



American Rescue Plan Act Business Engagement Program

Request for Proposals:
Business Engagement Contractor for American Rescue Plan Act (ARP)
Funding

Important Dates

RFP Release Date:

September 10th, 2021

Proposal Due Date:

October 11th, 2021

Deadline to submit proposals

Proposals must be submitted as a PDF e-mail copy sent to
RFPSubmissions@co.pg.md.us

Award Announcement(s) PROPOSALS SENT AFTER 12:00 PM EASTERN STANDARD TIME (EST) ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 11TH WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Employ Prince George's does not discriminate against faith-based organizations or against any Bidder or Bidders because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS..... 2

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS 3

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT CONTRACTOR..... 3

INTRODUCTION 3

 A. Overview..... 3

 B. Federal Regulations 7

 C. Term of Contract..... 7

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL ELEMENT REQUIREMENTS..... 8

 D. Timeline..... 9

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SCORING..... 10

 A. Experience and Capacity..... 10

SUBMISSION REQUIRMENTS..... 10

 A. Letter of Interest..... 11

 B. Threshold Requirements 11

 C. Main Proposal 12

SELECTION PROCESS 13

QUESTIONS 13

SUBMISSION DUE DATE 13

CERTIFICATION FORM NOTE 14

APPENDIX A: RFP SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST 15

APPENDIX B: CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT..... 16

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT CONTRACTOR

INTRODUCTION

A. Overview

This Request for Proposals (“RFP”) is being issued by Employ Prince George’s (EPG), on behalf of the Prince George’s County Workforce Development Board to announce the availability of up to \$100,000 in contractual funds to support Employ Prince George’s, Inc. (EPG) in their efforts to connect job seekers to employment through a targeted business engagement approach. Through this proposal, EPG intends to expand its capacity and reach to businesses operating in the DC, Maryland, Northern Virginia region. These funds will support Prince George’s County and our regional economy as we recover from the impacts of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The period of performance will include a contract term that begins January 1, 2022 and ends on December 31, 2022. American Rescue Plan Act Workforce Development Program Policies, Definitions, & Procedures (General for all ten local workforce development areas)

Employ Prince George’s, Inc. seeks to attract proposals from Workforce Development Professionals who specialize in business engagement and job development. The selected applicant will implement a Business Engagement & Discovery model that aligns with Prince George’s County Local Workforce Development Areas vision of the workforce development system, as written in the provisional **2020 - 2024 Local Plan**. Proposals must include:

- Methodology to Select Businesses
- Employer Engagement Strategy
- Assessment of a Businesses Needs
- Capacity to Navigate Case Management Systems
- Internal Communications Strategy

The Business Engagement Contract will increase EPG’s capacity to reach businesses and create linkages between employers and job seekers engaged in Prince George’s County American Job Center Network. The successful applicant will demonstrate their knowledge of the language business and industry speaks and identify potential workforce solutions that may support the business and their ability to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. The successful applicant must also become familiar with the supply of workforce talent in the context of the Prince George’s County American Job Center Network and market that supply to businesses. After a period of engagement and discovery with the business, the contractor would refer the newly engaged business to the internal Business Services Team to provide appropriate solutions and relevant follow up. Business Engagement and Discovery strategies should be designed to connect a diverse range of customers to employment opportunities in occupations that align with our region’s in-demand occupations.

#	Industry	#	Industry	#	Industry
1	Healthcare and Social Services	6	Education	11	Recreation, Tourism & Hospitality
2	Food and Beverage Manufacturing	7	Transportation and Logistics	12	Accommodation and Food Services
3	Advanced Manufacturing	8	Government Services	13	Retail Trade
4	Construction and Real Estate	9	Information Technology		
5	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	10	Business Services		

Companies with demonstrated experience in creating and delivering these types of services and with an interest in making their services available to Employ Prince George’s and Maryland’s Local Workforce Development Boards are invited to respond to this RFP. “Respondents” means the companies, or individuals, that submit proposals in response to this RFP. It is understood that the selected Respondent acting as an individual, partnership, corporation, or other legal entity, is state licensed and certified, as needed. The Respondent shall be financially solvent and each of

its members if a joint venture, its employees, agents, or sub-consultants of any tier shall be competent to perform the services required under this RFP document.

Nothing in this RFP shall be construed to create any legal obligation on the part of EPG, Maryland's Local Workforce Development Boards or any respondents. EPG reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to amend, suspend, terminate, or reissue this RFP in whole or in part, at any stage. In no event shall EPG, nor any Local Workforce Development Board in Maryland, be liable to respondents for any cost or damages incurred in connection with the RFP process, including but not limited to, any and all costs of preparing a response to this RFP or any other costs incurred in reliance on this RFP. No respondent shall be entitled to repayment from EPG for any costs, expenses or fees related to this RFP. All supporting documentation submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of EPG. Respondents may also withdraw their interest in the RFP, in writing, at any point in time as more information becomes known.

Prince George's County Workforce Development Board

Maryland's Public Workforce System consist of 13 Local Workforce Development Areas, including the Prince George's County Workforce Development Area. Each Local Workforce Development Area is governed by a Local Workforce Development Board. The Prince George's Workforce Development Board is a 34-member Local Workforce Development Board, appointed by the Prince George's County Office of the County Executive, governing the Prince George's County Workforce Development Area.

The Prince George's County Workforce Development Board is a dynamic group of private and public sector partners that provides leadership, direction and policy oversight for the workforce delivery system in Prince George's County. The mission of the Prince George's County Workforce Development Board that drives the innovation, integration, continuity, productivity, and efficiency of a workforce system that produces a robust, qualified, and skilled workforce that meets the needs of the business community. The Prince George's County Workforce Development Board achieves its mission by providing guidance over the Prince George's County Public Workforce System, modeled as the first public workforce system operating as a free membership network, the Prince George's County American Job Center Community Network

(www.pgcajc.com). The Prince George's County American Job Center Community Network serves over 20,000 job seekers and 1,500 businesses annually.

Employ Prince George's

Employ Prince George's, Inc. (www.employpg.org) is a nonprofit organization based in Largo, Maryland. Employ Prince George's administers a menu of workforce development services for job seekers and businesses. The mission of Employ Prince George's is to improve the local economy by creating a demand-driven workforce system with workforce development programs that deliver qualified workers to businesses, improves the productivity of businesses, and provides job seekers with opportunities for careers in high demand/high growth industries.

Employ Prince George's serves as the Staff and Fiscal Agent of the Prince George's County Local Workforce Development System. Prince George's County has designated one comprehensive American Job Center in Largo, MD and one affiliate center, located within the Tanger Outlet in National Harbor. Both centers support six Demographic Career Services Programs and seven Industry Bridge Programs that are supported through a combination of Federal, State and Private grant funds. Employ Prince George's serves over 20,000 job seekers and 6,500 businesses annually.

Prince George's County American Job Center Network

Prince George's County Local Workforce Development Board created a new approach to operating the local public workforce develop system in 2018, with an increased focus on partnership, integration and leveraging local area resources to maximize federal performance outcomes and positive impact on the local economy. Through a tiered membership model, Prince George's County American Job Center Network (AJCCN) aligns and leverages resources of its core and partner programs to achieve the strategic vision and goals of the workforce development board. There are currently over 65 partners engaged in the AJCCN.

The Workforce Impact of COVID-19 on Prince George's County

In Prince George's County, 90,191 people, or 9.9% of the population, have contracted Covid-19 and 1,618 have died from the disease. Likewise, and since January 2020, Prince George's

County's economy has struggled with unemployment rates rising from 3.7% to 8.3%, with a high of 10.9% in July and August of 2020. Along with high unemployment rates, Prince George's County employment decreased by over 44,000 and the overall labor force decreased by over 22,000.

Covid-19's impacts on the Prince George's County economy is even greater when compared to December 2019, the month the World Health Organization identified as the start of Covid-19. To combat the negative impacts of Covid-19 on the Prince George's County economy, Employ Prince George's is drastically increasing business services to assist businesses recover from the negative impacts of Covid-19, provide grants to businesses to assist them in recovery from profit losses during Covid-19 mandated closures, and rapidly connecting job seekers to businesses to help businesses increase their capacity while helping job seekers secure livable wage employment. Employ Prince George's goal is to assist Prince George's County rebound from the recession caused by Covid-19.

B. Federal Regulations

Award recipients providing services under the ARP Grant must follow the American Rescue Plan Act, US Department of the Treasury Interim Final Rule, unless stated otherwise in the final rule adopted and promulgated. Until that point, the guidance listed above takes precedent. Furthermore, any state legislation that dictates requirements for spending ARP funds must be adhered to as well. Respondents are strongly encouraged to read these regulations prior to submitting their response to this RFP.

C. Term of Contract

Any contract awarded pursuant to this RFP solicitation shall be for a contract period up to **twelve (12) months**, without the possibility of an extension.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL ELEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Each proposal must include the providers **Methodology to Select Businesses** to engage on behalf of Employ Prince George's and the Prince George's County American Job Center Community Network. The target population of businesses for this funding are those who belong to one of Prince George's County's in-demand industries, as described in the *summary section* of this proposal. Proposers should clearly illustrate their plan to engage a minimum of 850 businesses in their response.

Each proposal must include the providers **Employer Engagement Strategy**. Providers must propose a clear approach to engage and assess each business, using an **Assessment Tool** that captures employer information that is required to successfully record business engagement in the State of Maryland's CRM tool, Maryland Workforce Exchange. Applicants must provide a sample assessment tool, which includes the following required data points:

- Legal name of the business
- Physical Address
- MD Tax Accessors Office – Good Standing
- Business Point of Contact (2)
- Needs Assessment
- Website and/or Social Media links

The Assessment Tool must include a Needs Assessment, established by the proposing entity, that clearly shows how the data collected in the Needs Assessment will support the Business Services Team and their effort to connect job seekers with open positions.

The scope of work will require the applicant to record applicable business information in Maryland's Workforce Exchange and EPG's internal data tracking tool, Career Edge (pgccareers.com). The successful applicant will record business engagements by registering the employer in Maryland Workforce Exchange and recording applicable employer codes. The

applicant must demonstrate their **capacity to navigate case management systems** that document relevant business services.

The successful applicant will work closely with EPG's internal Business Services Team (BST) to establish a clear process to seamlessly transfer a new business to the BST after initial engagement and discovery has occurred. Employers should be provided an overview of the organizational structure and should be made aware of the warm handoff that will occur once the initial engagement and discovery phases have ended. The contractor will refer the newly engaged business to the internal Business Services Team to provide appropriate solutions and relevant follow up. Each proposal must include the providers **internal communication strategy** that facilitates the seamless transfer of information and needs to the BST. This could include warm handoffs to the BST, group calls between the contractor, BST and job seekers and/or direct linkages between job seekers and businesses. Please note, the Business Services Team with Employ Prince George's, Inc. is a teleworking team. Office and/or meeting space is available by appointment.

The proposal should provide background information about the proposer's experience, including an explanation of the expertise the provider possesses in engaging businesses, a demonstrated ability to develop relationships and secure a designated point of contact at the business, and the providers qualifications in business engagement and/or workforce development.

D. Timeline

RFP submissions are due Monday, October 11th 12:00 pm

Evaluation period Tuesday, October 12th through Tuesday, October 26th

Award Announcement Wednesday, October 28th

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SCORING

In evaluating responses to this Request for Proposal, EPG will take into consideration the experience, capacity, and costs that are being proposed by the Respondent. The following Evaluation Criteria will be considered in reviewing submittals:

A. Experience and Capacity

The point system is to evaluate the experience and capacity of the Respondent.

- Respondents will be awarded up to 15 points for experience providing this type of service.
- Respondents will be awarded up to 15 points for demonstrating their capacity to meet project timelines and how they will meet project timelines.
- Respondents will be awarded up to 10 points for pricing.
- Respondents will be awarded up to 50 points for the content of each required proposal elements and how the contractor will ensure the highest quality and accuracy (based on Federal guidance) of each of the four proposal elements:
 - Methodology to Select Businesses Employer Engagement Strategy Assessment of a Businesses Needs Capacity to Navigate Case Management Systems
 - Internal Communications Strategy
- Respondents will be awarded 10 points for innovation, accuracy (based on Federal guidance), and detail.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

RFP responses must be submitted as a **PDF** e-mail copy sent to RFPSubmissions@co.pg.md.us with the following subject line: **Business Engagement Contractor for ARP - [APPLICANT NAME]**. Each respondent shall submit one (1) copy of the following documents in a clear, legible, 12-point Times New Roman font, and 8.5 by 11-inch format. **Responses not submitted by e-mail in the requested format will not be considered.** Respondents are advised to adhere to the Submittal Requirements. Failure to comply with the instructions of this RFP will be cause

for rejection of submittals. EPG reserves the right to seek additional information to clarify responses to this RFP. Each response must include the following:

A. Letter of Interest

Please submit a Cover Letter of Interest signed by a duly authorized officer or representative of the Respondent, not to exceed two pages in length. The Letter of Interest must also include the following information:

1. The principal place of business and the contact person, title, telephone/fax numbers and email address.
2. A summary of the qualifications of the Respondent and team.
3. Description of organization (i.e., Corporation, Limited Liability Company, or Joint Venture).

The names and business addresses of all Principals of the Respondent. For purposes of this RFP “Principals” shall mean persons possessing an ownership interest in the Respondent.

If the Respondent is a partially owned or fully owned subsidiary of another organization, identify the parent organization and describe the nature and extent of the parent organization’s approval rights, if any, over the activities of the Respondent.

If the Respondent is a partially owned or fully owned subsidiary of another organization, identify the parent organization and describe the nature and extent of the parent organization’s approval rights, if any, over the activities of the Respondent.

The Certification attached hereto at the end of this RFP and incorporated herein by reference must be signed by Respondent and attached to the Letter of Interest

B. Threshold Requirements

These documents must be submitted and acceptable before EPG will review the Experience and Capacity proposal:

Certificate of Good Standing (Corporation) or Certificate of Existence (Limited Liability Company) issued by the Maryland Secretary of State (If Respondent is a joint venture, a Certificate of Good Standing or Certificate of Existence, as applicable, must be submitted for each entity comprising the joint venture.)

Conflict of Interest Statement & Supporting Documentation: Respondent shall disclose any professional or personal financial interests that may be a conflict of interest in representing the EPG. In addition, all Respondents shall further disclose arrangement to derive additional compensation from various investment and reinvestment products, including financial contracts.

References: Three (3) references of related projects, including date of project, contact person and phone number, and a brief description of the project.

C. Main Proposal

Please provide the following information:

1. Years of experience and detailed qualifications in performing these types of services, including resumes of the proposed staff working on the project. Past projects will be reviewed to determine if the respondent has successfully completed projects similar in nature and scope. Respondents should provide narrative examples, and attachments (as available), of one (1) to three (3) projects that are similar in nature to projects described in the RFP.
2. Capacity to complete the scope of work outlined in this RFP
3. Pricing proposal. This should include the hourly and/or unit rates for work (Labor will include payments of prevailing wage rates as determined by the Department of Labor and Industries. The Contractor will sign a fixed price contract to include all work and services.
4. Respondents should state whether they are an MBE/WBE or Section 3 business enterprise. If so, please provide a copy of a current MBE/WBE certification letter.

SELECTION PROCESS

The Selection Committee comprised of EPG staff will review qualifications in accordance with the evaluation criteria set forth herein and ARP objectives and policies. Proposals that are submitted timely and comply with the mandatory requirements of the RFP will be evaluated in accordance with the terms of the RFP. Any contract resulting from this RFP will not necessarily be awarded to the vendor with the lowest price. Instead, contract shall be awarded to vendor whose proposal received the most points in accordance with criteria set forth in RFP.

QUESTIONS

Questions regarding this RFP should be submitted in writing via email to RFPSubmissions@co.pg.md.us with the following subject line: **Inquiry: Business Engagement Contractor for ARP.**

SUBMISSION DUE DATE

Responses to this RFP are due by **12:00 pm Monday, October 11th**. Responses to this RFP must be e-mailed to **Amanda Wagner** at RFPSubmissions@co.pg.md.us.

CERTIFICATION FORM NOTE

THIS PAGE MUST BE COMPLETED AND INCLUDED WITH THE SUBMITTAL CERTIFICATION

The undersigned hereby certifies, on behalf of the Respondent named in this Certification (the “Respondent”), that the information provided in this RFP submittal to EPG is accurate and complete, and I am duly authorized to submit same. I hereby certify that the Respondent has reviewed this RFP in its entirety and accepts its terms and conditions.

(Name of Respondent)

(Signature of Authorized Representative)

(Typed Name of Authorized Representative)

(Title)

(Date)

APPENDIX A: RFP SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST

Please provide Checklist with response to RFP

- Letter of Interest
- Certification
- Certificate of Good Standing (Corporation) or Certificate of Existence (Limited Liability Company) issued by the Secretary of State (If Respondent is a joint venture, a Certificate of Good Standing or Certificate of Existence, as applicable, must be submitted for each entity comprising the joint venture.)
- 2021 Certificate to do Business with LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENTITY
- References
- Conflict of Interest Statement & Supporting Documentation
- Description of Company
- Capacity of Company
- Pricing Proposal
- MBE/WBE, Local Hiring, HUD Section 3, if applicable
- RFP Submittal Requirements Checklist

APPENDIX B: CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

[Respondent]

Conflict of Interest Statement

The owner(s), corporate members or employees of [Respondent], shall derive any personal profit or gain, directly or indirectly, by reason of his or her participation with [EPG]. Each individual shall disclose to [EPG] any personal interest or direct relationship which he or she may have and shall refrain from participation in any decision making in related manners.

Any owner, corporate member or employee of [Respondent] who is an officer, board member, a committee member or staff member of a related organization shall identify his or her affiliation with such agency or agencies; further, in connection with any policy committee or board action specifically associated with [EPG], he/she shall not participate in the decision affecting that entity and the decision must be made and/or ratified by the full board.

At this time, I am a Board member, a committee member, or an employee of the following organizations/companies:

Now this is to certify that I, except as described below, am not now nor at any time during the past year have been:

- 1) A participant, directly or indirectly, in any arrangement, agreement, investment, or other activity with any vendor, supplier, or other party; doing business with [EPG] which has resulted or could result in person benefit to me.

- 2) A recipient, directly or indirectly, of any salary payments or loans or gifts of any kind or any free service or discounts or other fees from or on behalf of any person or organization engaged in any transaction with [EPG].

Any exceptions to 1 or 2 above are stated below with a full description of the transactions and of the interest, whether direct or indirect, which I have (or have had during the past year) in the persons or organizations having transactions with EPG.

Date

Signature

Printed Name

Respondent

Address

Telephone