

**CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS  
NOTIFICATION OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY and REQUEST  
FOR PROPOSALS (NOFA/RFP).**

**TECHNOLOGY SECTOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT,  
TRAINING AND CAREER PLACEMENT FOR LOW/MOD INCOME  
AND MINORITY SPRINGFIELD RESIDENTS**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**1.1 Solicitation Purpose**

The City of Springfield is committed to supporting individual and family self-sufficiency by providing its residents with opportunities to support their ability to increase their economic independence. In recognizing this commitment, the City of Springfield's Development Services Division (DSD) is seeking to partner with an organization(s) that can assist Springfield in growing its qualified technology workforce by providing intensive onsite occupational focused training and job placement services for this high demand sector. Programs must focus on serving low to moderate income (LMI) and minority residents of the City of Springfield.

Organizations must demonstrate that the services they propose to provide will result in development of advanced technological skills and direct connections to jobs for residents that participate in the training program. The skills training provided must include specific employment related skills that lead to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by current private sector employers. Proposals must specifically describe how the proposed technology skills training to be provided will be incorporated into a physical or virtual curriculum. Priority consideration must be given to training that leads to recognized postsecondary credentials and which align with technology related occupations evidenced in the local job market. Training must: (1) be outcome-oriented and focused on a specific technology related occupational goal; and (2) be of sufficient duration to impart the skills needed to meet that occupational goal (minimum fifteen (15) weeks).

The selected organization(s) will be a part of a network of sub-recipients, which the City of Springfield can refer participants. Organizations must have the ability to serve a minimum of fifteen (15) Springfield based participants on an annual basis.

Organizations must demonstrate a program design that includes knowledge and expertise related to technology workforce development training, employer engagement and connections with other organizations that can provide further training and support. Additionally, organizations should have experience in career assessments, curriculum development and teaching essential skills. All contracts will be for a fixed annual per student fee, which will be paid out in quarterly increments. All funding

must be utilized in a manner that complies with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development CDBG-CV requirements.

## **PART 2**

### **2.1 Scope of Work**

The DSD intends for the organization(s) to provide an industry informed, comprehensive training program to equip low to moderate income Springfield residents with the employable skills required for entry level technology jobs. The grantee will be responsible for offering sector specific job readiness training with the purpose of building workplace skills/ credentials, fostering positive workplace attitudes and behaviors, and providing positive learning experiences that prepare jobseekers for employment. The intent of this grant funding is to help participants develop the skills required to be considered part of the City's technology workforce and to enhance the pool of local applicants that are prepared to fill these high demand positions as part of the City's overall economic development strategy.

### **Expected Outcomes**

1. Participants gain measurable work readiness skills to advance their careers
2. Participants successfully earn a new degree or certification
3. Participants obtain and retain employment
4. Participants obtain full-time employment and retain it
5. Participants served improve their job position
6. Participants increase their annual earning potential
7. Enhanced Regional Employment Base

The grantee will perform the following services, activities and deliverables during the contract term:

1. Work with DSD to mutually agree upon the technology training platform to be employed
2. Conduct LMI and minority focused participant outreach and screening
3. Work with DSD staff in tracking and documenting annual outcomes
4. Conduct participant assessments to evaluate academic levels, career interest and readiness, and service needs to ensure barriers to training completion, credential/ certification attainment and job placement are alleviated to the maximum degree possible
5. Develop individualized training and employment plans
6. Implement the development of soft-skills, punctuality, professional appearance, communication, customer service, resume building and interview skills.
7. Provide sector specific, comprehensive training to participants focused on specific skill development and credentials/ certifications

8. Provide work-based education activities such as job shadowing or internship opportunities to assist with experiential learning
9. Provide all required training materials and equipment
10. Provide a sufficient number of knowledgeable and experienced instructors able to effectively deliver the training
11. The selected grant recipient(s) must ensure that individuals in the training program are connected directly to the services and supports they may need to successfully complete it (i.e. transportation assistance, business attire)
12. Provide effective connections to employers in order to assist participants with:
  - a. Exploring technology sector related job opportunities
  - b. Providing work based learning experiences where participants have the opportunity to engage and learn from employers
  - c. Job search and placement
  - d. Employment and retention support (minimum six months)
13. Provide documentation on participant progress and performance including:
  - a. Participant outreach and assessment
  - b. Participant enrollment
  - c. Participant attendance
  - d. Technical and professional skill attainment including certifications
  - e. Internship attainment: company and position title
  - f. Employment attainment: company, position title and wages
  - g. Retention: 90 days, 6 months, 1 year
14. Attend DSD Service Provider meetings as scheduled
15. Provide reasonable accommodations for participants with disabilities.

## **2.2 Invoicing, Reporting and Annual Evaluation of Grantee Performance**

Funding awarded through this NOFA/RFP process will be for a **one -year period with the option to renew for two additional one-year periods**. Awards are subject to the availability of funds. Please note that this funding is committed quarterly.

Grantee(s) will be designated as a sub-recipient(s), as described in 24 CFR 570.500(c). Sub-recipients will be expected to comply with federal procurement regulations and standard sub-recipient reporting requirements.

Organizations will be required to submit quarterly invoices. Invoices shall include quarterly reports that include the specific Springfield based qualifying participants served during the quarter and their related progress in the program. Grantee(s) contract performance will be assessed annually using the performance based benchmarks indicated below.

The DSD will review grantee performance on an annual basis. Determination to award another year of grant funding will be based on the following factors:

Springfield LMI and Minority Outreach and Assessment (10%)

Springfield LMI and Minority Participant Enrollment (20%)

Springfield Participant Training completed (30%)

Springfield Participant Internship/ Employment Obtained (40%)

### **2.3 Schedule of Events**

The following Schedule of Events represents DSD's estimate of the timetable that will be followed in connection with this NOFA/RFP:

November 23, 2020	RFP Available and Posted on City of Springfield website
December 7, 2020	Deadline for Questions and/or Comments (RESPONSES WILL BE POSTED ON WEBSITE)
December 10, 2020 NO LATER THAN 4:30 p.m.	Proposals Due (MUST BE SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL)

*NOTES: DSD reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to adjust this Schedule of Events as it deems necessary. If necessary, DSD will communicate adjustments to any event in the Schedule of Events in the form of an addendum to this NOFA/RFP. Addenda to this NOFA/RFP will only be issued and posted on the City of Springfield's website at <https://www.springfield-ma.gov/planning/index.php?id=cdbq-dr>*

*Addenda will not be mailed to potential Respondents. It is the responsibility of the Respondent to monitor the City's website for any addenda issued. Each Respondent must acknowledge all addenda issued so as to ensure that addenda are considered in their proposal response by completing Addenda Acknowledgement Form. This Form must be submitted with the Service Provider's response to this Notice of Funding Availability/Request for Proposals. Failure to include the Form in the proposal response may subject your organization to disqualification.*

*This procurement is funded, in whole or in part, by grant funds provided by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The City will not be bound to any contract if funding is not made available or programing has been disallowed by HUD.*

*The City is not obligated to enter into a grant agreement related to this NOFA/RFP.*

## **2.4 Fee Proposal**

Respondent shall identify its pricing proposal for the requested Services not to exceed Ninety Seven Thousand, Five Hundred Dollars (\$97,500) annually for the term of the contract.

Pricing should be submitted in the form of a flat per student fee that can be billed for each student that completes the program. Flat per student fee should include all costs associated with the program including staffing, administrative costs, location, utilities, parking, equipment, curriculum, supplies, etc.

## **2.5 Questions and Grant Proposal Submission**

Questions regarding this NOFA/RFP should be submitted to [tquagliato@springfieldcityhall.com](mailto:tquagliato@springfieldcityhall.com) no later than December 7, 2020. Answers to questions will be posted on the City's website at:

**Grant proposals should be submitted no later than December 10, 2020 by 4:30 P.M. to [tquagliato@springfieldcityhall.com](mailto:tquagliato@springfieldcityhall.com). Grant proposals MUST be submitted via email to the designated email address by the specified time.**

## **2.6 Clean Hands Policy**

DSD / CDBG shall only contract with responsible organizations who have the technical and financial competence to perform, who have the fiscal responsibility in business dealings, and who have a satisfactory record of integrity. Before awarding a grant contract, DSD shall review the organizations ability to perform the contract successfully, considering factors such as the organization's integrity, compliance with public policy, record of past performance on DSD and other jobs (including contacting previous clients of the organization), and financial and technical resources. DSD shall not award a new contract or conduct new business with an applicant who:

- (i) has any past due financial obligations or indebtedness to the City
- (ii) has any outstanding violations with the City
- (iii) has failed to perform under another contract with the City
- (iv) Is federally debarred and/or ineligible
- (v) has an existing claim, demand, litigation action, investigation, hearing, or other legal, administrative, arbitral or similar proceeding or dispute against the City, whether civil or criminal (including any appeal or review of any of the foregoing)

Or in the DSD/ City's reasonable discretion, has taken action that may give rise to or threatened to assert a claim, demand, litigation action, investigation, hearing, or other legal, administrative, arbitral or similar proceeding or dispute against the City, whether civil or criminal (including any appeal or review of any of the foregoing) or other dispute against the City. The Mayor may

waive the requirements of this paragraph for good cause shown as determined by the Mayor and if it is otherwise in the City's best interests.

**PART 3**

**3.1 PROPOSAL EVALUATION**

**Mandatory Submittals**

The following Mandatory Submittals that must be included as a part of the proposal and received by the due date and time are:

1. Cover Letter
2. Clean Hands Certification HUD Form 5369-C:
3. MWBE/Section 3 & Employment Diversity Policy
4. Utilization Plan Principal Personnel Disclosure Statement Certification and Instructions
5. Respondent Disclosure Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility
6. Exclusion Addenda Acknowledgement Form (if applicable)
7. Fee Proposal

**3.2 Evaluation Factors and Award**

The proposal evaluating process is designed to award the contract, not necessarily to the Respondent(s) of least cost, but rather to the Respondent(s) with the best combination of attributes, (qualifications, experience, and cost), based upon the evaluation factors specifically established for the RFP. Respondent(s) must provide all information outlined in the Evaluation Factors (as defined below) for the Respondent's proposal to be considered responsive. Proposals will be evaluated based on the responsiveness of the Respondent's information to the Evaluation Factors which will demonstrate the Respondent's understanding of the Evaluation Factors and capacity to perform the required services of the Request for Proposals. The quality of answers rather than length of responses to this RFP are important. The maximum points that shall be awarded for each of the Evaluation Factors are detailed and described below.

The establishment, application and interpretation of the above Evaluation Factors shall be solely within the discretion of DSD/City. DSD/City reserves the right to determine the suitability of proposals on the basis of all of these factors.

**EVALUATION FACTORS MAXIMUM POINTS**

Cover Letter	Evaluated but not weighed
Organization History, Capacity, Relevant Experience	20 Points
And Organizational Diversity	

Programmatic Details	35 Points
Partnerships and Job Placement	15 Points
Program Outcomes	10 Points
Program Administration	10 Points
Budget and Narrative	10 Points
Fee Proposal	Evaluated but not weighed
	TOTAL 100

## **EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

The maximum points that shall be awarded for each of the Evaluation Factors are detailed and described below.

### Evaluation Question A

A Cover Letter - Evaluated but not weighted

In no more than 2 pages, the Respondent should include a cover letter with a description of the organization including size and diversity of the organization, location, number and nature of the professional staff to be assigned. The cover letter should highlight the firm's expertise in the area of technology employment training and job placement.

### Evaluation Question B

Organization History, Capacity and Relevant Experience (20 Points)

- a) Describe your organization's mission, qualifications and experience in delivering job training and employment skills to low-income individuals, and individuals who lack basic technology skills.
- b) Describe specific results that detail your organization's success in assisting individuals with training and job placement. Provide quantitative statistics about performance outcomes achieved.
- c) What are key features of your organization's approach to:
  - I. career training
  - II. access to labor market information
  - III. assessment of skills/ experience/ marketability
  - IV. development and support of job search strategies

V. follow-up services to support job retention

- d) Describe your organization's outreach and recruitment strategy.
- e) Describe your experience and ability to serve individuals with disabilities.
- f) Provide a list of and a brief summary job description including qualifications needed for all key staff that will have a significant role in delivering services.
- g) Describe your organization's experience related to employer engagement as it relates to linking workforce development training to labor market needs and available positions.

Evaluation Question C Programmatic Details (35 Points)

- a) Describe the application, intake, and enrollment processes.
- b) Describe the service continuum from intake to job retention and how your organization will help participants define a career pathway that demonstrates a clear sequence of education and/ or training credentials that are focused on technology sectors that are in-demand and that align with regional employer-validated needs.
- c) Provide a list of support services that will be provided that will enable a participant to successfully participate in the training (i.e. transportation assistance).
- d) List the targeted technology sectors and positions that your organization will provide training for.
- e) Describe the trainings that will be provided.
- f) Provide a description of the skills that will be developed once participants complete the program.
- g) Describe the facility where the training will be offered including capacity and American with Disabilities Act compliance.
- h) Describe any value-add services the organization is able to provide.
- i) If applicable, provide a description of any subcontracted services.

Evaluation Question D

Partnerships and Job Placement (15 Points)

- a) Provide a list and description of employer partnerships that directly support the employment goals of participants.
- b) Describe how employer or industry advisory boards help guide your organization.

c) Describe any additional partnerships or collaborations your organization may have with educational/training institutions and other community organizations.

#### Evaluation Question E

Program Outcomes (10 points)

- a) Define the program goals and intended outcomes and include the assessment instrument that will be used for evaluation.

#### Evaluation Question F

Program Administration (10 points)

- a) Describe the organization's capacity and experience with managing and complying with programmatic and financial grant reporting requirements.
- b) Describe the personnel responsible for the various elements of managing this grant; please include points of contact (i.e. contract items, operational items etc.).

#### Evaluation Question G

Budget and Narrative (10 points)

- a) Describe how the organization will use funds to implement the proposed programs.
- b) Describe the organization's capability to meet program expenses in advance of reimbursement.

Evaluation Question H

Fee Proposal (Evaluated but not weighted)

**MAXIMUM TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS 100**

### **3.3 Responsibility Determination**

The responsibility determination includes consideration of a Respondent's record of integrity and business ethics, compliance with public policy, past performance with the City (if any) and other entities, financial capacity, and eligibility to perform government work (e.g., debarment/suspension from any Federal, State, or local government).

DSD/City reserves the right to perform whatever research it deems appropriate in order to assess the merits of any Respondent's proposal and utilize the information gathered in the final evaluation of those firms in competitive range.

A. Financial Capacity Determination

DSD/City shall make an assessment of the Respondent's financial capacity, that is, whether in the sole opinion of DSD/City, the Respondent is capable of undertaking and completing the NOFA/RFP scope of work delineated within this RFP in a satisfactory manner. DSD/City will award a contract only to the responsible Respondent who, in DSD/City's sole opinion, has the financial ability to successfully perform under the terms of this NOFA/RFP. DSD/City's determination will include an assessment of the Respondent's financial resources/ability to perform the scope of work in accordance with the RFP requirements. Respondents who make the competitive range may be asked to submit financial information. Failure by the Respondent to provide such information within the allotted time will render the Respondent ineligible for award.

B. Technical Capacity Determination

DSD/City may conduct a survey relating to the Respondent's record of performance on past and present grants and/or projects that are similar to the scope of work identified in this NOFA/RFP, which may include services/projects not identified by the Respondent. DSD/City reserves the right to perform whatever research it deems appropriate in order to assess the merits of any Respondent's proposal. Such research may include, but not necessarily be limited to, discussions with outside Respondents, interviews and site visits with the Respondent's existing clients and analysis of industry reports. DSD/City will make a finding of the Respondent's Technical Resources/Ability to perform the NOFA/RFP scope of work based upon the results of the survey. A Respondent will be determined responsible if DSD/City determines that the results of the Technical Resources/Ability survey reflect that the Respondent is capable of undertaking and completing the NOFA/RFP scope of work in a satisfactory manner.