workers with high-level skills.

Data related to the ten county area can be found in the current Local Integrated Plan under Workforce Development tab at: wcapdd.org

Request for Proposals

The West Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board is seeking Request for Proposals for a public, private, non-profit entity or consortium of entities to serve as One-Stop Operator for the One-Stop Centers in West Central Arkansas. The locations for the comprehensive and affiliate One-Stop Centers are:

- Garland County Arkansas Workforce Center (comprehensive)
201 Market Street
Hot Springs, Arkansas 71901
- Hot Spring County Arkansas Workforce Center (affiliate)
1735 Sullenberger, Suite #3
Malvern, Arkansas 72104

- Pope County Arkansas Workforce Center (affiliate)
104 South Rochester
Russellville, Arkansas 72801
- Conway County Arkansas Workforce Center (affiliate)
104 Railroad Avenue
Morrilton, Arkansas 72110

The Garland and Hot Spring County Centers will serve Clark, Pike, and Montgomery Counties. Conway County office serves Perry County. Pope County office serves Johnson and Yell Counties.

This Request for Proposal was prepared based upon the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) and associated U.S. Department of Labor Regulations and guidance. This Federal Law was implemented to consolidate, coordinate, and improve employment, training, literacy and vocational rehabilitation programs in the United States. WIOA provides the framework for a national workforce preparation system that is flexible, responsive, customer-focused, and locally managed. Mandatory core program partners include: Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth, Wagner-Peyser, Adult Education and Literacy, and Vocational Rehabilitation, along with required partners specified in the Act. Offerors are strongly encouraged to read Training and Employment Guidance Letter 04-15 issued by the U.S. Department of Labor that outlines the vision for the One-Stop system under WIOA.

The three hallmarks of WIOA include:

1. The needs of businesses and workers drive workforce solutions, and local boards are accountable for this within the communities they serve.
2. One-Stop Centers provide excellent customer-centric services and focus on continuous improvement; and,
3. The workforce system supports strong regional economies and plays an active role in community and workforce development.

WIOA is built around the following key principles:

- Increase access and opportunity, particularly for those individuals with barriers to employment, to ensure success in the labor market.
- Support the alignment of workforce investment, education, and economic development systems in support of a comprehensive, accessible, and high-quality workforce development system.
- Improve the quality and labor market relevance of workforce investment, education, and economic development efforts to provide workers with the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in employment with family-sustaining wages, and to provide employers with the skilled workers they need to succeed in a global economy.
- Promote improvement in the structure and delivery of services to better address the employment and skill needs of workers, jobseekers, and employers.

- Increase the prosperity of workers and employers and the economic growth of communities, regions, and states, and the global competitiveness of the United States.
- Provide workforce investment activities, through statewide and local workforce development systems, that increase the employment, retention and earnings of participants, and increase attainment of recognized postsecondary credentials by participants.

In Section 107 of the legislation and in § 678.605 of WIOA Regulations Local Workforce Boards are required to competitively procure the One-Stop Operator role and responsibilities. §678.615 says that firewalls must be in place to ensure that the competition is free of conflict of interest. Therefore, the WCAPDD will not be applying to serve as the One-Stop Operator. The West Central Workforce Development Board is seeking a single entity or consortium of partners to serve as the One-Stop Operator.

Resource Information

Potential respondents may get helpful background information from the Local Integrated Plan provided to the State of Arkansas by the West Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board. The plan can be found at:

<https://wcapdd.org/workforce-development>

The United States Department of Labor has a WIOA Online Community of Practice that provides information sharing needed to implement and maintain WIOA at:

<http://on.workforcegps.org>.

WIOA law and regulations can be found at: www.doleta.gov/wioa/

Arkansas's WIOA Combined State Plan can be found at:

[https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/src/files/Arkansas PYs 2020-2023.pdf](https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/src/files/Arkansas_PYs_2020-2023.pdf)

Request for Proposal Timeline

08/22/21 Request for Proposal notice will be posted on the West Central Planning and Development District www.wcapdd.org website and on the Arkansas State website. The notice of Request for Proposal will be posted in the statewide newspaper on 08/22/21. Interested parties must submit a written request for a copy of the RFP. The written request may be submitted by mail, email, or delivered to the following:

WCAPDDD, Inc.
 Atten: David Moore
 P O Box 6409
 Hot Springs, AR 71902
 Emailing: dmore@wcapdd.org

09/23/21 Deadline for emailing questions Due by 4:00 p.m. central time to mdearmon@wcapdd.org or dmoore@wcapdd.org. As questions are received from potential proposers, they will be

posted on the WCAPDD website at: www.wcapdd.org. Vendors will not receive notification after each update.

- 09/30/21 Proposals Due Electronically by 4:00 p.m. Central Time to David Moore – dmoore@wcapdd.org and to Margaret Dearmon – mdearmon@wcapdd.org
- by 10/22/21 Evaluation and Board (Executive Committee) Review and Approval
- by 10/29/21 Negotiations Completed and One-Stop Operator Agreement Finalized
- 11/01/21 One Stop Operator Start Date

Technical Details

The contract and/or agreement resulting from this Request for Proposal begins November 1, 2021, and will be for the period through June 30, 2022, with an option for the Workforce Board to renew annually through June 30, 2025.

Once the contract and/or agreement has been awarded, the Workforce Development Board, in collaboration with the Chief Elected Officials, reserves the right to modify delivery design. In the event the modification requires additional labor hours on the part of the One-Stop Operator terms will be negotiated and the contract and/or one-stop operator agreement modified. The Board also reserves the right to de-obligate funds from the One-Stop Operator if it fails to meet contractual and/or agreement requirements.

The Successful Offeror will be required to agree to the contract and/or agreement General Terms and Conditions, have all controls securely in place, and agree to comply with any policies created by the Workforce Development Board and any applicable Federal or State policies, regulations, or laws. The Successful Offeror to this request for proposal may be expected to participate in contract negotiations to establish the exact services to be provided and the costs of those services if a proposal needs clarification. The final negotiated proposal narrative and budget schedule will constitute the Statement of Work for the contract and/or agreement. Applicants are advised that documents in the possession of the consultant, and upon completion the Board Administration, are considered public records and subject to disclosure under Arkansas Public Records Law.

This request for proposal does not commit the Workforce Development Board or Chief Elected Officials to direct the award of a final contract and/or agreement and the Workforce Development Board will not pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal to this request. The Workforce Development Board reserves the right to request additional data, discussion, or presentation in support of written proposals. The Workforce Development Board may reject any or all proposals received and reserves the right to cancel in whole or in part this Request for Proposals if it is in the best interest of the Workforce Development Board to do so.

An Offeror may not be recommended for funding regardless of the merits of the proposal submitted if it has a history of contract non-compliance with the Workforce Development Board or any other funding source. Subcontracting is not permitted.

The Workforce Development Board or its Executive Committee will vote on the final selection with the Chief Elected Officials approving the selection.

Offerors who have submitted a proposal may protest the award of the contract according to the following process:

1. Protests must be filed electronically and be received by David Moore at dmoore@wcapdd.org and Margaret Dearmon at mdearmon@wcapdd.org. October 28, 2021, at 12:00 p.m. central time. All protests are public information after the protest period ends.
2. All protests must state the basis for the protest in clear terms and provide an alternative the protester finds acceptable. The basis of the protest must be a violation of a State or Federal contracting law, rule, or regulation applicable to the contracting process.
3. During any part of the review or consideration, the protester may be asked to clarify or amplify statements or to provide proof of claims or other statements. Any such requests must be fully responded to within the time designated. In the event a protester fails to respond, the protest will be dismissed, and no further protest will be accepted relative to this Request for Proposals.
4. The board staff will review the protest and will issue a written response by email that is intended as a complete and final answer to the protest. A response will be issued no later than October 29, 2021, at 4:30 p.m. central time.
5. The board staff will document the submission of a protest and the findings.

Eligible Applicants

Organizations eligible to submit proposals may fall within any of the following categories:

- Governmental Agencies
- Private Non-Profit Organizations
- Private For-Profit Businesses
- Educational Entities
- Consortium of entities that at a minimum, includes three or more of the required one-stop partners of demonstrated effectiveness, located in the Local Area.

One-Stop Operator Roles and Responsibilities

The One-Stop Operator must coordinate the service delivery of core and required one-stop partners and other community partners working with the comprehensive and affiliate One-Stop Centers listed in this Request for Proposals. This includes managing partner responsibilities that are outlined in the local Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

The WIOA MOU serves the key purpose of defining partner roles and focuses, in

part, on the shaping of the workforce system. This includes the sharing of resources, referral agreements, etc. In the end, the overall goal is to ensure efficiency within the West Central Arkansas workforce system.

WIOA was signed into law on July 22, 2014, and went into effect July 1, 2015. WIOA supersedes the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, and amends the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

WIOA has two tiers of partners: Core Program Partners and Required Partners. The Core Program Partners who are required to collaborate and participate in the One-Stop System include: WIOA Adult, Dislocated Workers, Youth; Wagner-Peyser labor exchange; Adult Education and Literacy; and Vocational Rehabilitation. Core Program Partners are in the common performance measures pool and must work closely together to achieve success.

Required Program Partners must participate in the MOU process and provide coordinated services with the comprehensive One-Stop Centers. Required Program Partners include the four Core Program Partners as well as: Career and Technical Education, Title V Older Americans, Job Corps, Native American Programs, Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers, Veterans, YouthBuild, Trade Act, Community Services Block Grant, HUD, Unemployment Compensation, Second Chance, and TANF. In the event any of the required partners do not have funding in the West Arkansas Workforce Development Area, their participation is waived.

The One-Stop Operator will be the **point of contact regarding issues pertaining to customer complaints** that are substantive to the required partners operating in the comprehensive and affiliate One-Stop Centers. This will include **convening partner meetings on a regular basis** as well as **stakeholder meetings** including all core program partners and advising the Administrative Entity and Board Staff on partner operational challenges and successes. The One-Stop Operator shall **maintain partner meeting minutes** and submit them to the Administration at least quarterly.

In support of the WIOA MOU the One-Stop Operator responsibilities will also include:

- **Coordinating service delivery among partners, particularly customer flow in the Centers to ensure all partners get appropriate referrals;**
- **Managing hours of operation at the comprehensive Centers understanding that some partners may have different scheduled days off that must be accommodated for;**
- **Facilitating customer flow, customer service, initial assessment, resource room usage, tracking, and referral processes as agreed upon in the WIOA MOU;**
- **Communicating Board and Administrative policies and procedures to all partners;**
- **Reporting to the Administration and Board on Center activities quarterly;**
- **Working on Center required certifications;**
- **Modifying and updating the Memorandum of Understanding and the Infrastructure Agreements**
- **Hold quarterly partner meetings**

The One-Stop Operator will **submit a written and verbal report on work accomplished and challenges encountered on a quarterly basis** to the Workforce Development Board and Chief Elected Officials. In addition, the One-Stop Operator will **gather data for the Board from the partners on a quarterly basis including: common measure information; tracking incoming clients; resource room usage; and program specific referrals as outlined in the WIOA MOU.**

Proposals must identify a lead staff person and indicate how the lead is compliant with firewall requirements between Workforce Development Board Administration and Center Operations as defined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

The One-Stop Operator will not be responsible for the day-to-day activities of partners within and outside the Centers, although, may request assistance with front desk coverage or resource room coverage as appropriate. The One-Stop Operator will not be involved in personnel actions or any monitoring of partners programs.

One-Stop Operator Budget

Proposals must include a detailed line-item budget on the provided chart that shows all costs related to serving as One-Stop Operator. Costs must be categorized as administrative, program, and profit. It is assumed the One-Stop Operator will only utilize program dollars. In the event a consortium is competitively bidding, the budget needs to clearly show how the role of One-Stop Operator will be paid for including any proposed shared costs and/or leveraged costs of existing staff to supplement the One-Stop Operator budget. All proposals must include a lead staff person and associated expenses including space rent, equipment, wages, benefits, and other costs and how they will be paid for. Staffing costs should consider percent of time an individual will spend on One-Stop Operator roles and responsibilities.

Submission Information and Requirements

General Submission Information

To be considered for funding, an entity must submit a proposal along with other supporting documentation in accordance with the instructions in this request for proposals. When evaluating a proposal, the executive committee will consider how well the respondent has complied with these instructions and provided the required information. The executive committee reserves the right to request clarifications from any Offeror regarding information in their proposal and may request an oral presentation if deemed appropriate and necessary to make a final recommendation.

Offerors may request clarification to comply with instructions during the Question-and-Answer period August 22, 2021 through September 23, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. by reviewing questions and answers on the website or by emailing David Moore at dmoore@wcapdd.org or mdearmon@wcapdd.org. The board staff will respond to all questions by September 23, 2021. Offerors shall not direct questions or have conversations regarding this request for proposal with the WCAPDD staff except during the official “question” period. All questions must be communicated through dmoore@wcapdd.org or mdearmon@wcapdd.org. Questions submitted should be electronic and include in the subject line ***Questions West Central Arkansas OSO Operator Procurement.***

The proposal, as well as any reference materials presented, must be typed in English in at least 12-point font and must be on standard portrait 8 ½ “ by 11” size with no less than one-inch margins on one side of the paper. Landscape orientation containing charts, spreadsheets, and oversize exhibits is permissible.

Contract Funding Source

Funding for One-Stop Operator is made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor and is administered by the Workforce Development Board on behalf of the Chief Elected Officials.

Compliance Requirements

Any award of a contract and/or agreement under this request for proposal will be subject to applicable requirements of the funding sources, including the U.S. Department of Labor, State of Arkansas, and the Workforce Development Board.

These terms and conditions include, without limitation, provisions regarding reporting, insurance, indemnification, audits, nondiscrimination, minority and women's business enterprise requirements, veterans’ priority of service, conflict of interest and local hiring provisions.

Public Records

Offerors are advised that documents in possession of the consultant and/or the official record provided to the Workforce Development Board following the award, are considered public records and subject to disclosure under the Arkansas Public Information Act.

Contractor Qualifications and Responsibilities

All businesses/organizations must meet a minimum level of administrative and fiscal capacity in order to contract as One-Stop Operator. Therefore, all applicants given selection notification must provide the following Documentation of Qualifications within a ten-day period after notification. Failure to satisfactorily provide the following documentation could result in disqualification of proposed award.

Documentation of Organization's Qualifications:

- Legal entity (Proof of Incorporation, 501(c) (3), etc. and Designation from the IRS of tax-exempt status) if applicable. Must submit document proving legal entity.
- Written personnel policies. Must submit table of contents of personnel policies.
- Written conflict of interest policy for staff and board. Must submit copy of Conflict-of-Interest Policy.
- Written grievance procedure for customers/clients. Must submit copy of grievance procedure.
- Have an ongoing quality assurance process for services. Must submit descriptions of process.
- For organizations with an annual budget of at least \$100,000, must submit most recent annual budget document identifying the various sources of the amounts.
- For organizations that have more than one revenue source, must submit revenue documentation identifying the various sources of the amounts.
- Proven fiscal capacity including capacity for fund accounting. Must submit bound copy of most recent formal audit completed within last year. Must satisfactorily address all findings.
- Verify that the program has procured and will maintain during the life of the contract the following required insurance coverage: professional liability, errors and omissions; commercial general liability insurance, including contractual liability insurance; business automobile liability (if applicable); worker's compensation coverage; and employee dishonesty insurance. Must submit copies of certificate of insurance with contract.

In the event some of these documents are not applicable, the contract file will so indicate and the justification for such.

Proposal Content and Scoring

Proposals will be evaluated on Three Parts:

- Part I Required Format and Content in #1 below
- Part II Experience and Philosophy (35 points) & Approach (40 points)
- Part III Budget Detail and Total Cost (25 points)

1. **All Proposals must contain the following documents in this order to be considered:**

- a. Title Page Including Entity, Contact Person (email, phone, address)
- b. Executive Summary (no longer than 2 pages)
- c. Proposal Narrative (no longer than 15 pages)
- d. Budget and Budget Narrative (no longer than 2 pages)
- e. Three References Attesting to Relevant Experience – hard copy letters preferred along with list and contact information
- f. In the case of a consortium, all included entities must sign a statement that they have agreed to the contents of the proposal.
- g. Supporting documents (no longer than 5 pages)

2. **Experience and Philosophy** (35 points – 5 each)

Describe your experience with and/or philosophy regarding the following:

- a. Visionary leadership while operating within structured rules and guidelines.
- b. Fostering collaboration and partnerships.
- c. Measuring customer satisfaction.
- d. Working on diverse/divergent issues or agendas to reach outcomes.
- e. Serving diverse customers including employers, economically disadvantaged individuals with little or no work experience, individuals with disabilities, dislocated workers with experience, and young adults.
- f. Understanding of Federal laws and workforce or related laws, including the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
- g. Experience with operating One-Stop Centers in the current and previous legislations.

3. **Approach** (40 points – 5 each)

Describe how you will approach the One-Stop Operator roles and responsibilities identified above in terms of:

- a. Staffing (Including Job Descriptions, Experience, and Percent of Time Allocated to One-Stop Operator Duties, and Local Hiring of Management)
 - Please note that in the event a consortium submits a bid, there must be clear and concise description of who will be the lead and how the consortium will function. The job description must include the roles and responsibilities outlined in this request for proposal.
- b. Partner Collaboration
- c. Partner and Center Communication
- d. Performance Reporting Including Partner Data Collection and Submission
- e. Adherence to Board and Administrative Entity Policies and Procedures
- f. Comprehensive Center Coverage and Customer Flow/Referral Processes
- g. Affiliate and/or Satellite Center Coverage
- h. System Orientations

4. **Budget, Budget Narrative, and Total Cost**

a. Operator Budget Summary Chart (format to be used in Offer). It is expected that the One-Stop Operator will be entirely program funds.

Cost Category	WIOA Title I Program Costs	WIOA Title I Administrative Costs	Funds Leveraged from Partner Resources
Staff Salaries			
Staff Fringe			
Staff Travel			
Equipment			
Space Rent			
Supplies			
Postage			
Utilities			
Other: (list)			
TOTAL COST			

b. Budget Narrative

- Provide detail of what is covered under each budget line item
- Include any leveraged amounts to be used and not paid for by this RFQ; explain in detail

c. Proposed Profit

- Provide information on profit requested