



**Employ Prince George's Operations Division on behalf of the
Prince George's County Workforce Development Board**

Strategic Planner: In-School Career Counseling Program

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP No.: WDBRFP-011

Important Dates

RFP Release Date: **Tuesday, October 10th 2023**

Virtual Information Session: **Thursday, October 19th, 2023 at 11:00 am**
Click [here](#) for the Microsoft Teams Info Session Link

Proposal Due Date: **Thursday, November 9th, 2023**

Proposals must be submitted via our online grant application portal which can be accessed by clicking [here](#). **PROPOSAL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED AFTER 4:00 PM EASTERN STANDARD TIME (EST) ON NOVEMBER 9, 2023 WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** The Prince George's County Workforce Development Board (WDB) is not responsible for any errors of omission. Mailed, faxed, or emailed proposal(s) will not be accepted.

The Prince George's County Workforce Development Board (WDB) does not discriminate against faith-based organizations or against any Bidders or Proposer(s) because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment.

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INTRODUCTION & INTENT

Employ Prince George's, Inc. (Employ Prince George's or EPG), serving as the principal workforce development service provider for Prince George's County and a career services provider of the Prince George's County Workforce Development Board, is the recipient of diverse sources of funding to support workforce development efforts within Prince George's County.

The Prince George's County Workforce Development Board (WDB) is committed to developing a skilled talent pipeline of workers to meet the needs of business and industry to promote sustainable economic growth and regional and global competitiveness. The WDB seeks to identify and procure a qualified consultant to support the WDB, Prince George's County Public Schools and Prince George's Community College plan, launch and sustain a college and career readiness career counseling program for all middle and high school aged students in alignment with the vision of Pillar 3 of Blueprint for Maryland's Future. The consultant will support the partnerships efforts to operationalize a career counseling program that includes career pathway exploration and development for every 6 – 12 grade student in Prince George's County, regardless of their race, ethnicity, income, or ability.

ISSUING ENTITY

The WDB (<https://pgcajc.com/workforce-board/>) is a dynamic group of private and public sector partners that provides leadership, direction, and policy oversight for the Prince George's County Public Workforce System, branded and modeled as the Prince George's County American Job Center Community Network. Our mission is to be a 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 membership of the WDB is represented by:

Business Sector	Department of Social Services
Economic & Community Development	Adult Education/Literacy
Labor Organizations	Workforce Development Organizations
Vocational Rehabilitation	Higher Education
Community Based Organizations	State Employment Services
Chambers of Commerce	Elected Officials

The WDB provides guidance and oversight of the Prince George's County American Job Center Community Network and ensures that businesses have the skilled workers and the resources needed to remain competitive and prosper in a global market. Job seekers can acquire the training and knowledge necessary to achieve livable wage employment along a career pathway, work toward financial stability and building wealth.

The WDB's workforce strategies are designed to reduce skills gaps across targeted in-demand industries with an emphasis in the following in-demand industries:

- Healthcare & Social Assistance
- Food & Beverage Manufacturing
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Construction and Real Estate

- Professional, Scientific & Technical Services
- Education
- Transportation and Logistics
- Government Services
- Information Technology
- Business Services
- Recreation, Tourism & Hospitality
- Accommodation and Food Services
- Retail Trade

The focus is on advancement along an in-demand career pathway, an approach that encourages job seekers to pursue incremental, progressive skills that will lead to better jobs as they advance along their chosen career pathway.

BACKGROUND

The Blueprint for Maryland’s Future was passed by the Maryland General Assembly in 2021 to transform public education in the state into a world-class education system. The College and Career Readiness Pillar (Pillar Three) sets a new College and Career Readiness (CCR) standard that prepares graduates for success in college and the workforce. The Blueprint aims to have all students meet the CCR standard by the end of their 10th grade year, develops CCR-Support pathways to support students in meeting the standard, enables students to enter a Post-CCR pathway that builds on the student’s strengths, develops a Career and Technical Education (CTE) system that is aligned with industry’s needs, and ensures that prekindergarten through 12th grade curriculum, standards, and assessments are all aligned with the new CCR standard. Further, Pillar Three requires a career counseling program for middle and high school students to help each student choose one or more post-college and career readiness pathways.

Through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Employ Prince George’s (EPG) (on behalf of the Prince George’s County Workforce Development Board), Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS), and Prince George’s Community College (PGCC) are partnering to deliver the career counseling program. The partnership seeks a strategic planning contractor to support the development and implementation of the career counseling program.

The partnership has established the following foundational elements:

1. The Blueprint allocated funding to PGCPS for the Prince George’s County Workforce Development Board (administrative functions and programming operations conducted by Employ Prince George’s) to establish a robust career counseling program for students in all PGCPS middle and high schools (6th grade – 12th grade).
2. The goal of this career counseling program is that the counseling is aligned with the in-demand industries and in-demand industry clusters identified by the Prince George’s County Workforce Development Board, through the Board’s Local Plan and State of the Workforce Report.
3. Along with aligning the career counseling programming with the career pathways of Prince George’s County’s in-demand industry clusters, identified by the Prince George’s County Workforce Development Board, the career counseling will identify the educational training options (secondary and post-secondary) within each career pathway.
4. The long-term goal of this career counseling program, led by the Prince George’s County Workforce Development Board, is that PGCPS will see increases in CTE enrollments, CTE

program completers, and CTE credential attainment rates, along with increases in PGCPs registered apprenticeship programming and participation.

PURPOSE

The selected contractor will support the partnership with:

1. Project Planning: Serving as a thought partner with EPG, PGCPs, and PGCC staff and to develop all aspects of the career counseling program.
2. Project Management: Managing project tasks and activities on schedule and within budget.
3. Relationship Cultivation: Building and maintaining relations with partner members, external stakeholders, and the Workforce Development Board.
4. Curriculum Development: Leading the development of a best practices and evidence-based career counseling program.
5. Logistics Support: Coordinating the management of meetings and workshops and identified tasks.
6. Communication and Outreach: Developing content about the career counseling program that is clear and easily understood.

Required duties will include but not be limited to:

1. Design, plan and facilitate all partnership meetings. Meetings may be virtual or in person and occur weekly.
2. Conduct initial stakeholder research and build out a landscape map of existing career exploration programming for Prince George's County students in Grades 6-12.
3. Assist with the design of age and stage-appropriate career counseling services based on best and evidence-based practices. This may include research, investigation, and demonstration.
4. Identify community partnerships needed to ensure successful implementation of the program service delivery model.
5. Develop a plan to engage parents and guardians of 6-12 grade students.
6. Define what program success would look like; identify benchmarks. Develop strategy on usage of platforms and tools.
7. Research and recommend business engagement strategies.

ELIGIBLE BIDDERS

Eligible applicants include non-profit and for-profit organizations, private sector entities, educational institutions, private career schools, community-based organizations, and other entities operating in accordance with federal, state, and local law, that have been in business for at least three years. Applicants must be an incorporated organization. Eligible applicants must be in good standing with the state and federal government. Organizations currently barred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by a Federal, State, City, or County department/agency, quasi-governmental agency, or the WDB are ineligible to apply.

A group of two or more applicants may apply as a consortium, but the WDB will award only one contract in a consortium application to the lead applicant/fiscal agent. All entities, whether directly contracted or

subcontracted via the lead applicant/fiscal agent, will be held to the requirements of Federal, State, and local policies. Please be aware that additional monitoring, compliance, and assessment requirements will become the responsibility of the lead applicant/fiscal agent. All selected applicants will have demonstrated experience and expertise in the provision of high-quality workforce development services to the target populations described in this RFP. Providers will be expected to ground their organization within the communities they serve with staff focused on providing culturally competent services and a history of successful workforce development programming.

An entity may submit multiple applications for funding; however, only one application from any single entity may be funded.

TERM OF CONTRACT

EPG is the administrative and fiscal agent of the WDB, responsible for the management of the WDB's funds received from various sources including the U.S. Department of Labor, Maryland Department of Labor, Prince George's County Government, and other grant funding. Funding for the project described in this RFP is anticipated to originate from [Maryland Department of Education's Blueprint for Maryland's Future](#).

The WDB anticipates that total funding of **up to three hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$350,000.00 USD)** for innovative workforce programs will be available for the contract(s) awarded through this RFP. Funding for this RFP is expressly contingent upon final budget approval. Respondents selected as a result of this solicitation must participate in contract negotiations with EPG/WDB and may be required to submit programmatic, financial, or other revisions which may have resulted from such negotiation. The award of any contract or agreement shall be contingent upon the satisfactory completion of contract negotiation. Please note that the WDB is not obligated to award the full amount requested by an applicant; based on the competitiveness of applications received, the WDB may elect to partially fund a proposal.

The WDB anticipates awarding funding to **one (1) entity** that demonstrates an ability to effectively deliver and manage services as described within this RFP. The WDB reserves the right to accept other than lowest cost proposals and to reject any and all proposals or parts thereof. Agreements are anticipated to have terms effective **January 1, 2024** through **June 30, 2025**

Contracts executed because of this RFP will be paid through cost reimbursement unless otherwise specified. Final contracts will also be subject to any changes in legislation, regulations or policies required by the funding sources. The WDB reserves the right to vary or change the terms of any contract executed because of this RFP, including but not limited to funding levels, the scope of services, performance standards, and period of performance, as it deems necessary.

QUESTIONS

All questions regarding the RFP must be submitted in writing via email to **Employ Prince George's Contracts & Operations Department** at rfpsubmissions@co.pg.md.us no later than **Thursday, October 26th** as no questions will be taken during the Virtual Information Session. Answers to written questions will be posted and sent via email on or around **Tuesday, October 31st**. Interested bidders are strictly prohibited from directly contacting members of the Workforce Development Board and EPG staff regarding this RFP.

EX PARTE COMMUNICATION/CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Each Bidder shall ensure that no improper, unethical, or illegal relationships or conflicts of interest, whether actual or apparent, exist between or among the Bidder, the WDB, and any other parties to this RFP. The Bidder is responsible for disclosing, at the point of proposal submission or as soon as the situation arises, any such relationships. This includes interests that they may have with any individual or entity doing business with or proposing to do business with the Workforce Development Board or Employ Prince George's (EPG). An employee or official may not be employed by or have a financial interest in any entity subject to their authority or of the Prince George's County agency, board, or commission of which they are affiliated; or entity that is negotiating or has a contract with that agency, board, or commission; or hold other position that may impair their judgment or impartiality.

The WDB reserves the right to determine the pertinence of such relationships, when discovered or disclosed, whether intended or not, and to decide whether the Bidder's disqualifications and/or cancellation shall be at no fault or liability whatsoever to the WDB. The WDB's determination regarding any question of conflict of interest will be final. All WDB members, EPG Board members, officers, and staff are precluded from entertaining questions concerning the completion of the proposal or the procurement process. Potential Bidders are asked to respect these conditions by not making personal requests for assistance, except in instances where technical assistance is needed.

VIRTUAL INFORMATION SESSION

All organizations intending to bid either as a sole applicant or as the lead of a consortium proposal are encouraged to attend the **Virtual Information Session** scheduled for **October 19, 2023, from 11:00 am EST until 11:45 am EST** via [Microsoft Teams](#). EPG has selected this forum to present detailed non-competitive information regarding the RFP. The session will provide an overview of the RFP and bidding process and will be recorded for reference. Information for the Virtual Information Session will be provided on the WDB's RFP webpage <https://pgcajc.com/rfps/>.

SCHEDULE FOR RFP SUBMISSION, REVIEW & AWARDS

With exception of proposal submission deadline, EPG reserves the right to make changes to the timeline below.

ACTIVITY	DATE
RFP Published	October 10, 2023
Virtual Information Session	October 19, 2023 11:00 am EST
Deadline to submit Proposal	November 9, 2023 4:00 pm EST
Selection of Successful Bidder on or around	December 15, 2023
Contract to begin NO LATER THAN	January 1, 2024

MINIMUM CONTRACTOR REQUIREMENTS:

Applicants must have the following demonstrated experience:

- Program and/or instructional design
- Facilitation
- Research
- Workforce development and/or K-12 education

COST REQUIREMENTS

The Bidder may propose costs associated with performing the scope of work by providing a proposed budget and narrative. The Bidder must submit a description of the proposed costs and explain the allocation by cost element. The Bidder must have an explanation of how costs will be recorded and tracked, and the name and version of the proposed accounting system.

PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must be submitted via our online grant application portal no later than **November 9, 2023**, which can be accessed by clicking [here](#). Proposals not received by the deadline will be automatically disqualified from competition – no exceptions. Mailed, faxed, or hard copy proposals will not be accepted.

Proposals should be prepared in a professional manner, providing a complete and detailed description of the proposed program. Emphasis should be placed on clarity of content and completeness. Bidders must include all the required attachments listed within the submission portal that pertain to the proposal. Failure to include required attachments will disqualify the proposal. No additional attachments are allowed. Bidders may submit the required attachments as part of their electronic submission.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Questions regarding technical assistance with our online application portal should be submitted in writing via email to **Ericka Stevens** at ENStevens@co.pg.md.us with the following subject line: **Technical Assistance: WDBRFP-011**. 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.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Responsive proposals will be reviewed and rated by a qualified review committee. The following is the total weight for this RFP. Bidders **must have a total of 80% or higher** in the scoring methodology to be recommended to the WDB for final consideration.

SCORING METHODOLOGY	
Organizational Background	10
Demonstrated Experience	30

Staffing Levels and Qualifications	15
Project Approach	25
Budget and Narrative	20
TOTAL AVAILABLE POINTS	100 POINTS

The WDB reserves the right to select other than lowest cost proposals and to reject any and all proposals or parts thereof.

BIDDERS CONDITIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND AUTHORIZATIONS

By submitting its proposal, each Bidder understands, represents, and acknowledges that:

A Bidder or his/her authorized representative may withdraw or modify his/her proposal by written notice received, at the Issuing Office’s address, prior to the exact hour and date specified for proposal receipt.

The Bidder’s information and representations in the proposal are material and important, and the Issuing Office may rely upon the contents of the proposal in negotiations, contractual obligations, and awarding the contract(s). The Bidder agrees that the proposal will remain firm for a period of one hundred twenty (120) calendar days after the date specified for receipt of proposals or until a sub-recipient agreement is fully executed.

The Bidder selected is a sub-recipient of a Federal award and thus are required to follow the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200).

Each Bidder, by submitting its proposal, authorizes the WDB to release to the State of Maryland information concerning the Bidder's Maryland taxes, unemployment compensation, workers’ compensation liabilities, and total compensations for individuals charged to the subrecipient agreement. The Bidder has arrived at the cost(s) and amount(s) in its proposal independently and without consultation, communication, or agreement with any other Bidder or potential Bidders. The Bidder shall not disclose any of these items on or before the proposal submission deadline specified in this RFP.

The Bidder has not attempted, nor will it attempt, to induce any firm or person to refrain from submitting a proposal on this sub-recipient agreement, or to submit a proposal higher than this proposal, or to submit any intentionally high or noncompetitive proposal or other form of complementary proposal.

The Bidder has not made, under separate sub-recipient agreement with the WDB, any recommendations to the Issuing Office concerning the need for the goods and services described in its proposal or the specifications for the goods and services described in the proposal.

The Bidder is not currently under suspension or debarment in the State of Maryland, any other State, or the Federal government and, if the Bidder cannot so certify, then it shall submit along with its proposal a written explanation of why it cannot make such certification.

The Bidder must clearly identify and describe the services being offered in response to this RFP. Bidders are cautioned that the organization, as well as the thoroughness of the response, is critical to the evaluation process.

The Bidder's Proposal forms must be legible and complete in their entirety, with all required supplemental information presented in an organized, comprehensive, and easy-to-follow manner.

The WDB is not liable for any costs the Bidder incurs in preparation and submission of its proposal, in participating in the RFP process, or in anticipation of award of the sub-recipient agreement.

The WDB reserves the right to reject any proposal if the evidence submitted by the Bidder proves the Bidder is not qualified to carry out the obligations of the RFP and to complete the Project as specified.

The WDB may make investigations (including on-site visits and contacting any or all references) as deemed necessary, to determine that the Bidders competence, number of qualified employees, business organization, and financial resources are adequate to perform per the RFP.

To the best knowledge of the person signing the proposal for the Bidder, the Bidders, its affiliates, subsidiaries, officers, directors, and employees are not currently under investigation by any governmental agency and have not been convicted or found liable for any act prohibited by State or Federal law in any jurisdiction, involving conspiracy or collusion with respect to bidding or proposing on any public contract, except as the Bidder has disclosed in its proposal.

To the best knowledge of the person signing the proposal for the Bidder and unless the Bidder has otherwise disclosed in its proposal, the Bidder has no outstanding, delinquent obligations including, but not limited to, any Federal and State tax liabilities not being contested on appeal or other obligation of the Bidder that is owed.

Until the selected Bidder receives a fully executed and approved written sub-recipient agreement from the Issuing Office, there is no legal and valid sub-recipient agreement, in law or in equity. The WDB reserves the right to vary or change the terms of any sub-recipient agreement executed as a result of this RFP, including funding levels, the scope of work, performance standards, and shortening or extending the sub-recipient agreement period, as it deems necessary in the interest of the Board and its programs, pending availability of funds.

The fully executed Agreement will require the selected Bidder to assume responsibility for all goods and services offered in its proposal whether it produces them itself or through subcontract. Additionally, if the Bidder uses any subcontractor, the proposal should be clear on the roles, responsibilities, and outcomes of each. The substitution of one subcontractor for another must be made at the discretion and prior written approval of the Issuing Office. The WDB considers the selected Bidder to be the sole point of contact regarding all contractual matters.

Bidders shall not issue press releases, internet postings, advertisements or any other public communications pertaining to this Project without prior written approval of the Issuing Office, and then only in coordination with the Issuing Office.