

OVR Innovation and Expansion Projects

OVR is announcing a restricted Bid for I&E Projects developing Transition Services. OVR will again be working with staff from the Department of General Services to qualify bidders for this project. We will be using the Invitation to Qualify (ITQ) process to generate a list of qualified Bidders. Once potential Bidders are qualified through the ITQ process, we will be able to send the Bidder the Statement of Work as part of the Request for a Quote (RFQ) for the project(s) the Bidder has qualified for and proceed with the Best Value Determination of the applications submitted for review. Please share this Announcement and the PowerPoint with your staff/constituents/stakeholders. Thank you for your interest in creating new programs to serve OVR customers.

Subject: Announcement - Innovation and Expansion Projects – Potential Bidders must qualify for the Invitation to Qualify (ITQ) process by September 9, 2015

OVR is interested in developing Innovation and Expansion Projects to serve OVR eligible customers. These new programs will comply with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) State Plan and target the development of new strategies and programs that may currently not be available in a District Office's service area. The 2015 State Plan has been revised to include the following language: These projects will target expansion of competitive integrated employment services into rural and underserved counties, job readiness and job placement of customers with the most significant disabilities who have traditionally been underserved, and/or the development of Industry Integrated Employment programs, as well as other innovative strategies identified by local OVR staff. OVR anticipates that potential contracts would generally be up to \$150,000 for the initial project year. Higher contract awards could be accepted for proposals of exceptional activity, as funds are available. Depending on the availability of funds, OVR will use Title I funds for the development of Innovation and Expansion Projects. OVR is seeking community projects that result in competitive integrated employment of persons with the most significant disabilities, as defined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act of 2014. Competitive integrated employment means work that-

- (i) Is performed on a full-time or part-time basis (including self-employment) and for which an individual is compensated at a rate that–
 - (A) Is not less than the higher of the rate specified in section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1)) or the rate required in the applicable State or local minimum wage law;
 - (B) Is not less than the customary rate paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by other employees who are not individuals with disabilities and who are similarly situated in similar occupations by the same employer and who have similar training, experience, and skills;
 - (C) In the case of an individual who is self-employed, yields an income that is comparable to the income received by other individuals who are not individuals with disabilities and who are self-employed in similar occupations or on similar tasks and who have similar training, experience, and skills;
 - (D) Is eligible for the level of benefits provided to other employees; and
- (ii) Is at a location--
 - (A) Typically found in the community; and
 - (B) Where the employee with a disability interacts for the purpose of performing the duties of the position with other employees within the particular work unit and the entire work site, and, as appropriate to the work performed, other persons (e.g., customers and vendors), who are not individuals with disabilities (not including supervisory personnel or individuals who are providing

services to such employee) to the same extent that employees who are not individuals with disabilities and who are in comparable positions interact with these persons; and

(iii) Presents, as appropriate, opportunities for advancement that are similar to those for other employees who are not individuals with disabilities and who have similar positions.

Eligible bidders are existing public or private entities that possess the infrastructure, proven track record, and at least five (5) years of demonstrated experience and expertise in providing rehabilitation services to persons with the most significant disabilities. Bidders must also have an established collaborative relationship with the OVR/BBVS District Office. **Potential Bidders must be qualified through the Invitation to Qualify (ITQ) process (see instructions below) to receive the Request for Quote and Statement of Work.** At this time, OVR is restricting Bids to the following 3 Innovation and Expansion Project Categories:

3. Targeting Transition Planning and Services for Students.

The key objective for this project is the successful execution of a Transition Planning and Services Project to serve fifteen (15) students during the 2015 – 2016 school year and additional months of post-graduation services. The overall goal is to place seven (7) OVR customers who have the most significant disabilities in competitive integrated employment through this Transition Planning and Services Project.

OVR is expects to develop this project for the Wilkes-Barre BVRs District Office serving Bradford, Columbia, Luzerne, Lackawanna, Pike, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne, and Wyoming Counties, the Williamsport BVRs District Office serving Potter, Tioga and Clinton Counties and the New Castle BVRs District Office serving Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, and Lawrence Counties. OVR will accept Bids to serve other BVRs/BBVS District Offices or multiple District Offices across the State

9. Transition Projects Targeting the Replication of Project SEARCH for Students with Disabilities or Youth with Disabilities

Develop Project SEARCH for 8-12 students with Disabilities or 8-12 youth with Disabilities, based on the national model for Project SEARCH operating in the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center in Cincinnati, Ohio. Students with Disabilities and Youth with Disabilities cannot be served in the same project. The Project will serve 8-12 eligible OVR customers and place 6 or more participants in competitive integrated employment.

OVR will accept bids for Allentown BVRs District Office serving Monroe County; Erie BVRs District Office serving Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Mercer, Venango and Warren Counties; Harrisburg BVRs District Office serving Cumberland County, Johnstown BVRs District Office serving Indiana and Westmoreland Counties; New Castle BVRs District Office serving Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, and Lawrence Counties; Altoona BVRs District Office serving Bedford, Blair, Centre, Fulton and Huntingdon Counties; the Reading BVRs District Office serving Berks and Schuylkill Counties, and the Norristown BVRs District Office serving Delaware, Bucks and Montgomery Counties. OVR will also accept bids to develop Project SEARCH in other BVRs/BBVS District Offices or multiple District Offices across the State.

10. Providing Pre-Employment Transition Services for Students with Disabilities

Develop Pre-Employment Transition Services for Students with the most significant disabilities. Project will serve twenty-five (25) students with disabilities in Pre-Employment Transition Services Project resulting in the successful transition of at least 19 students from high school to Competitive Integrated Employment or post-secondary education.

OVR is interested in receiving bids to develop this project for Altoona BVRs District Office serving Bedford, Blair, Centre, Fulton and Huntingdon Counties, Erie BVRs District Office serving Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Mercer, Venango, and Warren Counties, Wilkes-Barre BVRs District Office serving Bradford, Columbia, Luzerne, Lackawanna, Pike, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne and Wyoming Counties, Allentown BVRs District Office serving Lehigh, Northampton, Carbon and Monroe Counties, New Castle BVRs District Office serving Armstrong, Beaver, Butler and Lawrence Counties, Norristown BVRs District office serving Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery Counties, Philadelphia BVRs District Office serving Philadelphia County, Pittsburgh BVRs District Office serving Allegheny County and the Reading BVRs District Office serving Berks and Schuylkill Counties. OVR will accept Bids to serve other BVRs/BBVS District Offices or multiple District Offices across the State.

To become qualified for the Invitation to Quality (ITQ), a potential Bidder would start the qualification process by getting a vendor ID (SAP#) at: www.pasupplierportal.state.pa.us. This is also the web site where a potential Bidder would log on to start the ITQ qualification process. Please review the attached PowerPoint describing the ITQ process. The Qualification process may take a week or two to complete as 3 references are required. **You may qualify for the ITQ with the Department of General Services at any time, but we will begin sending out the Request for Quotes on September 9, 2015.** If you have questions about the ITQ process, please contact Matt Fidler (DGS) at 717-783-2090 or mfidler@pa.gov. If you have questions about the Innovation and Expansion Projects, email your questions to Chris Forbrich at lyforbrich@pa.gov. Please share this Announcement with your staff/constituents/stakeholders. Thank you for your interest in creating new programs to serve OVR customers.

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