

**Governor's
Workforce
Board**
Rhode Island



Today's Vision... Tomorrow's Opportunity.

Request for Proposals For a Manufacturing Industry Partner

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*Building a Skilled Workforce for Rhode Island
Through Industry Partnerships*

Proposals due by 4:00 PM, Friday, June 8, 2012

**Governor's Workforce Board RI
RI Department of Labor & Training
1511 Pontiac Avenue, Building 73
Cranston, RI 02920**

**Lincoln D. Chafee, Governor
State of Rhode Island**

**Constance A. Howes, Chair
Governor's Workforce Board RI**

Section 1 – Proposal Requested

The Governor's Workforce Board (GWB) is seeking proposals that demonstrate the capacity of an existing or proposed industry partnership to serve as a "workforce intermediary" for Rhode Island's manufacturing sector. The GWB Manufacturing Industry Partner will provide information to and from manufacturing companies that will inform, promote, align, and leverage training and education investments in order to meet the workforce needs of Rhode Island manufacturers. Proposals may be submitted by existing partnerships or those formed in response to this Request for Proposals (RFP).

The GWB has made available up to \$100,000 to fund this RFP. Proposals may include leveraged funds from sources outside GWB, and these funds may support components that fall outside the scope of this RFP. The GWB reserves the right to fund the proposal components wholly or in part.

Section 2 – Introduction and Background

The purpose of the Governor's Workforce Board Industry Partnerships is to align the state's resources with the workforce needs of vital sectors of the Rhode Island economy so that businesses within these industries have access to appropriately skilled employees, and that job seekers have the skills, training and support they need to meet employer demand in these industries.

Industry Partnerships form powerful coalitions of companies, institutions and organizations which are linked by common markets, labor pools and technology and are charged with identifying and ameliorating skill gaps within their existing and emerging workforces. Successful partnerships must be informed and directed by private industry; they must foster collaborative environments in which private industry and the workforce development system connect and educate each other; and they must be adequately supported to assess and act upon the workforce needs of their represented industry.

A successful Manufacturing Industry Partnership will:

- Identify the training needs of businesses, including skill gaps critical to competitiveness and innovation;
- Facilitate companies to come together to aggregate training and education needs and achieve economies of scale;
- Help educational and training institutions align curriculum and programs to industry demand, particularly for higher skill occupations;
- Inform and collaborate with youth councils, business-education partnerships, parents and career counselors and facilitate bringing employers together to address the challenges of connecting youth to careers;
- Help companies identify and collaborate to address common organizational and human resource challenges – recruiting new workers, retaining incumbent workers, implementing high-performance work organization, adopting new technologies and fostering experiential on-the-job learning;
- Develop new career ladders and pathways within and across companies, enabling entry-level workers to improve skills to advance into higher skill, higher wage jobs;
- Develop new industry credentials that give companies confidence in the skills of new hires and workers more mobility and earning potential across firms;
- Promote communication networks between firms, managers, and workers to promote innovation, potential economies of scale in purchasing and other economic activities, and dissemination of best practices. In some cases, these activities result in the development of new learning collaboratives, Centers of Excellence, or joint economic development activity.
- Undertake special projects, as approved by the Governor's Workforce Board (GWB).

For the purpose of this RFP, the term "manufacturing" means both "traditional" and "advanced" manufacturing.

Instructions and Notifications to Applicants

- Potential applicants are advised to review all sections of this Request carefully and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejection of the proposal.
- Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this procurement are solicited. However, proposals which depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this Request will be rejected as being non-responsive.
- All costs associated with developing or submitting a proposal in response to this Request, or to provide oral or written clarification of its content, shall be borne by the applicant. The State assumes no responsibility for these costs.
- The State of Rhode Island has a goal of ten percent (10%) participation by MBE's in all State procurements. For further information, visit the web site www.rimbe.org. To speak with an M.B.E. Officer, call (401) 222-6253.
- Interested parties are advised to peruse the Governor's Workforce Board web site (www.gwb.ri.gov) on a regular basis, as additional information relating to this solicitation may be released in the form of an addendum to this RFP / LOI.

Equal Employment Opportunity (RIGL 28-5.1)

§ 28-5.1-1 Declaration of policy. – (a) Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action toward its achievement is the policy of all units of Rhode Island state government, including all public and quasi-public agencies, commissions, boards and authorities, and in the classified, unclassified, and non-classified services of state employment. This policy applies in all areas where the state dollar is spent, in employment, public service, grants and financial assistance, and in state licensing and regulation. For further information, contact the Rhode Island Equal Employment Opportunity Office, at 222-3090.

Section 3 – Eligible Applicants

An "Industry Partnership," in the context of this Request for Proposals, means a new or existing multi-employer partnership formed to address workforce issues and challenges faced by the manufacturing sector in Rhode Island. The lead applicant agency **must** have the fiscal and administrative capability to receive and manage federal and state grant funds. The lead applicant serves as the recipient of funds and should have a leadership role in developing and maintaining the partnership through ongoing interaction with the Governor's Workforce Board, Local Workforce Investment Boards, the education and training provider network, businesses and employee representatives.

Section 4 – Period of Performance

The funding period for the grant is one year (July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013), and funds must be spent within the contract period. The proposer's contract performance will commence upon execution of a contract and be evaluated on a monthly basis. (*Successfully performing contracts may be renewed for one additional year.*)

Section 5 – Proposal Instructions/ Program Design Components

General Instructions: The proposal narrative must include the following: an abstract, a background statement, a needs statement, an action plan, outcomes, project management and related financials, and a sustainability plan. The narrative must also provide evidence of the proposer's knowledge and understanding of the industry and the demonstrated leadership experience needed to build the partnership membership to be an all inclusive partnership that reflects the unique characteristics of the industry and the associated businesses in Rhode Island.

The narrative must convey to evaluators that the proposer understands the approach to be followed for each of the program components in order to provide the necessary services and must include and set clear performance goals that are measurable.

The narrative should not exceed 40 pages, 1½ spaced text, in font size 11 with 1” margins on all sides. This page limit does not include the project budget, timeline, organizational qualifications, staff résumés, or other appropriate information.

All proposals must include:

A. Abstract

B. Background: Partnership background should include:

- The mission and goals of the partnership as they relate to industry and occupational demand.
- The rationale for the industry partnership, including the numbers and types of jobs and typical wages that support the selection of this sector; and the number of businesses in Rhode Island in the targeted industry or other pertinent information and or data that supports the establishment of the partnership.
- Leadership and governance of the partnership (including organizational structure, management, meeting frequency, by-laws, etc.).
- Relevant experience of the partnership, including existing partners and stakeholders, demonstrated knowledge, experience and history in building collaborative solutions to industry-specific workforce issues.

C. Needs Statement: The needs statement must articulate the challenges and/or resource issues unique to the partnership. The challenge and/or resource issue should be supported by recent employer feedback, statistics, industry views and trends. A clear and succinct needs statement must be directly related to and substantiate the partnerships ability to respond to the components of this RFP.

D. Action plan: An action plan must incorporate the three (3) components listed below. These components provide the framework of the industry partnership proposal and the strategies from which tactics should be developed.

1) Partnership Development and Governance

Describe the plan for establishing or expanding a Manufacturing Industry Partner governing board and/or advisory council that is inclusive and representative of the diversity of Rhode Island manufacturers. The partnership must be a business majority and must also include other entities such as: local community based organizations (CBO), workforce training providers, labor organizations, economic development, K-12 and/or Career & Tech Education, higher education, trade association's and private foundations.

2) Skills Gap Study

Describe how the Manufacturing Industry Partner will prepare and submit a Skills Gap Study to the Governor's Workforce Board. Provide a narrative that includes a problem statement, a proposed study methodology describing how the study will address the items below, and an affirmative representation that the funds being provided under this grant will not support work that has already been undertaken by the partnership using other funds.

The Manufacturing Industry Skills Gap Study shall:

- a. Identify the most significant industry workforce challenges for your partnership and how each might be overcome.

- b. Identify and rank the top occupations in your partnership, including for each the following information:
 - i. average entry-level, median, and top hourly wages
 - ii. current and projected vacancy rates
 - iii. average time to fill vacancies
 - iv. core skills, technical skills and/or credentials necessary to obtain employment
 - v. skills gaps, if any, between job applicants and job requirements
- c. Identify the occupations that have the greatest skill shortages within the partnership and determine the root causes for those shortages.
- d. Identify the top five (5) barriers that employers face when looking to hire entry-level workers in your industry partnership.
- e. Identify and evaluate all existing training programs for entry-level workers to obtain jobs and for incumbent workers to move into better paying positions within the industry.
- f. Identify gaps in available training and help align curriculum and programs to industry demands.
- g. Develop recommendations to address the skills gaps and other workforce challenges that confront the industry

3) Collaboration with the Public Workforce System

Describe how the industry partnership will serve as a liaison to the workforce education and training system, including:

- a. Provide industry-specific “workforce intelligence”, including current trends in the industry, such as expansions, layoffs, technology advancements, in order to provide the workforce system with a more complete understanding of the industry as a whole.
- b. Facilitate the engagement and connection of the industry partnership and related businesses with the activities and services of the Department of Labor & Training (e.g. netWORKri, Business Workforce Center, Labor Market Information); Governor’s Workforce Board (e.g Employer Committee, Career Pathways System Task Force, Incumbent Worker Training); and Local Workforce Investment Boards (education, training, and employment programs).
- c. Assist the Workforce System in accessing industry information and resources when applying for public and private workforce development grants.
- d. Identify the training and education needs of businesses; assess the availability and quality of appropriate training and education providers; and assist in the development of curricula, programs, and education providers that will address industry workforce needs.
- e. Collaborate with educators, youth councils, business-education partnerships and career counselors to address the challenges of connecting youth to careers.
- f. Develop new career ladders and pathways within and across companies, enabling entry-level workers to improve their skills to advance into higher skill, higher wage jobs.
- g. Identify credentials and certificates that provide options for employers when hiring new workers and improve worker mobility and earning potential across industry.

E. Outcomes: Include clear performance indicators that will measure the progress made toward proposed goals and objectives and will be **reported to GWB on a monthly basis**. Choose indicators and outcomes that recognize success, allow for learning and improvement, mobilize support, and improve accountability and return on investment. Whenever feasible, a baseline should be determined before implementing the strategy; this baseline will then be compared to measures at completion and or follow-up. Outcomes can include those that show impact for workers, employers, the manufacturing sector, and/or the workforce system as a result of the Industry Partnership. Outcomes can be divided into short-term, immediate and long-term and should answer the question of whether the program is making a difference.

F. Sustainability plan: Each proposal must include a sustainability plan to develop multiple and diverse funding sources to reduce the partnership’s dependence on a single revenue stream and

increase the potential for long-term sustainability. In addition to sources available through this Initiative, industry partnerships should demonstrate employer support through financial and non-financial contributions (see Section 6).

Section 6 – Partnerships / Leveraging Resources

The GWB is interested in funding an industry-driven Manufacturing Industry Partnership that represents a diverse cross-section of employers in the manufacturing sector, and that is engaged in collaborative partnerships with the workforce development system, in order to effectively address the workforce needs of manufacturing companies and their current and emerging workforce.

Applicants must demonstrate the awareness, support, and commitment of prospective partners from the manufacturing sector, as well as from the workforce development system. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit signed Letters of Commitment from prospective partners that:

- a. Indicate familiarity with the proposal
- b. Describe the relationship to the applicant
- c. Endorse the applicant as the Industry Partner
- d. Describe interest in / goals for the Industry Partnership
- e. Describe the commitment to the Industry Partnership, such as:
 - i. participate on Industry Partner governing board / advisory council
 - ii. participate in skills gap study
 - iii. collaborate with public and private workforce development agencies / programs
 - iv. provide in-kind resources
 - v. provide financial support

Section 7 – Proposal Costs

A proposed budget and narrative must be submitted with costs justified in terms of activities related specifically to major expenditures, e.g., salary, itemized fringe benefits, supplies, rent, utilities, travel, outside contracts, etc. In cases where services are to be provided by a subcontractor, consultant, or other organization, applicant must provide a detailed basis for the corresponding costs. (See Appendix A)

- **Allowable Costs:** Grant recipients must follow federal allowable cost principles which apply to their specific organizations and/or Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures.
- **Disallowable Costs:** Funds cannot be used for equipment or building construction; the reduction of the workforce or the displacing of workers. Projects cannot violate any conditions of a collective bargaining agreement.
- **Fidelity Bond:** Prior to the initial disbursement of funds, selected proposers must submit a written statement from the insurer that all persons handling state and federal funds are covered by a fidelity bond equal to the average daily financial transactions.

Section 8 – Project Management and Related Financials

The management plan should include the following components:

- A statement of qualifications that demonstrate the proposer's ability to execute the project.
- A résumé of the current project manager or draft job description for a future project manager.
- A schedule for internal monitoring to ensure success in the program administration and compliance with all aspects of the contract.
- A statement that applicants are willing to collect participant data and track and report program performance and outcomes.
- A statement that the lead applicant agrees to participate in a third-party evaluation.
- Copy of the lead agency's most recent audit and/or audited financial statement (Pell-eligible institutions are exempt).
 - All governmental and non-profit organization must follow the audit requirements of OMB circular A-133.

- Commercial organizations that expend \$500,000 or more in federal funds must have either an organization-wide audit conducted in accordance with OMB circular A-133 or a program-specific financial and compliance audit. Those entities that expend \$500,000 or more in federal funds may include audit costs to the grants on a pro-rated basis.

Section 9 – Payment

Payment will be on a cost reimbursement basis once per month and one advance payment may be made within the first quarter of the contract in an amount not to exceed twenty percent (20%) of the full contracted amount. Payment requests must include all supportive documentation.

Section 10 – Fiscal Management / Internal Oversight

Contractors are required to maintain complete and accurate records of all financial expenditures with supporting documentation. These records must be available to the GWB and other monitoring staff. Contractors are required to internally monitor fiscal activities to ensure compliance with the applicable federal cost principles. At a minimum, internal oversight will address the following:

1. Staff attendance and payroll disbursement have been properly documented;
2. Accounting records are traceable to the source document and the application of grant funds relating to authorizations, obligations, balances, liabilities, expenditures and income;
3. Program expenditures are supported by appropriate documentation; and
4. Budget allocations and expenditures comply with contracted obligations.

The lead agency must ensure that all funds expended are in compliance with the contract, applicable OMB guidelines and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. Disallowed costs by the partner(s) agency will be the liability of the lead agency. No work is to be performed without authorization from GWB and receipt of a signed contract and an approved purchase order.

Section 11 – Adherence to State and Federal Laws & Regulations

The proposer must comply with the applicable state and federal laws, regulations and policies for each funding stream; including, but not limited to, labor laws; including child labor, OSHA, Right-to-Know and the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Nepotism: No individual may be placed in an employment activity if a member of that person's immediate family is directly supervised by or directly supervises that individual.

Section 12 – Confidentiality

It is the responsibility of the successful proposer to limit access to personal and proprietary information generated in the course of the contract. All data stored and generated may only be used for the purposes of this program. The proposer must specify that all electronic data files are secure and access is limited on a need to know basis. Identity theft is a prime concern and must be guarded against at all times.

Section 13 – Selection Process

A. Evaluation of Technical Proposals

The GWB will commission a Technical Review Committee that will evaluate and score all proposals that were submitted on time, signed by the signatory authority of the respondent organization and are not debarred, suspended or voluntarily excluded from receipt of federal funds. All proposals meeting this test will be evaluated to determine whether the proposal is responsive to the proposer's duties and responsibilities as provided in the RFP.

The maximum possible score is 100 points. Proposals scored below 70 points will not be considered.

B. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the proposer's program design (as described in the proposal narrative), Letters of Commitment, administrative and fiscal capability of the lead business, institution or agency, proof of sustainability of the partnership, adherence to format and proposal specifications. Additional points will be awarded based upon the criteria outlined in Number 5 below.

1. Proposal Design Narrative (0-40 points)

The proposer has demonstrated the capability to execute the project. Proposer has demonstrated clear goals and objectives, as well as indicated the amount of time required to implement program components or services. The proposer has presented the qualifications of the existing and/or proposed staff that will implement and manage this program. The proposer has presented a plan of action which is clear and detailed, and meets the requirements of each component. The proposer has clearly demonstrated when and how each task in the work plan will be carried out, and methods to be used to assure participation of the members of the partnership and related organizations.

2. Letters of Commitment & Proof of Sustainability (0-20 points)

Letters of Commitment indicate that both a significant and broad spectrum of the partnership is represented; further, that adequate resources are leveraged to increase the effectiveness and sustainability of the partnership.

3. Administrative and Fiscal Capability of the lead agency (0-20 points)

The statement of organizational qualifications will be evaluated. This criterion also evaluates the proposed or existing governance structure of the partnership and the administrative and fiscal capabilities of the lead agency, including the qualifications of the existing and proposed project manager.

4. Budget and Budget Narrative (0-10 points)

The budget must be submitted with costs justified in terms of activities related specifically to major expenditures, e.g., salary, itemized fringe benefits, supplies, rent, utilities, travel, outside contracts, etc. In cases where services are to be provided by a subcontractor, consultant, or other organization, applicant must provide the basis of the corresponding costs.

5. Other (0-10 points)

Points will be given to proposals that meet the following additional criteria:

- The proposal demonstrates the partnership is a growing and vital industry sector and partnership.
- The proposal demonstrates a clear link with a high performance partnership strategy.
- The proposal strengthens coordination between state and local workforce boards (GWB & LWIB's), economic development agencies, and secondary and post-secondary institutions.

- The proposal demonstrates a credible strategy for reaching small and midsize businesses.
- The proposal demonstrates co-investments from the partners, especially employer partners.

C. Negotiation

The GWB reserves the right to negotiate with proposers on costs and deliverables in order to contract with the proposer who best meets the Board's needs. This negotiation may result in selection of an apparent successful proposer, and a contract will be drafted and signed as soon as possible. If a contract for any reason cannot be negotiated, another proposer may be selected.

Section 14 – Proposal Submission

Seven (7) complete sets of the proposal, including three (3) with original signatures, must be submitted **no later than 4:00 P.M. on Friday, June 8, 2012, to the Governor's Workforce Board, RI Department of Labor & Training, 1511 Pontiac Ave., Bldg. 73, Cranston, RI 02920**. Proposals received after this time and date will not be considered. Faxed and emailed proposals will not be accepted.

Appendix A - Budget Form & Cost Allocation Plan

Agency Name:			
Requested Funds: \$			
			Amount To Contract
1. Staff Positions	Hourly Rate	Annual Salary	
a.			
b.			
c.			
d.			
TOTAL		\$0.00	\$0.00
2. Fringe Benefits	Benefit	Total Benefits	
a.			
b.			
c.			
d.			
e.			
f.			
g.			
h.			
i.			
j.			
k.			
l.			
m.			
n.			
o.			
p.			
TOTAL		\$0.00	\$0.00
3. Mileage-In state (list position)	Rate Per Mile	# of Miles	
a.			
b.			
TOTAL			\$0.00
4. Rent (address & number of square feet)	Cost Per Month	# of Months	
a.			
b.			
TOTAL			\$0.00

5. Utilities	Monthly Rate	# of Months	
a.			
b.			
c.			
d.			
e.			
TOTAL			\$0.00
6. Equip Rental (copier, etc)	Monthly Rate	# of Months	
a.			
b.			
TOTAL			\$0.00
7. Consumable Supplies	Monthly Rate	# of Months	
a.			
b.			
c.			
d.			
TOTAL			\$0.00
8. Other (Professional Services, etc.)	Monthly Rate	# of Months	
a.			
b.			
c.			
d.			
e.			
f.			
TOTAL			\$0.00
9. Indirect Costs (If Applicable)	Monthly Rate		
a.			
b.			
TOTAL			\$0.00
Grand Totals			\$0.00

Budget Narrative: Attach a narrative that provides additional information on costs, indicating how the grant and matching funding are tied to program design and goals. This section should also include information on any other sources of matching funds that will be used to support this effort. Applicants that utilize a Cost Allocation Plan must submit one with the budget indicating how costs will be shared across the various funding streams.