

**TO:** Interested Parties

**FROM:** Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County

**DATE:** February 15, 2011

**SUBJECT:** RFP #11-03 REQUEST FOR HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE TRAINING CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT/REDESIGN

The Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County (WDC) is a nonprofit workforce “think tank” and grant-making organization whose mission is to support a strong economy and ensure the ability of each person to achieve self-sufficiency. To learn more about the WDC, please visit the WDC website at [www.seakingwdc.org](http://www.seakingwdc.org).

## **BACKGROUND**

In October 2010 the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County (WDC) was selected by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as a grant-funded partner in its national five-year Health Professions Opportunity Grant (HPOG) initiative. The WDC is seeking qualified training partners to implement a collaborative effort under this initiative that improves educational and employment outcomes in the healthcare field for TANF recipients and other low-income adults and youth in King County. To this end, the WDC is issuing RFP #11-03 to solicit proposals from training providers for **development of new approaches** that meet the purpose, goals, scope, and requirements outlined below. The WDC has also issued a companion solicitation, RFQ #11-02, seeking qualifications from training providers for existing training. Eligible applicants may choose to submit responses under either or both solicitations.

## **PURPOSE AND GOALS**

The WDC seeks proposals from multiple training institutions, such as community or technical colleges, 4-year universities, registered apprenticeship programs, and other providers of training that have the expertise and capacity to develop new and/or redesigned curriculum to address gaps in training offerings and/or instructional delivery approaches that help individuals prepare for and attain jobs in the healthcare field. The purpose of the training is to increase: (1) enrollment by the target population in training that results in an employer-recognized credential; (2) training retention and completion rates; (3) rates of training-related job placement and retention, and (4) rates of return to training for successive levels of skill development and employment advancement.

## **TARGET POPULATION**

This HHS-funded project is focused on low-income adults and youth across the following priority categories:

**1<sup>st</sup> Priority:** Current TANF recipients

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Priority:** Other low-income adults and youth in households with income less than 175% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Priority:** Entry-level incumbent workers and others with household income above 175% FPL with circumstances that would allow them to benefit from this opportunity (e.g., limited basic and/or English language skills, unstable work history, disability, single-parent status, etc.)

**PROJECT SCOPE AND TIMELINE**

Demographics and training needs for those within the target population are diverse, including individuals with limited literacy/English language skills and/or academic history, little or no work experience, etc., as well as those with previous post-secondary education and employment history and entry-level incumbent workers. The WDC is seeking a broad range of training options that will respond to the diverse needs of the target population, but with a particular emphasis on innovative strategies that create more opportunity for enrollment in and completion of training for low-income individuals with multiple barriers to successful participation. Accordingly, the WDC is seeking to invest in the development of new/redesigned training that will fill gaps in current healthcare training offerings at three levels:

<b>Foundational Training</b>	Creates an access point or bridge to entry-level healthcare training for those with low-level basic skills and little positive academic experience. All content is contextualized to healthcare occupations and builds universal skills such as reading, writing, basic math and IT literacy.
<b>Entry-level Training</b>	Short-term training that leads to an employer-recognized credential for occupations such as those listed below. Entry-level training is accessible with no prior higher-education experience and may be offered with support such as that provided through the I-BEST approach.
<b>Advancement-level Training</b>	“Next level” healthcare training leading to an employer-recognized credential for occupations such as those listed below. Advancement training may also be offered with customized support and packaged with required pre-requisites.

Training described above at all levels—but especially the foundational level—may also incorporate career exploration/exposure, “life skills,” and work readiness, as well as robust strategies to support learning and successful training completion for those with limited academic skills/history.

It is the WDC’s intent to invest in curriculum redesign, development of new approaches to instructional delivery, and/or new curriculum development to address gaps in training offerings to meet the needs of the target population and advance the project goals described above. The WDC is also particularly interested in training options with clear articulation to next level training, or from previous level training, including strategies that “package” pre-requisite coursework to expedite training and employment progression. As such, the WDC also invites proposals that address existing gaps in training articulation.

Responses may include such things as:

- proposals to adapt existing curriculum, at the entry or more advanced level, to include integrated approaches such as IBEST

- strategies to adapt current or new IBEST offerings to reach lower level ESL/ABE students
- development of new training programs that create additional or more effective entry/re-entry points for the target population to healthcare training
- re-packaging of existing curriculum to create more efficient entry, exit, and articulation points for the target population (including integration/"packaging" of pre-requisites coursework)
- refining or re-packaging of existing curriculum to better align with industry needs or make students from the target population more competitive as training graduates (e.g., infusing customer service or other content into existing entry level training for example, or integrating multiple disciplines into a single training such as NA-C and phlebotomy, to provide options for concurrent credentialing that might qualify graduates to perform multiple tasks and sell themselves as more versatile potential employees, etc.),
- modifying existing curriculum to infuse new instructional delivery approaches, such as hybrid online-classroom instruction, etc.
- other strategies that effectively address current gaps

Respondents to this solicitation should keep in mind the diverse needs of the target population described above, including the challenges associated with balancing training with other obligations. With regard to current TANF recipients, competitive proposals will include innovative strategies to address WorkFirst participation requirements and limitations on time spent in vocational training. This may include strategies to combine training with work study opportunities on campus, for example, to strategically address TANF/WorkFirst participation requirements, assist participants who need some earnings to persist in training, and build work readiness for participants who have little or no previous work experience.

The WDC hopes that curriculum development/redesign activity supported under this procurement will take place between April and September of 2011, with products available for delivery during academic year 2011-2012. **Training providers may also submit qualifications to deliver existing training programs that align with project goals and the target population described above under a companion solicitation, RFQ #11-02.**

## ELIGIBILITY

King County training institutions, such as community or technical colleges, 4-year universities, registered apprenticeship programs, and other providers of healthcare training.

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Training institutions interested in this RFP should respond using the following format:

### 1. Identifying Information

- a. Name of institution, university, or training institution, address, phone & fax number, email address & web page URL (if applicable), and name/title/contact information of lead representative

## 2. Proposed Design

- a. Please describe the specific approach you are proposing (new curriculum development, curriculum redesign, integration of new instructional delivery strategies, etc.); please include detail regarding specific content/curriculum, duration of training, expected minimum/maximum/ideal level of enrollment (number of students), intended learning outcome(s), etc. [*Note: Applicants may submit more than one proposed approach in response to this solicitation if applicable.*]
- b. Please indicate what gap your proposal is addressing, and how it aligns with the purpose and goals described above and the needs of the target population and, if appropriate, the particular segment of the target population the training is designed to serve.
- c. Please describe what data, research, past experience, or other sources have informed your belief that what you are proposing is a promising strategy to address the identified gap.
- d. Please indicate whether the approach you are proposing aligns with training at the foundational, entry, or more advanced level.
- e. Please describe how you have assessed industry demand for graduates of the program/approach you are proposing.
- f. Describe the certificate(s)/credential(s)/licensure that will be attained by program graduates and how it is recognized by employers (or, in the case of foundational level training, what the expected training outcome is and what the next step(s) are for training completers).
- g. Describe the occupation(s) the proposed training approach prepares successful completers to obtain, which types of employers are hiring for that occupation (e.g., hospitals/acute care, clinics, community/public health, long-term care, etc.), and particular strategies to enhance work readiness and competitiveness of program completers.
- h. Please describe the extent to which employers have been involved in the development and/or validation of your curriculum/approach; please also describe how you have ensured input from various decision-making levels within industry (e.g., HR, administrative/CEO, etc.).
- i. If applicable, please indicate how the proposed training articulates to next level training, or how the proposed approach improves articulation, including specifics about which next level training(s).
- j. Include a timeline detailing when/how soon the proposed training/approach could be offered, training schedule, and any flexibility you anticipate in terms of schedule, instructional delivery, training location, etc. as applicable.

## 3. Cost Proposal

- a. Please use Attachment A to detail pertinent costs including curriculum development/redesign, faculty professional development, supplies, etc. ***Please note that no funds released under this solicitation may be used to pay participant wages of any kind.***
- b. In the **budget narrative**, please provide detail for each of the funding categories.

Please limit your application to no more than six (6) pages single spaced, per proposed approach, excluding the required budget attachment. If you are interested in submitting a

proposal to be considered under this RFP, please submit your materials to the WDC by the close of business on **Wednesday, March 23, 2011**.

**Questions may be emailed to [operations@seekingwdc.org](mailto:operations@seekingwdc.org) through Wednesday, March 16, 2011. No phone calls please.**

The WDC will use the following criteria to evaluate proposals:

- Quality, clarity, and completeness of response
- Extent to which proposed approach addresses a gap in current training offerings, including research/evidence/experience that demonstrates the promise of the proposed approach to successfully address the gap described
- Level of employer involvement in development/validation of the proposed approach
- Employer demand (within and across segments of the healthcare industry, e.g., acute care, long-term care, community/public health, etc.)
- Current supply of training graduates in particular occupations (including supply from regular community and technical college offerings, other training providers, and special initiatives such as foundation, grant, and industry-funded cohorts)
- Fit with target population, including level of innovation and creativity in addressing particular challenges to accessing and persisting in training
- Presence of clear articulations to/from proposed training
- Cost effectiveness

## **PROPOSAL SUBMISSION**

**Please send four (4) copies of your response in a sealed envelope to arrive no later than 5:00 pm, Wednesday, March 23, 2011 addressed to:**

Tess Suarez RFP#11-03  
Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County  
2003 Western Avenue Suite 250  
Seattle, WA 98121-2162

**Late responses will not be considered and will be returned unopened. Electronic or fax submissions will not be accepted.**

**The WDC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to accept or reject any or all items in a proposal, and to award contract(s) in whole or in part as is deemed to be in the best interests of the WDC. The WDC reserves the right to negotiate with any or all bidders on modifications to proposals and/or integration of components across proposals to achieve maximum efficiency. *Award contingent on available funds.***

**The Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County  
is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Provider of Employment And Training Services**  
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities  
TDD/Washington Telecommunications Relay Service 1-800-833-6384