PUBLIC NOTICE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Nebraska VR (Vocational Rehabilitation) requests proposals for the development and implementation of innovative short-term programs to provide career exploration and personal development opportunities for transition students with disabilities during the summer of 2016. Nebraska VR intends to contract with several qualified applicants for a period up to 4 months to develop and implement Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) for eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities, aged 14-21 years old enrolled in school.

Copies of the RFP are available at http://www.vr.nebraska.gov or by contacting Nebraska VR at 402-750-2324 or toll free at 877-637-3422.

Proposals are due by 5 pm CT on 4/15/16.

Nebraska VR Request for Proposals
Transition Summer Program
Release date: March 15, 2016
Submission deadline: April 15, 2016

Intent
Nebraska VR (Vocational Rehabilitation) requests proposals for the development and implementation of innovative short-term programs to provide career exploration and personal development opportunities for transition students with disabilities during the summer of 2016. Nebraska VR intends to contract with several qualified applicants for a period up to 4 months to develop and implement Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) for eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities, aged 14-21 years enrolled in school. As the state-federal vocational rehabilitation program, Nebraska VR maintains a dual customer approach, helping individuals with disabilities prepare for, obtain and maintain competitive, integrated employment while helping businesses recruit, train and retain employees with disabilities.

Request for Proposal Schedule
Notice of Request for Proposals: 3/15/2016
Pre-proposal Meeting in-person at Lincoln Nebraska VR office and by videoconference from all Nebraska VR offices across the state: 3/21/2016 1-2 pm CT/12-1 pm MT (list of sites attached)
Proposal Due Date: 4/15/2016 @ 5 pm
Notification of Selected Proposals: 4/25/2016
Award Date: 5/6/2016
All Proposed Services must be provided sometime between the date of award and September 30, 2016.

Qualified Applicants
Any Nebraska agency, business or organization with either non-profit or for-profit status with experience in providing services to individuals with significant disabilities is eligible to submit a proposal. Applicants must demonstrate they are able to deliver community-based, culturally competent services in environments accessible to individuals with physical, mental and sensory impairments. Applicants must assure compliance with the general responsibilities listed in the Standard Addenda to NDE Contract.

Targeted Population, Service Area and Definition
The goal of the Transition Summer Program is to develop innovative programs across the state using best practices to provide opportunities for career exploration, employment preparation, and work experiences using such techniques as short-term internships, job shadowing, and hands-on learning activities for students with disabilities, to increase the likelihood of successfully transitioning to competitive integrated employment. According to the Nebraska Department of Education, as of October 1, 2015, there is a total of 13,381 students aged 14 to 21 years verified for special education services and for the 2015/2016 school year there is a total of 3,242 students under Section 504 plans.

Nebraska VR intends to contract with several qualified applicants for a period up to 4 months to develop and implement Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) for eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities, aged 14-21 years enrolled in school. Services delivered during the contract period (within 20 days of award through September 30, 2015) shall capture each participant's growth and the program outcomes as an aggregate in the final Outcomes Measure

Report. The Pilot Program budget is not to exceed $49,000.00 per award during the contract period based upon available funds.

Nebraska VR is seeking proposals to provide one or more of the following pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities age 14-21 during the summer of 2016 during school vacation:

1. Job Exploration Counseling. Examples of eligible activities include job shadowing, workplace site visits, interest and/or career inventories, exploration of relevant career fields and potential jobs, and learning about career opportunities.
2. Work based Learning Experiences. Examples of eligible activities include work opportunities, paid or unpaid internships, obtaining transferable skills, and summer employment provided in an integrated setting.
3. Workplace Readiness Training. Possible activities include training to develop interpersonal skills, independent living skills and leadership abilities. This could include managing disclosure and how to request accommodations, instruction in employability skills and transportation training.
4. Postsecondary Training/College Exploration, Preparation and Planning Services. This includes postsecondary readiness training to develop social and independent living skills to facilitate transition of students with disabilities into post-secondary education to improve the likelihood of successful post-secondary experience.
5. Instruction in Self Advocacy. Possible activities include training on how to identify positive supports, how to self advocate independently as well as in the presence of support.

Proposals should outline the goal of the proposed activity, the number of students with disabilities to be provided services, the proposed service area, and the projected time period of the proposed services. For example: *The goal of the program is to provide students with disabilities living in Lancaster County job/career exploration counseling. Twenty students with autism, who will be entering their last year of high school in the fall, will be provided services between the start date of June 1, 2016 and the end date of September 30, 2016. Students will be expected to increase their knowledge of current labor market needs and career opportunities in their community. In addition, 50% of the students participating will job shadow in a career selected after a review of information from the job/career exploration counseling.*

Review Criteria and Selection Process
Applicant proposals must meet or exceed requirements described in this RFP. Review team members will evaluate and score submitted proposals using the attached *Transition Summer Program RFP Scoring Sheet.* Questions about this RFP or requests for technical assistance should be in writing and directed via email to Brigid Griffin, Nebraska VR at brigid.griffin@nebraska.gov. Any questions and subsequent responses will be posted at vr.nebraska.gov.

All proposals will be evaluated using the same criteria and scoring process. Nebraska VR will evaluate proposals on a variety of quantitative criteria and reserves full discretion to determine the competence and responsibility, professionally and/or financially of all vendors. All assignment of points shall be at the sole discretion of Nebraska VR. Nebraska VR has the sole right to select the successful vendor(s) for award, as a result of this RFP, after which a contract will be executed.

Proposal and Budget Narrative Instructions
Applicant proposals should present information in the following order:

1. Proposal Narrative: a description of the goal of the proposed activity and/or service(s), the number of students with disabilities to be provided services, the proposed service area, and the projected time period of the proposed services. (30 points)

2. Personnel: include a brief overview of the organization and the experience and qualifications of key personnel involved in the activity or service(s). (15 points)

3. Work Plan: include a clear and realistic work plan with estimated timelines for all service development and implementation activities for the proposed Pre-Employment Transition Services. (20 points)

4. Coordination of Services/Evaluation: describe the process for coordinating with Nebraska VR staff on student referral and progress reporting activities. Describe the measures to be used to track and evaluate whether the proposed goal and objectives were met. Include an assurance of the applicant's ability to comply with the general responsibilities listed in the attached Standard Addenda to NDE Contract. (15 points)

5. Budget Narrative: describe an appropriate and realistic budget for all activities. Include clear and concise justifications for expenses for the full time period of the proposal. If funds from other sources will be leveraged, describe those partnerships or resources. (20 points)

In addition to the budget narrative, provide a line item budget using the following categories:

* Personnel (Salaries, wages and fringe benefits)
* Travel
* Equipment (itemized with costs)
* Supplies (list separately with itemized costs)
* Other and/or indirect expenses (rent, utilities, printing, postage, etc.)
* Total amount requested

Submittal Instructions
Submit an electronic copy with a signed cover letter via email with any supporting documentation by 5:00 pm Central time on April 15, 2016 to Brigid Griffin, Nebraska VR at brigid.griffin@nebraska.gov. All proposals should be submitted under a subject title: Nebraska VR RFP: Transition Summer Program. Proposals should be written in 12 point font and double spaced, with a maximum of 10 pages.

Attachments

- Standard Addenda to NDE Contract
- *Transition Summer Program RFP Scoring Sheet*
- *List of Nebraska VR offices statewide*

STANDARD ADDENDA TO NDE CONTRACT

I. Work Paid by Other Public Funds. The Contractor agrees that the contract work to be performed shall not be performed on time that is paid for by other public (i.e. any government) funds.

II. Access to Records. The Contractor agrees to maintain complete records regarding the expenditures of funds provided by NDE under this Contract. The Contractor agrees to allow free access at reasonable times by authorized representatives of NDE and the funding Federal Agency and United States Comptroller General, if appropriate, to all records generated and/or maintained as a result of this Contract. Such access to records by the above shall continue beyond termination of this Contract for a period of three (3) years.

III. Non-discrimination. The Contractor agrees to comply fully with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and the Nebraska Fair Employment Practice Act, as amended, in that there shall be no discrimination against any employee who is employed in the performance of this Contract, or against any applicant for such employment, because of age, color, national origin, race, religion, creed, disability, or sex. This provision shall include, but not be limited to, employment, promotion, demotion, transfer, recruitment, layoff termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship. The Contractor further agrees to insert a similar provision in all subcontracts for services allowed under Contract.

If the contractor is entering into a contract with NDE for operation of any educational program or activity that is authorized or extended by the United State Department of Education, contractor shall comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681-1688), regarding the prohibition of the following: the exclusion of any person from participation in, denying the benefits of, or subjection to discrimination in any such program or activity on the basis of sex.

IV. Americans with Disabilities Act. The contractor shall comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (29 CFR 1601, 28 CFR 35), as applicable.

V. Drug-Free Workplace. The Contractor certifies that (s)he operates a drug-free workplace and during the terms of this Contract will be in compliance with the provisions of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988.

VI. Debarment/Suspension Certification. (This certification is only applicable to federally funded contracts for amounts of $25,000 or greater.) The Contractor certifies, by signature on this Contract, that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, recommended for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency. If the Contractor is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, the Contractor will attach an explanation to this Contract (Reference 34 CFR Part 85, Appendix B).

VII. Technology Access. All contracts, that include provisions of technology products, systems, and services, including data, voice, and video technologies, as well as information dissemination methods, for the state of Nebraska will comply with the Nebraska Technology Access Standards adopted pursuant to *Nebraska Revised Statute* section 73-205. These Standards are available for viewing at NDE and on the Web at http://nitc.ne.gov/standards/2-201.html, and are incorporated into this contract as if fully set forth therein.

VIII. Product Ownership. The Contractor agrees that no authority or information gained through the existence of and performance under this Contract will be used to obtain financial gain for the Contractor, for any member of the Contractor's immediate family, or for any business with which the Contractor is associated except to the extent provided by the Contract. The Contractor further agrees that anything produced, developed, prepared, or created under the terms of this Contract shall become the property of NDE.

IX. Presentation/Workshop Requirements. The following provisions apply to contracts in which the contractor makes a presentation or conducts a workshop.

a) The contractor will provide copies of all materials used in the workshop to staff in advance of, or immediately following, the workshop. In the case of copyrighted materials, the contractor must clearly identify the materials that are copyrighted and specify conditions/limitations of distribution.

b) The contractor gives permission to NDE to videotape all presentations. Subsequent use of the videotape by NDE will only be for quality control and archive purposes and not for future training activities, unless specifically provided for elsewhere in this agreement.
c) The contractor and/or speakers will clearly distinguish their personal opinions from NDE positions.

X. Copyright. NDE retains the right to copyright any materials produced under this Contract unless otherwise provided in this Contract. If the contract is federally funded, the federal awarding agency reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, for Federal Government purposes: (a) The copyright in any work developed under the contract, and (b) Any rights of copyright to which NDE purchases ownership with federal funding support.

XI. Confidentiality. The Contractor agrees that any and all information gathered in the performance of this Contract, either independently or through NDE, shall be held in the strictest confidence and shall be released to no one other than to NDE without prior written authorization of NDE. Only provisions contained in this Contract authorizing specific exceptions to this general confidentiality provision shall allow the Contractor to release information as provided.

XII. Subcontractors. The Contractor agrees that no subcontractors shall be utilized in the performance of this Contract without the prior written authorization of NDE.

XIII. Workers Compensation. If a contractor has employees or subcontractors, the Contractor will attach a copy of the Certificate of Insurance for Worker's Compensation or the waiver permitted by §48-115 RRS 1993.

XIV. Contractor Indirect or F&A Costs. Contractors, who have an approved indirect cost rate or Facilities and Administration cost rate(s), must record as direct costs their costs paid from the proceeds of this contract, excluding proceeds for Indirect or F&A Costs. Reference Federal the applicable Federal OMB Circular.

XV. Assignability. The Contractor agrees not to assign or transfer any interest, rights, or duties in this Contract to any person, firm, or corporation without prior written authorization of NDE.

XVI. Amendment. This Contract may be amended at any time in writing upon the agreement of both parties.

XVII. Cancellation. Except as otherwise provided herein, this Contract may be canceled by either party with thirty (30) days written notice. Settlement for such cancellation shall be negotiated between the parties based upon specified deliverables completed by the Contractor and accepted and usable by NDE. Settlement shall be based on the date of termination notice if the Contractor initiates termination or the identifiable percentage effort expended by the Contractor if NDE initiates termination.

Contracts that create an employer-employee relationship may be cancelled immediately by NDE in the event that: (a) NDE determines that the results of any background checks reveal information about the contractor that NDE determines is an unacceptable result for the continuation of the employment relationship; (b) NDE determines that the contractor engaged in any behavior or activity that is cause for termination of employment under the NDE Personnel Rules; or (c) NDE determines that the contractor has failed to perform satisfactorily.

XVIII. Breach of Contract. If the Contractor breaches this Contract, NDE may, at its discretion, terminate the Contract immediately upon written notice to the Contractor. NDE shall pay the Contractor only for such performance as has been properly completed and is of use to NDE. NDE may, at its discretion, contract for provision of the services required to complete this Contract and hold the Contractor liable for all expenses incurred in such additional contract over and above the total cost of performance set forth herein at Paragraph 3 of this contract. This provision shall not preclude the pursuit of other remedies for breach of contract as allowed by law.

XIX. Unavailability of Funding. Due to possible future reductions in State and/or Federal funds, NDE cannot guarantee the continued availability of funding of this Contract notwithstanding the consideration stated above. In the event funds to finance this Contract become unavailable, either in full or in part, due to such reductions, NDE may terminate the Contract or reduce the consideration upon notice in writing to the Contractor. Said notice shall be delivered by certified mail (return receipt requested) or in person (with proof of delivery). NDE shall be the final authority as to the availability of funds. The effective date of such Contract termination or reduction in consideration shall be the actual effective date of the elimination or reduction of funding. In the event of a reduction in consideration, the Contractor may cancel this Contract as of the effective date of the proposed reduction upon the provision of advance written notice to NDE.

XX. Governing Law. This contract is governed by and subject to the laws of the State of Nebraska.

XXI. Proprietary Information. The contents of this contract, and all documentation provided therein, become the property of the State of Nebraska and the data becomes public information when the contract is executed. Per Neb. Rev. Stat. §84-602.02(3)(a), beginning July 1, 2014, a copy of all state contracts active on or after January 1, 2014 that are the basis for an expenditure of state funds will be publicly available on a web site maintained by the Nebraska Department of Administrative Services. The web site data base will also include any amendments to such contracts and any documents incorporated by reference in such contracts. The web site will also contain a data base that includes copies of all expired contracts which were previously included in the data base of active contracts. If the contractor wishes to have any information withheld from the public, such information must fall within the definition of proprietary information contained within Nebraska's public record statutes. All information in this contract that the contractor believes constitutes proprietary information that it wishes to have withhold from the public must be described in writing together with the basis for that belief and submitted to NDE prior to the time this contract is executed. Contractors may not have the entire contract deemed as proprietary. Contract amounts are not proprietary information. Failure of the contractor to follow these instructions regarding proprietary information may result in the information being viewed by other businesses and the public. Proprietary information is defined as trade secrets, academic and scientific research work which is in progress and unpublished, and other proprietary and commercial information which if released would give advantage to business competitors and serve no public purpose (see Neb. Rev. Stat. §84-712.05(3)). In accordance with Attorney General Opinions 92068 and 97033, contractors submitting a written statement that information is proprietary may be required to prove specific, named competitor(s) who would be advantaged by release of the information and the specific advantage the competitor(s) would receive. Although an effort may be made to withhold information that is properly submitted as proprietary and meets the State's definition of proprietary information, the State is under no obligation to maintain the confidentiality of proprietary information and accepts no liability for the release of such information.

XXII. If the contract does **not** establish an employer/employee relationship and the Contractor is a non resident of the State of Nebraska and is maintaining an office or transacting business within Nebraska and is to receive a monetary consideration beyond expenses or multiple monetary considerations, totaling more than $600, the contractor must obtain a W-4NA form from NDE. The contractor must complete the W-4NA form, and submit the form with their invoice. If the contract specifies multiple payments are to be made to the contractor, a W-4 NA form must be submitted with each invoice and request for payment.

Nebraska VR Request for Proposals
Transition Summer Program

1-2 pm CST/12-1 pm MT, Monday, March 21, 2016
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES OFFICE
3901 N. 27th Street, Suite 6, Lincoln, NE

Attend by interactive videoconference at the following Vocational Rehabilitation Offices:

Columbus — 3100 23rd Street, Suite 5
Fremont — 827 North D Street
Grand Island — 203 E. Stolley Park Road, Suite B
Kearney — 315 W. 60th Street, Suite 400
Norfolk — 1212 Benjamin Ave.
North Platte — 200 South Silber, Bldg. 2
Omaha — 1313 Farnam on the Mall
Omaha — 12011 Q Street
Scottsbluff — 505A Broadway, Suite 500
Lincoln State Office Building — 301 Centennial Mall South, 6th floor

Nebraska VR Request for Proposals
Transition Summer Program
SCORING SHEET

All applicants must present information in the recommended order, meet or exceed requirements described in the Request for Proposals and be submitted by 5:00 pm Central time on April 15, 2016.

APPLICANT: _____

DATE: _____ REVIEWER: _____

Criteria Weight

All proposals shall be evaluated using the same criteria and scoring process. The following criteria shall be used by the Evaluation Team to evaluate proposals:

Required Information	Review Points	Score
1. Proposal Narrative Includes a description of the goal of the proposed activity and/or services, the number of students with disabilities to be provided services, and the projected time period of the proposed service(s). Proposals that include the provision of more than one pre-employment transition service will score higher.	30	
2. Personnel Includes a brief overview of the organization and the experience and qualifications of key personnel involved in the activity or service(s).	15	
3. Work Plan Includes a clear and realistic work plan with estimated timelines for all service development and implementation activities for the proposed Pre-Employment Transition services.	20	
4. Coordination of Services/Evaluation Describes the process for coordinating with Nebraska VR staff on student referral and progress reporting activities. Describes the measures to be used to track and evaluate whether the proposed goal and objectives were met. Includes an assurance of the applicant's ability to comply with the general responsibilities listed under Terms, Conditions and Assurances on the attached sample Service Agreement.	15	
5. Budget Narrative Describes an appropriate and realistic budget for all activities. Includes clear and concise justifications for expenses for the full time period of the proposal. If funds from other sources will be leveraged, describes those partnerships or resources.	20	
TOTAL	100	

COMMENTS: _____

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