

**Fulton, Montgomery and Schoharie Counties  
Workforce Development Board, Inc.  
On behalf of the  
Greater Capital Region Workforce Investment Boards  
Regional Work Readiness Credential**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS 08-02**

The Fulton, Montgomery, and Schoharie County Workforce Development Board, on behalf of the four Greater Capital Region Workforce Investment Boards (Albany, Schenectady, Rensselaer; Saratoga, Warren, Washington; Columbia-Greene; and, Fulton, Montgomery, Schoharie), requests proposals to assist in the development of a Regional Work Readiness Credential.

**BACKGROUND:** Since 2002, the Greater Capital Region Workforce Investment Boards (GCR WIBs) have collaborated to encourage the development of a highly skilled and technologically sophisticated workforce that is aligned with the current and future needs of business and industry. In addition to the WIBs, other partners have included: state, regional and local economic development agencies; educational institutions, such as BOCES, K-12 school districts, Community Colleges, and other post secondary schools; and, private businesses representing high-tech sectors. Recently the GCR WIBs received a New York State Department of Labor grant for “Regional Economic and Workforce Transformation Strategies: Tier I and Tier II”. A component activity of this grant is to develop a Regional Work Readiness credential. The purpose of the Work Readiness Credential is to confirm that job seekers have the basic skills necessary to succeed at entry level jobs. Currently, there are many organizations and educational institutions in our region that offer local versions of a work readiness credential. In addition, during the past year, a national work readiness credential has been unveiled and is being test marketed. Generally, the available work readiness programs define the skills they are credentialing as either basic academic skills (reading, writing and math) and/or basic business soft skills (good attendance, verbal communication, customer service, team work, etc.).

**PROJECT OBJECTIVES:** The Contractor will be responsible for completing the following activities:

1. **Contact all regional organizations that are currently providing a work readiness program and enlist their active participation in the creation of this regional work readiness credential.** Currently, there are at least 7 regional programs offering a work readiness credential that are interested in this project. The contractor will need to contact these organizations, as well as any others that the GCR WIB’s determine is necessary
2. **Review the curriculum materials from all participating work readiness programs, as well as the national credential, to assist in creating a regional work readiness set of standards.** The contractor will need to determine what skills are being addressed in each of the available programs and in which manner those skills are being taught. Besides reviewing the written materials, the contractor will need to interview regional partners to explore each of their program’s curriculum’s strengths and needs.
3. **Determine if separate standards should be developed for issuing a credential to youth and adults.** Because some of the available programs currently focus on serving in-school or out-of-school youth and others focus on adults, the contractor will need to determine how to best serve both groups of participants while maintaining credibility with the business community.

4. **Obtain input from members of the business community.** It is believed that the best method of marketing this credential is to enlist the business community's input in developing the final product. At a minimum the Consultant will be required to meet with business representatives of the four WIBs and chambers of commerce throughout the region. The purpose of these meetings will be to ensure that businesses' input is sought in determining the skills entry workers need and appropriate methods of evaluating the attainment of those skills. Also, the business community's input should be used in determining the look and content of the actual credential.
5. **Create a regional standard/credential.** Again, the contractor will need to determine if it will be necessary for the Regional Credential to take two forms; one for youth and another for adults. Also, for each standard that must be met in order to receive the credential, the contractor must provide a recommended curriculum to teach that standard. The contractor will also need to provide a recommendation as to the best method to measure the acquisition of that skill. Finally, the contractor will attempt to get agreement from as many local providers as are willing to participate in this new regional credential program.
6. **Create a system to review local work readiness programs for official approval as a Greater Capital Region Work Readiness Credential provider.** The contractor will need to develop an application procedure so current and future work readiness training providers can apply to offer the Greater Capital Region Credential.
7. **Create a marketing plan that sells job seekers on the value in the curriculum and the credential.** The credential, itself, should be a tool recipients can use as part of their job search. The marketing plan should help providers encourage the enrollment of students in credentialing programs. Again, two marketing plans may need to be developed if there are separate Adult and Youth credentials.
8. **Create a marketing plan that sells businesses on the value of the credential.** By building on the activities undertaken to reach objective # 4 (Obtain input from members of the business community) develop a marketing plan that will help providers "sell" their graduates with a credential to employers.

#### **PROJECT PARAMETERS:**

- The Consultant will be required to be available, by phone or in person, during regular business hours (Monday – Friday from 8 am – 5:00 pm) for scheduled meetings. The Consultant may also be required to attend some evening meetings with community/business groups.
- The GCR WIBs makes the final decision about when the Project Objectives have been met.
- Payments to the Consultant include all costs incurred in project completion, including but not limited to: supplies and materials, travel costs, and phone costs.
- Consultant will acknowledge and agree that contributions to the development of all proprietary information for the GCR WIBS was done in the course and within the scope of the project and that all work product arising and resulting from project efforts is the property of the GCR WIBS.
- Consultant will acknowledge and agree that all of the work product that is developed, directly or indirectly, as a result of this project with the GCR WIBS, were "works made for hire" as defined in the United States Copyright Act and as such the Workforce Investment Office will be deemed as the "author" of such work product for Copyright Law purposes.

**PROJECT TIMELINE:** It is anticipated that the project will be initiated on November 15, 2008 and completed no later than April 30, 2009.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** All questions should be submitted to:

Gail B. Breen, Executive Director  
Fulton, Montgomery, and Schoharie Counties  
Workforce Development Board, Inc.  
Email: [gbreen@fmsworkforcesolutions.org](mailto:gbreen@fmsworkforcesolutions.org)

Questions and answers will be posted at [www.fmsworkforcesolutions.org](http://www.fmsworkforcesolutions.org)

**METHOD OF PAYMENT:** The contract with the consultant will be with the project's grant recipient, the Fulton, Montgomery and Schoharie Counties Workforce Development Board. The consultant will be paid based on the completion of activities. Activities must be completed to the satisfaction of the GCR WIBS. Payment covers all costs involved in completing project objectives, including supplies, materials and travel expenses.

- Total project cost to be negotiated, but not to exceed \$30,000.
- 20% for start-up activities upon receipt of signed contract.
- 30% for completion of Activities 1 - 3.
- 20% for completion of Activities 4 - 5
- 30% for completion of Activities 6 - 8.

**SELECTION PROCEDURE:** Persons or organizations interested in responding to this request should submit a letter of intent, summary of qualifications, a resume and/or curriculum vita, and proposed cost of the project.

- The letter of intent with summary of qualifications and resume should provide previous experience with completing similar activities/projects.
- The summary of qualifications should include a description of other work/project activities the applicant will be responsible for completing during the same timeframe as this project.
- The summary of qualifications should also confirm that the Consultant would be available by phone or in person during regular business hours and some evening hours for scheduled meetings during the timeframe of the project.
- Proposed Work Plan outlining the steps to be taken and the time frame proposed to reach the goals, and proposed total cost of the project.
- Preference will be given to applicants with previous experience in workforce development, education, business training and/or human resource management.
- An interview with GCR WIBS staff may be required prior to selection.
- Bidders must demonstrate the ability to provide the required services at a reasonable cost to the FMS WDB. Costs will be evaluated based not only on competitiveness with respect to their bids, but equally important, the value they reflect in light of services proposed and bidder's capability and experience.

Reservation Clauses: The FMS WDB, in order to serve the best interests of the FMS Workforce Investment Area and its regional partners, reserves the right to:

- Postpone or cancel this RFP upon notification to all bidders
- Amend the specifications after their release with appropriate notice to all bidders
- Request bidders to present supplemental information clarifying their proposal, either in writing or in formal presentation
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in proposals received after prior notification to the bidder
- Reject any and/or all proposals received in response to this RFP
- Contact bidders' references as a check on qualifications
- Award the contract to other than the lowest bidder
- Negotiate with selected bidder prior to contract award
- Disqualify any bidder who inappropriately acquires information contained in a competitor's proposal and attempts to use that information to influence the award decision

**Contract Cancellation:** The FMS WDB reserves the right to cancel the contract or any part thereof, at any time, upon thirty (30) days written notice. If, in the judgment of the FMS WDB, the Contractor fails to perform the work in accordance with the contract, the FMS WDB may terminate the contract immediately by written notice for cause. The FMS WDB may elect to provide a corrective action period prior to termination.

**SUBMISSIONS:** A letter of intent, summary of qualifications, proposed work plan, and resume should be no longer than 10 pages in length. Three (3) copies of the complete bid package must be postmarked and received by the Workforce Development Board by 4:00 p.m. on October 31, 2008. Proposals may be hand-delivered or sent by mail to:

Gail B. Breen, Executive Director  
Fulton, Montgomery, and Schoharie Counties  
Workforce Development Board, Inc.  
2620 Riverfront Center  
Amsterdam, New York 12010  
(518) 842-3676, Ext. 3026  
Email: [gbreen@fmsworkforcesolutions.org](mailto:gbreen@fmsworkforcesolutions.org)

**Faxed or e-mailed copies will not be accepted.** Bids received after 4:00 p.m. on October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008 will not be eligible for funding consideration. Use of certified, registered or express mail is suggested for postmark verification.

All bids and accompanying information become the property of the Fulton, Montgomery, and Schoharie Counties Workforce Development Board, Inc. and will not be returned.