

Bidders Conference

**LIFE SCIENCES WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
June 20, 2023

B

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Overview & Purpose of Funding

- The aim of the RFP is to fund qualified organizations to provide sectoral training and intermediary services under its Life Sciences Workforce Development Initiative (LSWDI), an initiative that seeks to support the growth of local life sciences clusters by expanding access to career opportunities for underserved and underrepresented communities

Overview & Purpose of Funding Con't

- Building a diverse and inclusive workforce by:
 - Increasing the number of workers receiving life sciences certification or academic degrees and expand employment opportunities and career pathways in the industry, particularly workers from underrepresented communities, including those without four-year degrees and workers of color.
 - Expanding the availability of training and education programs
 - Increasing the number of Boston residents with access to middle- and high-wage earning opportunities in life sciences through demonstrated employer commitments
 - Removing institutional obstacles to occupational mobility
 - Provide resources to help workforce development partners, training partners, and employers leverage available funding to place workers in good jobs in life sciences and STEM.
 - Engaging industry leaders in an expanded role of informing training curricula; removing credential barriers; creating certificate training programs; and training job seekers and incumbent workers.
 - Empowering engagement between stakeholders in the ecosystem by creating opportunities for cross-system alignment and improvement.

Through these efforts, the City aims to expand the pool of women and people of color who pursue life sciences careers with the goal of 1,000 new Boston residents employed in the life sciences by the end of 2025.

Overview & Purpose of Funding Con't

Two service categories

Category 1 will fund job training services for Boston residents to gain entry into high-growth, high-demand careers in the life sciences and STEM industries. Awards will be for \$100K or more for Category 1 programs.

Category 2 will fund an intermediary to drive the formation of labor market relationships and develop sustainable pathways to career advancement and family-supporting employment in the life sciences industry. Both service categories are complementary, and funded entities are expected to interface closely with each other and operate in a collaborative manner to achieve the desired outcomes. Up to \$500K will be available for Category 2.

Overview & Purpose of Funding Con't

- A maximum of \$4.0 million in funding is available for this project
- Funds for this RFP come from two sources: the Neighborhood Jobs Trust (NJT) and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds
- Awardees will be funded either through NJT or ARPA funds, but likely not both.
- The RFP review team will ultimately determine the funding source supporting each project.

Scope of Work

CATEGORY 1: Funding for Training and Placements

- Innovative job training models that focus on life sciences and other STEM fields, incorporating supports that allow workers who face barriers to employment to thrive.
- The aim is to provide Boston residents, ages 18 and over, with support services, connections to employers, and the skills training to attain employment in the life sciences and life science 5 occupations.
- The training must lead to high-quality jobs or paid internships.
- Preference will be given to programs that tailor services to groups that are underrepresented in the STEM and life sciences industry.
- Successful responses to this RFP will demonstrate an understanding of both the technical and non-technical skills.

Awards will be for \$100K or more for Category 1 programs.



Scope of Work Con't

CATEGORY 2: Greater Boston Life Sciences Intermediary

Intermediary that will bring together employers, training providers, and other relevant partners to create and implement coordinated pathways to career advancement and employment in life sciences and support all stakeholders. Specific strategies include:

- Serving as a central industry resource for workers, training providers, and employers by addressing the known gaps;
- Planning regional strategies among employers and training providers, including Category 1 funding organizations, that lead to structured pathways and beneficial employment;
- Engaging in curriculum alignment by cross-walking job skills with training curricula;
- Addressing barriers to job opportunities and career advancement for low-income workers by transforming human resource practices, and coordinating support services and community resources to address the needs of career seekers;
- Collecting data and analysis on the most successful strategies to expand inclusive employment strategies for life sciences employers in Greater Boston.

Up to \$500K will be available for Category 2



Scope of Work Con't

- Funded entities are expected to operate in a collaborative manner to achieve the desired outcomes
- Permitted to be the lead on only one application, but no limit to partnering as a sub-applicant.
- Identify whether applying for Category 1 or Category 2
- The award will be made for a two-year contract with an anticipated start date of October 2, 2023.

Services Requested

Category 1 Elements

- Successful proposals will include plans for outreach and recruitment, assessment, case management, occupational skills training, employer partnership, job or internship placement, and post-placement career services.
 - **Recruitment:** Demonstrate an understanding of the target population and how to best engage and serve that population.
 - **Assessment:** Thorough assessments of prospective participants to ensure they receive appropriate services. Include a discussion of how they assess a participant's digital literacy skills and access to technology.
 - **Case Management, Career Counseling, and Support Services:** Outline the strategy for providing a coordinated response to address participants' needs and remove barriers to success. Stipends, wages, and robust wrap-around support services are allowable expenses for funded programs

Services Requested

Category 1 Elements Con't

- **Job Training:** Identified job training should have clear goals, objectives, and methods of instruction. Competencies should be defined at every stage of programming to evaluate progress and define achievement. The targeted jobs/occupations must be clearly defined.
- **Employer Partnerships:** Related employers should be involved in as many aspects of the program as feasible. Provide clear evidence that training will lead to employment or internships. If internships are the primary outcome, provide a clear demonstration of how the placement will lead to full-time employment. **Provide a signed letter of commitment from at least one employer detailing the employer's role and responsibilities.**
- **Job Development, Job or Paid Internship Placement, and Post-Placement Services:** Describe a timeline of job/internship development, job/internship placement, and post-placement activities. Provide support both for accessing and applying for jobs or internships leading to interviews, as well as support for graduates after placement or post-secondary school enrollment.
- **Cooperation with Intermediary:** Work with the chosen intermediary to coordinate placements.



Services Requested

Category 2 Elements

- The Intermediary's role is to provide wraparound support to recipients of training, training providers, and participating life sciences employers, ensuring that all parties have access to needed support to succeed.
- Must show a demonstrated track record of supporting nontraditional workers in successfully entering career pathways and of working closely with employers to meet their workforce needs, particularly when engaging in inclusive training and hiring.
- Will work with Category 1, but must also independently demonstrate the support of participants in the life sciences training and employment ecosystem of Greater Boston.

Eligibility Criteria

- Lead applicants must hold 501(c)(3) status under the Internal Revenue Code or have an identified fiscal sponsor holding 501(c)(3) status.
- Non-profit, private, or public higher education institutions are also eligible to apply
- Applications from partnerships or collaborations are welcome. Partnerships will need to identify a lead applicant.
- An organization may be part of multiple applications as a partner but may only be the lead applicant on one application.

Eligibility Criteria

CATEGORY 1: Funding for Training and Placements

- Unemployed or underemployed, defined as those in temporary, part-time, or unstable positions; those working in jobs without benefits; and those whose income does not suffice to meet the needs of their families (including those earning less than the City of Boston's Living Wage).
- Boston resident
- 18 years old or older.
- Must be willing and able to be placed in and retain full-time, unsubsidized employment, internship, or post-secondary education leading to a career with full-time employment in a living wage job, defined as \$17.55 /hour as of July 1, 2023.
- NJT Funds may only be used to serve clients who are at or below 80% of Boston's Area Median Income (AMI) (see Appendix D).
- Goal of serving at least 75% of participants being (of) one or more of the following: ● BIPOC communities; ● individuals with limited English proficiency; ● low-income communities.

Eligibility Criteria

CATEGORY 2: Greater Boston Life Sciences Intermediary

- Intermediary will engage entities with a vested interest in Greater Boston's life sciences sector, including employers, education and training providers, and workforce development agencies.

Terms of Procurement

- Category 1 training contracts will utilize a milestone and performance-based funding structure
 - Category 1 awardees will receive an initial payment upon execution of the contract. Subsequent payments for program implementation will be provided on a milestone basis, with lump sum payments to be made upon the accomplishment of defined milestones. The remaining 35% will be paid out based on the negotiated rate for placements
- Category 2 contracts will utilize a milestone payment structure in which payments are made upon the accomplishment of defined milestones.
- The start and end dates for these contracts will be negotiated with selected applicants once awards have been made, with a start date on or after October 2, 2023, to October 2, 2025.

Application Specifications

In response to this RFP, all proposers must provide the following information:

- Cover sheet (Appendix A), budget, and budget narrative (please use the Excel workbook provided at owd.boston.gov titled "Appendix B OWD Budget Form").
- For job training programs, include materials outlining the proposed course of training; this could include a syllabus and/or curriculum outline, sample lesson plans, or a weekly schedule. Page limit for this section: three pages.
- Copy of 501(c)(3) letter from IRS, if applicable.
- Proposal narrative is limited to a 10-page document, which is sequentially numbered, and exclusive of attachments (Cover Page, Budget Summary and Detail, Budget Narrative, Certification and Assurances Statement, and Letters of Commitment).
- Applications for either category should include evidence of support from employer partners. Letters of Commitment detailing an employer's specific commitment to actively participating in the project is required for Category 1 programs (see page 12, 'Services Required>>Program Design>>Employer Partnership')

Proposal Guidelines

Point values are allocated to each section of the proposal narrative as follows:

CATEGORY 1: Funding for Training and Placements

- ❖ Agency Background and Organizational Capacity
- ❖ Statement of Need and Target Population
- ❖ Program Design
- ❖ Letters of Support/Commitment
- ❖ Staffing
- ❖ Budget, Budget Narrative, and Resources

CATEGORY 2: Greater Boston Life Sciences Intermediary

- ❖ One-page Executive Summary
- ❖ Background Qualifications
- ❖ Plan
- ❖ Staffing
- ❖ Budget, Budget Narrative, and Resources

Timeline

Request for Qualifications Issued	June 5, 2023
Bidder's Conference	June 20, 2023
LOI (OPTIONAL)	June 23, 2023
Questions Due	July 14, 2023
RFP Responses Due	July 21, 2023
Notification of Selection	Early Sept.
Anticipated Contract Start Date	October 2, 2023

Submission Instructions

- Full proposals, following the format specified in this document, are due no later than 5:00 PM EDT on Fri., July 21, 2023.
- Proposals must be uploaded as a single PDF document with all relevant attachments included in this link (<https://bpda.app.box.com/f/d9ddf08f2b4e484fa94a6e2be044fb49>). Please use the naming convention OrgName_LSWDIproposalCY23.
- It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure their information is complete and submitted on time.

Questions?

A blue-tinted photograph of a university campus. In the center, a large, leafy tree stands next to a statue of a man in a long coat, mounted on a stone pedestal. To the left is a building with arched windows, and to the right is a taller, more ornate building with classical architectural details. The overall scene is lush and green, though the blue tint gives it a cool, serene feel.

THANK YOU

