



Appendix A: RFP Template for Third-Party
Evaluator

Request for Proposals for:

**Independent Third-Party Program Evaluator for the Strengthening
Community Colleges Training Grants.**

RFP Issue Date: 4/19/21

Response **Due Date:** 5/24/21

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Invitation

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Northwest State Community College is extending an invitation for proposals to select an independent third-party program evaluator. This project is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants program, Grant # MI-35894-21-60-A-39.

NOTICE!

In order to receive any addenda or supplemental information, you **MUST** register with the Grants Office of Northwest State Community College, either by mail at 22600 State Route 34, Archbold, OH 43502; by telephone at 419-267-1368; or by email to acox@northweststate.edu .

The following information is required:

- Name of Organization
- Contact Name
- Street Address
- City, State Zip
- Telephone
- Fax Phone (optional)
- Email address

Background Information

Northwest State Community College (NSCC) seeks bids from qualified applicants for an independent third-party evaluation of the proposed project. This procurement is part of a federally-supported initiative called the Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants. The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) awarded \$40 million dollars to Community Colleges across the nation to address the skill development needs of employers, supporting workers in gaining skills and to transition quickly from unemployment to employment. The grants also build the capacity of community colleges to address challenges associated with the pandemic, such as expanding online and technology-enabled learning.

The NSCC Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grant project will help to address the workforce deficit and skills gap in Northwest Ohio's advanced manufacturing industry. With the grant funds, NSCC will increase advanced manufacturing short-term accelerated programs, single-credit stackable courses, and industry recognized credential offerings, with expanded remote and hybrid learning options. They will further collaborate with the workforce development system to attract, place, and retain new entrants into advanced manufacturing programs and occupations, and create an Advanced Manufacturing Steering Committee to guide the development and alignment of curriculum.

NSCC's project will focus on career pathways in advanced manufacturing. The selected evaluator will be expected to work with the project team immediately to develop a detailed evaluation design, to be submitted to USDOL in compliance with grant requirements.

Overview

NSCC aims to build its training capacity, increase program and credential offerings, and expand collaboration with the workforce development system, while engaging the local advanced manufacturing industry under the Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants program. The evaluation of the project will include the systematic collection of information for the purpose of determining the extent to which program objectives have been met. The successful RFP will agree to and provide the following items:

- Develop an evaluation plan that is consistent with project goals and that comply with federal regulations and DOL-SCC review criteria for program evaluation.
- Provide assistance in determining data tracking and collection needs, setting appropriate and measurable outcome projections and measures, and a plan for using data for continuous improvement and effectiveness across the consortium.
- Provide information about best practice approaches, current research, and evaluation plans included in projects awarded by the USDOL Employment and Training Administration
- Conduct review of the colleges work plan to assure the evaluation plan is consistent with and

appropriate for the proposed project.

- Prepare and submit the evaluation plan, budget and budget narrative to the College in the format required by USDOL and/or the College for review and approval by the College for submission to USDOL.
- Work in cooperation with the Colleges faculty and staff as well as key partners to implement the approved evaluation plan, including, but not limited to, data collection, analysis and reporting.
- Comply with regulations for the use of confidential information.
- Meet all funder requirements for the period of performance and approved timeline as it relates to project evaluation.
- Provide assistance with or preparation of interim and annual performance reports required by the funding agency.
- Provide assistance with preparation for project site visits and/or audits that may occur during or after the project period.
- Provide unlimited telephone, fax, email, videoconferencing and/or onsite consultations concerning evaluation of the grant project.
- Provide consultation regarding the status of the project, including addressing barriers to progress toward objectives.
- To develop and implement a mixed-method evaluation design including an outcome analysis, a formal implementation analysis, and a systematic review of evaluation findings to better understand the DOL-SCC grants program

In broad terms, the evaluator will support the operation and implementation of the grant by:

- 1) Analyzing progress against strategy implementation.
- 2) Providing evaluation of deliverables produced under the grant to date
- 3) Assessing project outcomes.
- 4) Developing evaluation reports that provide recommendations for adjustments and improvements to programs.
- 5) Ensuring Northwest State Community College is in compliance with mandatory reporting requirements.

6) Participate in evaluator webinars hosted by USDOL.

7) Attend evaluation conferences offered by DOL in Washington, DC or virtually, as needed.

Scope of Work

The consultant awarded this contract shall perform the tasks and sub-tasks listed below:

Task 1: Design: The first month of the project will be devoted to understanding NSCC's grant project progress to date and developing the evaluation strategy plans for the remainder of the grant.

Task 1.1: Conduct start-up Meetings: Start-up meetings will be conducted between the evaluator and DOL-SCC grant management team to discuss the project, priorities for the evaluation, methods and sources of data collection, timelines, expectations, etc.

Task 1.2.a: Conduct College Information-Gathering Sessions: The evaluator will conduct a site visit to the college or virtually, based on public health guidelines, for the purpose of understanding the advanced manufacturing programs, curriculum, industry and workforce development system partnerships, as well as measurable outcomes and deliverables under the grant. The visits may also include meeting with primary area grant partners.

Task 1.2.b: Start-Up Meeting Report: The evaluator will provide a summary of project understandings and agreements to NSCC's DOL-SCC grant management team.

Task 1.2.c: Conduct site visits (or virtual meetings, based on public health guidelines) throughout the life of the project as necessary to gather, analyze, and utilize data.

Task 1.3: Prepare a Design Report: The evaluator will prepare a draft detailed evaluation design to describe a strategy for carrying out the project activities. This will be submitted to the grant management team and be revised as necessary based on the management team's comments or to accommodate additional data collection needs.

Task 2: Data Collection: Data will be collected from multiple stakeholders involved in the programs to triangulate the findings.

Task 3: Analysis and Reporting:

1) The evaluator will be expected to assure compliance with mandatory reporting requirements.

Note: The final report at the end of the evaluation period should include: executive summary, evaluation methodology, summary of program, presentation of formative and summative results (including a mix of graphic data representations and narrative explanations of findings, with an emphasis on outcomes, comparisons and observations), conclusions and implications, and recommendations for future research.

2) Make presentations as required to a variety of faculty, partners, and stakeholders to communicate and explain useful data results in alignment with grant deliverables.

- 3) Prepare a narrative and data analysis that assesses and draws conclusions about the efficacy of the program strategies as they impact employment outcomes for project participants.
- 4) Prepare all required reports in a format that follows requirements.
- 5) Support the evaluation design and implementation process during any DOL monitoring visits.

Task 4: Deliverables Review: Conduct reviews of the deliverables produced through the grant to include: steering committee development, new accelerated advanced manufacturing short-term certificate programs, system enhancements, career pathways, curricula, course materials, and other products developed with grant funds.

Deliverables and Milestones

OUTPUTS	MEASURE(S)	DUE DATES
A draft of the detailed evaluation plan will be submitted to FPO and Program Office.	1. Startup meetings will be conducted with essential teams, to discuss the project, priorities for the evaluation, methods and sources of data collection, timelines, and create SMART goals. 2. A preliminary evaluation plan will be created outlining the evaluation design and timeline	Completed by September 30, 2021.
A final detailed evaluation plan will be submitted to FPO and Program Office.	1. The evaluator will provide a Design report describing a detailed strategy for carrying out the project activities. 2. The final plan will be submitted to the grant management team and be revised as necessary based on the management teams' comments or to accommodate additional data collection needs. 3. Final revisions will be completed and the plan will be submitted.	Completed by December 31, 2021.

<p>Third-party evaluator carries out the evaluation completing all tasks and deliverables.</p>	<p>1. Data will be collected quarterly from Banner, Sakai, and other systems and sent to the evaluator. 2. Data will be collected as necessary from multiple stakeholders involved in the programs to triangulate the findings. 3. The Third Party Evaluator will have quarterly meetings with the grant team.</p>	<p>September 30, 2021 through December 31, 2024.</p>
<p>Submit evaluator's Interim Implementation Report to FPO and Program Office using suggested format.</p>	<p>1. The Third Party Evaluator will make presentations as required to a variety of faculty, partners and stakeholders to communicate and explain useful data results in alignment with grant deliverables. 2. The third party evaluator will prepare a narrative and data analysis that assesses and draws conclusions about the efficacy of the program strategies as they impact employment outcomes for project participants.</p>	<p>Completed by February 28, 2023.</p>
<p>Submit evaluator's Final Implementation Report using suggested format.</p>	<p>The final report at the end of the evaluation period should include: executive summary, evaluation methodology, summary of program, presentation of formative and summative results (including a mix of graphic data representations and narrative explanations of findings, with an emphasis on outcomes, comparisons and observations), conclusions and implications and recommendations.</p>	<p>Completed by December 31, 2024.</p>

Submittal Requirements

(1) Inquiries and Information Requests Prior to Submission

Northwest State Community College's Grants Office will act as the clearinghouse for all inquiries and information requests.

All inquiries and information requests must be submitted electronically to Ashlynn Cox, Grants Accountant: acox@northweststate.edu .

The answers to all inquiries will be provided to all registered parties by the Grants Office. All answers will be electronically distributed to all those registered as being in receipt of the RFP documents. Addendums will also be posted on the Northwest State Community College website with the original Proposal document. Any other responses to questions not via the Grants Office are considered casual and not binding.

(2) Timeline

The tentative schedule for evaluation, product selection and implementation is as follows:

- | | |
|--|---------|
| • Issuance of RFP | 4/19/21 |
| • Last day for question submittal | 5/3/21 |
| • Final Addendum issued | 5/10/21 |
| • Submittals Due | 5/24/21 |
| • Notification of Vendor/Vendors Selection | 5/31/21 |
| • Commence work | 6/30/21 |

Key dates may be altered by Northwest State Community College; registered parties will be updated via Addendum should any alteration occur.

(3) Proposal Instructions:

Each bid should be completed entirely, should not exceed 10 pages, and be typed in 12-point font, single-spaced, 1" margins on all sides. Bids should include page numbers and table of contents. The cover page, table of contents, and attachments will not count against the 10-page limit.

Proposals will clearly and concisely define the processes, skills, and tools to be used toward project requirements. Proposals will include project plans with specific milestone dates, action items, outcomes measurements and costs of the project while demonstrating:

- Clear understanding of the Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grant scope of work, outcomes, and timelines as approved and funded by the USDOL.
- Experience with other DOL-funded projects, and participant management experience.
- Ability to identify and assess students that will potentially be impacted by the proposed educational innovation strategies. This may be a prediction based on capacity.
- Plans for carrying out the work, including staffing, major milestones, and timelines

- Explanation of budget, which must not exceed \$84,456. Budget description may include tiered pricing options, if necessary.

Please have your proposal organized in the following manner for each component:

- Attachment A: Cover Page
- Attachment B: Conflict of Interest Form
- Attachment C: Budget Form & Narrative
- Organizational Chart
- Proposal (scope of work)

(4) Complete Submittals: Respondents shall electronically submit their proposal containing all the requested information to the Northwest State Community College Business Office: Ashlynn Cox at acox@northweststate.edu by 5/24/21 by 5:00 PM, Local Time.

- a) Late responses may be deemed unresponsive. At its sole discretion, Northwest State Community College reserves the right to reject any proposal not deemed satisfactory and to waive any and all irregularities in the procedure. Omission, inaccuracy, or misstatement may be sufficient cause for a proposal to be deemed unresponsive and/or irresponsible.
- b) There will be NO public opening; submittals may be viewed by appointment with Northwest State Community College.

The Selection Process

(1) Evaluation of Proposals

Scoring by the evaluation committee will be via the Evaluation form included in the Appendix.

(2) Evaluation/Selection Committee

Name/Title	Institution	Contact Information
Ashley Pere, Director of Grants	Northwest State Community College	apere@northweststate.edu
Ryan Hamilton, Dean of STEM and Industrial Technologies	Northwest State Community College	rhamilton@northweststate.edu
Sarah Stubblefield, Project Manager	Northwest State Community College	sestubblefield@northweststate.edu
Industry partners	TBD	

Disclaimers and Disclosures

Disclaimers

In its sole discretion, Northwest State Community College may withdraw the RFP either before or after receiving submissions, may accept or reject submissions, and may accept submissions which deviate from the RFP as it deems appropriate and in Northwest State Community College's best interest. In its sole discretion, Northwest State Community College may determine the qualifications and acceptability of any party or parties submitting in response to this RFP.

Following submission of a RFP, the respondent agrees to deliver such further details, information and assurances, including financial and disclosure data, relating to the response and/or the respondent, including the respondent's affiliates, officers, directors, shareholders, partners and employees, as requested by Northwest State Community College in its discretion.

Northwest State Community College and its advisors shall have no obligation or liability with respect to this RFP, the selection and award process contemplated hereunder, or whether any award or recommendation will be made. All costs incurred by a respondent in preparing and responding to this RFP are the sole responsibility of the respondent. Any recipient of this RFP who responds hereto, fully acknowledges all the provisions of this disclosure and disclaimer and agrees to be bound by the terms hereof. Any response submitted pursuant to this RFP is at the sole risk and responsibility of the party submitting such response.

Respondents are advised that participation in the design of evaluation strategies might result in exclusion or restriction from participation in other phases.

Disclosures

Northwest State Community College is governed by the Ohio "Open Records Law" and all responses and supporting data shall be subject to disclosure as required by the law.

All submittals will be available for review by the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration. Northwest State Community College complies with all USDOL regulations in purchasing equipment.

Selected vendor, in accepting a Purchase Order or entering into an agreement with Northwest State Community College, agrees to comply with USDOL regulations and cost principles as per the Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants agreement.

Appendix

Evaluation Matrix

Organizational qualifications and experience	Possible
General Qualifications	10
Respondent’s Background and Experience	15
Evaluation Strategy	40
Management and Staffing Plan	10
Work plan and timeline	
Clear understanding of scope of work, outcomes, and timelines	5
Plan to accomplish the scope of work	10
Cost	
Budget submitted with this RFP is reasonable	10
Total	100

Attachment A: Cover Sheet

Please complete this **mandatory** cover sheet accordingly.

Organization Name				
Address				
Phone Number				
Number of Years in Business				
DUNS #				
Acknowledgement that Proposing Entity is up-to-date on taxes and not currently debarred or suspended.		YES		NO
Type of Organization (check all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Higher Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Private
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community-Based Org.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Business Organization
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Government Agency	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (explain)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Labor Organization		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Profit		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Employment Service State Agency (Wagner-Peyser)		
Contact Person's Email Address				
Signatory Authority Signature				

Attachment B: Conflict of Interest Form

By submitting a proposal, the authorized signatory authority of the bidding entity certifies to his/her knowledge and belief that there is no conflict of interest (real or apparent) inherent in the bid or in delivering the scope of work if Northwest State Community College awards a contract. A conflict of interest would arise if any individual involved in the preparation of this proposal and delivery of services has a financial or other interest or would be likely to gain financially or personally from the award of a contract. The same would hold true for any member of the individual's family, partner, or an organization employing or about to employ any of the above as a direct result of the successful award of a contract under the RFP. Northwest State Community College reserves the right to disqualify a bidding entity should a conflict of interest be discovered during the solicitation process.

Signatory Authority Name and Title	Signature	Date
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*Note: This form is a **mandatory** required document to be considered for either component. Bidders should only complete this form once per entry.*

Attachment C: Budget

Please complete the **mandatory** budget form and narrative explanation below. In creating a budget, the applicant should provide per unit costs by completing the following table and providing a justification for costs in a budget narrative.

Budget Line Item	Cost
Salaries	\$
Benefits	\$
Travel	\$
Operational (supplies, communications, etc.)	\$
TOTAL	\$

Budget Narrative: Please provide a detailed explanation for each budget line item to justify the cost.