

CareerSource Florida

**GRANT SOLICITATION
INNOVATIVE REGIONAL PROJECTS
2014-2016**

Issue Date:	August 1, 2014		
Title:	Innovative Regional Projects		
Funding:	\$1,000,000 in total funding available from WIA State Set-Aside	Project Expires:	24 months or September 30, 2016

DUE DATE:	5:00 pm, Eastern, Tuesday, September 2, 2014		
	Please complete application at:		
	http://careersourceflorida.com/funding-opportunities/innovative-regional-projects/		
	Questions regarding this solicitation should be directed by e-mail only to: Mary Lazor, mlazor@careersourceflorida.com		

1.0 Purpose and Background. CareerSource Florida (CSF) is seeking proposals from Florida's Regional Workforce Boards to implement **Innovative Regional Projects**. Striving for continuous improvement, the CSF Board of Directors established the development of **Innovative Regional Projects** to advance the Board's six strategic goals and aligned with Florida's workforce investment system values:

Strategic Goals:

- **World-class Service to Florida's Target Industry Clusters**
- **World-class Service to Florida's Infrastructure Innovators**
- **Top National and State Leadership for the Demand Driven Solution**
- **Aligned, Responsive, Jointly Engaged Talent Supply System**
- **Outstanding Business Communications and Intelligence for Performance and Accountability**
- **Dedicated Commitment to Change Management and Transportation**

Workforce System Values:

- **Business-Driven**
- **Continuous Improvement**
- **Integrity**
- **Talent Focus**
- **Purpose-Driven**

Projects must demonstrate innovative approaches to workforce development with statewide and national impact. The CareerSource Florida Board is seeking high-value, new, creative and disruptive ideas that without this funding source may not be attempted. CareerSource Florida has set aside funding for ***Innovative Regional Projects*** for regions to develop new concepts and ideas resulting in outcome-based workforce solutions. Project concepts should include workforce system effectiveness and efficiency strategies such as cross-regional collaboration and leveraged resource commitments through public, private and non-profit organizations.

2.0 Funding. CareerSource Florida will utilize WIA state set-aside dollars to award grants to multiple successful respondent(s). There is a total of \$1,000,000 in WIA funding to implement this initiative. All projects using these funds must be completed within the grant award period.

CareerSource Florida encourages the submission of proposals at all funding levels. It is expected that most proposals will be in the range of \$100,000 to \$500,000 (the maximum award level). Those proposals seeking the maximum amount of funding must be cross-regional (i.e., two or more RWB's).

CareerSource Florida reserves the right to negotiate regional budget proposals within the top respondents to award the maximum number of regional projects.

No funds granted by CareerSource Florida under this initiative may be used to purchase equipment or furnishings (Operating Capital Outlay) or for building construction or renovations (Fixed Capital Outlay). If a respondent to this grant solicitation plans to purchase equipment, furnishings or have construction done as a part of this project, they must utilize funds from sources other than CareerSource Florida.

3.0 Qualifications for Applicants. Only **Florida Regional Workforce Boards** may apply for these grants. Eligible regional workforce boards will provide documentation demonstrating the region has:

- Chair / Executive Director leadership commitments (attested to by both individuals signing the application)
- Secured local funding commitment (if appropriate)
- Obtained letters of commitment from named partners / stakeholders (if appropriate)

4.0 Term. The projects funded through this grant solicitation will be for period of grant award notification through September 30, 2016. For this reason, all funding awards for ***Innovative Regional Projects*** from this funding source must be obligated within the project period.

5.0 Leveraged Resources. Regional Workforce Boards are encouraged to obtain and document leveraged resources for the project amount they submit. All leveraged resources must be identified by source. Leveraged resources may be obtained from:

- Regional Workforce Board (RWB) formula dollars,
- Participating businesses or business groups;
- Educational institutions (public/private); or
- Other sources to contribute financially to the project, including cross-regional collaboration.

Leveraged resources may be in the form of financial gifts or in-kind services. In-kind services are services that are provided to enhance the project at no charge or at discounted charges. In-kind services that are used to meet this leverage requirement must be described in the application along with the method used to ascertain their in-kind value. Leveraged resources accomplish three things: 1) promotes the sustainability of the project; 2) strengthens partnerships for future outreach; 3) contributes to the success of the project.

6.0 Project Scope of Services. This section provides a detailed overview of the projects that CareerSource Florida will fund. Applicants should pay particular attention to the requirements listed in this section. Applicants are encouraged to establish project collaborations with cross-regional, private, public or non-profit organizations. Applicants with collaborative partners are required to obtain letters of commitment from their partners and include those letters with their application. The letters will include the activities and the financial support to be provided by the partners. Regional project applicants with two or more regions must enter into Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), agreements or contracts with regional partners specifying the partner's roles and responsibilities to implement this project. **Note: Proposals with multiple regional applicants without a detailed MOU will be considered non-responsive.**

6.1 Innovation Areas. Regional respondents should align **Innovative Regional Project** goals and objectives with one or more of CareerSource Florida's six strategic goals. The following are examples of regional project objectives that align with the strategic goals. However, regions are not limited to these objectives and should be creative in how they achieve this requirement:

- Better results for job seekers and employers
 - Directly addresses the skills gap – identification of skills/credentials required for in-demand jobs and just-in-time training programs
 - Partnerships with business or business associations to meet regional needs
- Greater efficiency in the delivery of quality services
 - Shared services/resources among regions
 - More customers served (job seekers / employers)
 - Faster entry into employment
 - Outcomes achieved at lower costs
 - Reduction in duplicative program components and related administrative costs
 - Use data analytics to focus services
 - Implement new procurement strategies
 - Pilot or expanding new uses of technology

- Stronger cooperation across programs, partners and funding streams
 - Seamless service delivery system
 - Integrating services at a regional level to align with regional labor markets and existing or emerging economic growth strategies
 - Using apprenticeships / other youth credentialing efforts to develop and prove talent pipeline pools for key sectors in regional economy

6.2 Project Components. Applicants should include the following **Innovative Regional Project** components in their response to this grant solicitation and complete the online Grant Application:

6.2.1 Organization/Implementation Plan. This component will include a Statement of Need (current state metrics) describing issue(s)/need(s) to be addressed and outlining proposed project innovative solutions. The Plan should include a strategic approach with explicit goals for project leadership; project benchmarks and future state metrics/outcomes, collaborative partnerships to include cross-regional collaboration, if appropriate; communication strategies and tools to expand beyond the region including the development of a Toolkit to enable the successful replication of the initiative to other regions.

6.2.1.1 Strategic Leadership. This component will identify strategic leaders engaged with the project to include the Regional Workforce Board Chair(s), Executive Director and key project leaders, as well as a project coordinator to be accountable for overall project coordination. Depending on the subject of the proposal, a regional or statewide board member may be identified as a mentor on the project. Strategic leadership is essential to sustainability beyond the life of the project.

6.2.1.2 Project Milestones/Timelines. Project timelines for developing and implementing the project and proposed project deliverables within the specified timeframes should be included. Quarterly reports to the CareerSource Florida Board will be required for each award. It is envisioned that there will be routine communication with the applicant and the CareerSource Florida professional team. The proposal must contemplate regular teleconferences and/or webinars in the timeline.

6.2.1.3 Collaborative Partners. This component will describe the recruitment and engagement of regional economic development partners (economic development organizations, small business development centers, chambers of commerce, etc.) and education partners (lifelong learning institutions from both the public and private sectors). Letters of commitment among collaborative partners should be included to solidify the collaboration and clearly outline roles and responsibilities of each partner involved including opportunities for future project sustainability.

6.2.1.4 Communications Strategies. The project proposal will include communication strategies for project engagement, alignment with Florida's CareerSource Florida Brand, communication vehicles (e.g., web, social

media, etc.), presentation plans to update the local regional board, required state-level quarterly reports with potential presentations to the CareerSource Florida Board and additional statewide presentations to include the Workforce Professional Development Summit.

6.2.1.5 Regional Replication--Tool Kit Development. The project proposal should identify regional replication strategies to include the development of a Regional Tool Kit. The purpose of the Tool Kit is to train other regions or a consortium of regions to replicate the results of the project. The project application should include details on the composition of the Tool Kit and deployment strategies. The Tool Kit would also be used in presentations during the Workforce Professional Development Summit and CareerSource Florida Board/Council meetings.

6.2.2 Performance Tracking Plan/Project Impact. Proposals must identify the qualitative and/or quantitative objectives of the proposal (i.e. the derived benefit to the state or region). The derived benefit statement should include how the proposal impacts the state and region and how it will further the statewide strategic goals. The proposal must also identify a proposed quantitative evaluation process to determine the impact of the investment to the state and region at the completion of the project. This component must show how the outcomes associated with the project will be tracked through current or future state metrics. The evaluation process may include staged evaluations during the project with stated milestones.

6.2.3 Sustainability Plan. This component will consider and offer recommendations on sustainability of the initiative after the grant ends without further investment needs from the state. It should describe how the valued initiative will continue after the grant funding period, the components of the project that have applicability for replication in other areas, the components of the project that make it noteworthy for addressing workforce needs for continued improvement in a region, and how the innovative solutions can be promoted within other regions to employers and job seekers.

6.2.4 Financial Plan and Budget. Regional applicants are required to provide a Financial Plan for their project. The Financial Plan should include broad project goals, timetables, resources, allocations and leveraged funding support (as appropriate) with consideration of project sustainability and should quantify a high-level budget. The Budget should include the following:

- Costs. The projected overall costs broken down by (1) administrative costs and (2) direct costs for project implementation. 'Administrative' costs would be those costs associated with managing the project; 'direct program services' costs would be those for program development, implementation and delivery of services. Administrative costs CANNOT exceed 10% of the funds CSF will provide. Applications that minimize administrative costs will receive a competitive advantage. Administrative costs that are being donated or paid for by other sources are not subject to this 10% limitation.

- Revenue. The Budget must include project revenue details—CSF funding and additional fund sources with specific amounts.

7.0 Performances and Reporting. CareerSource Florida will, along with DEO, establish NFA's with reporting requirements based on successful applicant proposals and scope of services. There may be negotiations regarding services, performances and funding during the review and award of applications resulting in some modifications. Quarterly written reports and a final summative report are required. Quarterly reports should include project challenges/successes, benchmarks/milestones, timetable updates and leveraged resource updates. The final summative report should include a description of achievement of project goals and objectives, the impact to the region and state and total resources required to implement the project. Quarterly Project Progress Reports and the final summative report must be submitted to Mary Lazor (mlazor@careersourceflorida.com).

8.0 Application Submittal Requirements. Applicants are advised to carefully read and follow these instructions for submitting grant applications. A Grant Application Review Team will be established to evaluate applications based on the requirements in this grant solicitation. The Grant Application is available online for applicants to complete and submit their applications. Using the provided Grant Application makes it easier for application preparation and ensures that CareerSource Florida obtains required information in a consistent format for the Grant Application Review Team.

8.1 Twenty-page Limit. Grant Applications should be concise and should not exceed twenty (20) pages.

8.2 Documentation of Collaboration and Commitment. Respondents are encouraged to submit letters of commitment from regional economic development and education partners as described in section 6.2.1.3. Regional projects where two or more regions are serving as project applicants, an MOU, agreement or contract must be submitted with applications in response to this Grant Solicitation and **MUST** commit the regional partner to: (a) specific activities the partnering regions will provide during the project; (b) the funding regions will provide to the project (if appropriate); and (c) any ongoing support, both programmatic and financial the regions will provide to enhance the project's success. MOUs, agreements, contracts and letters of commitment do not count toward the 20-page limit on applications.

9.0 Grant Application Reviews and Award. Applications will be reviewed by the Grant Application Review Team through an electronic evaluation process administered by the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO). DEO will verify the Review Team's evaluation scores and submit its findings to CareerSource Florida. After a review of the findings from DEO, CareerSource Florida will finalize award decisions and authorize DEO to issue award notices. CareerSource Florida retains the authority to accept or reject any or all applications. CSF also retains the authority to negotiate terms (i.e., performances, overall cost) with an applicant to which it is considering an award and to decline its award if such negotiations prove unsuccessful. The notice of award of this grant solicitation will be emailed by DEO to **all organizations submitting applications.** Award(s) will also be posted on the following websites:

CareerSource Florida – careersourceflorida.com/

Department of Economic Opportunity – www.floridajobs.org/

If an applicant submitted an application and not received an email award notice on the tentative date listed below in Schedule of Events that means the award has not been finalized. There may be circumstances beyond the control of CSF resulting in delays of the award decision.

10.0 Scoring. The Grant Application Review Team will score each application using the range of points for the areas listed below:

Leveraged Resources (see 5.0)	0 – 5 Points
Innovation Areas (see 6.1)	0 - 10 Points
Organization/Implementation Plan (see 6.2.1)	0 – 50 Points
Performance Tracking Plan/Project Impact (see 6.2.2)	0 – 20 Points
Sustainability Plan (see 6.2.3)	0 – 10 Points
Financial Plan and Budget (see 6.2.4)	0 –5 Points
	100 Points
TOTAL AVAILABLE POINTS	
<i>Multiple Region Project Applications</i> Attach a detailed MOU, agreements or contracts for regional project applicants with two or more regions specifying the partner’s roles and responsibilities. <i><u>Note: Proposals with multiple regional applicants without a detailed MOU, agreement or contract will be considered non-responsive.</u></i>	

11.0 Schedule of Events. To the extent possible, CSF will adhere to the following timelines:

August 1, 2014

Issue GRANT SOLICITATION

**Tuesday, September 2, 2014
5:00 pm Eastern**

DEADLINE for receipt of applications

**September 29-October 1
2014* (on or about)**

Application evaluations completed and awards announced at the 2014 Future of Florida Forum

September 30, 2016

Project End Date

*Applicants may receive a notice of award via email from CareerSource Florida when award decisions are finalized. Subsequent to the announcement at the Future of Florida Forum, awards will be posted to CSF & DEO websites. This date is a tentative date of award; if an applicant has not received an email award notice, that means that the award decision has not been made – please do not call and request information regarding the timing of the award.

12.0 DUE DATE for Applications. Applications shall be submitted to CareerSource Florida through the CareerSource Florida website **NO LATER THAN 5:00 PM, Eastern, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2014.** The following link will direct you to where applications can be completed:

<http://careersourceflorida.com/funding-opportunities/innovative-regional-projects/>

13.0 Point of Contact. Any questions regarding this grant solicitation should be emailed to:

Mary Lazor	CareerSource Florida
E-mail	mlazor@careersourceflorida.com

DUE DATE: 5:00 PM, EASTERN, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2014