

**CareerSource Florida, Inc.**  
**Invitation to Negotiate**  
**for**  
**Public Information and Outreach Services**  
**May 1, 2024**

**PLEASE DIRECT INQUIRIES TO:**  
**Quartil Robinson,**  
**Contracts and Procurement Manager**  
**[contracts@careersourceflorida.com](mailto:contracts@careersourceflorida.com)**

**TIMETABLE**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>
Wednesday, May 1, 2024	3:00 pm	Release of ITN
Monday, May 6, 2024	3:00 pm	Questions due to CSF (via email – <a href="mailto:contracts@careersourceflorida.com">contracts@careersourceflorida.com</a> )
Friday, May 10, 2024	5:00 pm	CSF responds to questions (anticipated)
Thursday, May 16, 2024	3:00 pm	<a href="#">Proposals</a> due to CSF
Thursday, May 30, 2024	5:00 pm	CSF selects Vendor(s) (anticipated)
Monday, June 3 – Friday, June 14, 2024	TBD	CSF and selected Vendor(s) conduct negotiations
Friday, June 21, 2024	3:00 pm	Award Posted
Monday, July 1, 2024	8:00 am	Anticipated Contract start date

- A. **Invitation to Negotiate Release Date: Wednesday, May 1, 2024**
- B. **Deadline for Submitting Proposals: Thursday, May 16, 2024**
- C. **Method for Submitting Proposals:** Complete the [submission form](#) and attach accompanying documents.
- D. **Right to Reject:** CareerSource Florida reserves the right to reject all proposals received in response to this ITN in the event funding becomes unavailable or other unforeseeable circumstances occur. A contract for the accepted proposal will be based upon the factors described in this ITN and may include any or all parts of the proposal.

- E. **Contract Period:** The contract period will not extend beyond June 30, 2027, although there may be an option to renew up to two one-year terms.
- F. **Contract and Payment Schedule:** Upon receipt of competitive quotes, CareerSource Florida will select a vendor, develop a contract proposal, and set contract terms, including a payment schedule. Any services and deliverables executed under this contract will be paid on a reimbursement basis only. This is not an ITN for a retainer contract. All billing must reflect actual work completed. CareerSource Florida requires that all services be listed within bidder proposals showing hourly rates for each individual service.
- G. **Notification of Award:** A decision selecting the successful bidder is scheduled to be made within four (4) weeks of the closing date for the receipt of proposals. Interviews and negotiations with prospective vendors will take place during this four-week period if needed. Upon conclusion of final negotiations with the successful bidder(s), all offerors submitting proposals in response to this Invitation to Negotiate will be informed, in writing, of the decision. **Availability of funds for this project is subject to legislative appropriation and budget signature. CareerSource Florida receives its funding through an annual appropriation from the Florida Legislature, any contract is subject to the availability of funds.**

**PURPOSE.** CareerSource Florida Inc. issues this Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) to elicit responses from full-service, integrated communications, public relations, and/or marketing firms capable of contracting with CareerSource Florida to deliver strategic, customized, and customer-centric outreach, recruitment, and public information services.

The contractual partnership(s) will amplify public awareness and engagement in crucial areas of workforce education, economic development services, and apprenticeship expansion efforts, with the primary aim to enhance recruitment into these areas. Additionally, this partnership seeks to bolster public and stakeholder education, fostering a deeper understanding of workforce resources and opportunities. Through robust collaboration among workforce entities, educational institutions, communities, and partners under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the aim is to create a synergistic environment conducive to advancing our shared goals of workforce development and economic prosperity.

In accordance with this corporation's guidelines that call for periodic evaluation of external contractor services, CareerSource Florida seeks to establish this contract with the possibility of two annual renewals. The contract period will be determined by CareerSource Florida. In the event CareerSource Florida determines the outreach capabilities of more than one contractor are in the best interest of the organization, CareerSource Florida reserves the right to contract with more than one respondent.

This Public Information and Outreach Services contract will facilitate increased public awareness of initiatives that close achievement and attainment gaps for Floridians, serving job seekers facing barriers to employment and promoting strategic and cross-sector partnerships.

Under the leadership of Governor Ron DeSantis, CareerSource Florida is focused on ensuring the state workforce system, in collaboration with education and economic development partners, is meeting the evolving needs of Florida employers, job seekers and workers. These efforts demand increasing and strategic collaboration with statewide agencies, education providers, businesses and other entities for whom talent development and workforce quality is a top priority, including the Florida Department of Education, the State University System, the Florida College

System and the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida, and statewide and local economic development organizations such as the Florida Economic Development Council, Space Florida, Visit Florida, the Florida Chamber and Florida Chamber Foundation, and other partners within Florida's talent development ecosystem.

The approved contractor(s) will provide outreach services to assist with CareerSource Florida's continued implementation of the WIOA Combined Plan. The approved contractor(s) also will deliver comprehensive, on-demand services including, but not limited to, graphic design, outreach and recruitment, media engagement, video production, web/interactive, research, annual and special report development and publication, social media management, printing, copy writing and collateral development, development of ad hoc outreach plans, and strategic communications planning and development. Additionally, the approved contractor(s) will also provide essential, integrated services including, but not limited to, developing branding strategies for alignment with organizational goals, conducting market analysis and audience segmentation for tailored communications, planning and implementing crisis communication strategies, identifying and collaborating with strategic partners, implementing analytics tools for performance tracking and reporting insights, and ensuring accessibility compliance. Such services would be provided to CareerSource Florida at their direction.

## **BACKGROUND.**

CareerSource Florida was established by the Florida Legislature to provide policy direction and general oversight to the state's workforce development system. As established in Chapter 445, Florida Statutes, this workforce system comprises CareerSource Florida; FloridaCommerce, which serves as the administrative and fiscal entity for CareerSource Florida; 24 local workforce development boards; and several state, regional and local partners including the state Department of Education and the state Department of Children and Families. A board of directors largely appointed by the Governor oversees policies and investments that impact the delivery of workforce services statewide as well as activities of CareerSource Florida. CareerSource Florida is managed by a president and professional staff located in Tallahassee.

Workforce development services are provided primarily through the 24 local workforce development boards throughout the state, which are chartered by CareerSource Florida, in partnership with the Florida Department of Education and FloridaCommerce, as well as through the system-wide virtual job matching and labor market tool, Employ Florida at [employflorida.com](http://employflorida.com).

There are approximately 100 career centers in Florida, overseen by the local workforce development boards, that provide workforce-related services to individuals seeking jobs, to employed individuals needing skills upgrades to retain their jobs and to businesses seeking to fill vacancies or stay competitive by upgrading the skills of their existing workers. More information about CareerSource Florida is available at [careersourceflorida.com](http://careersourceflorida.com) and about our 24 local board partners and the career centers they oversee by visiting their websites, which can be found by clicking the individual areas on the map [at this link](#).

**CONTRACTOR QUALIFICATIONS.** Through this ITN, CareerSource Florida will select and negotiate a contract with a communications, outreach, and public relations firm within the following parameters:

1. Experience. Firms must have been in business under their existing names and/or business structure for not less than five years from the date of issuance of this ITN. Respondents must be integrated communications firms with significant experience in all phases of digital

and traditional outreach, public relations, earned, owned (including social), and paid media management, graphic and web design, video production, public affairs and communications services to a statewide market, in addition to outreach and recruitment experience for populations served by the Florida workforce system. That experience will be demonstrated by listing recent/current projects the firm has managed and results achieved.

2. Capacity. Responding firms must have significant in-house capacity and be able to create and execute strategic, integrated statewide outreach and recruitment campaigns; communications tools and tactics on an as-needed basis; and comprehensive, complete project management for CareerSource Florida. Subcontractors required for specific projects must be disclosed to the contract manager in advance.

The firm's capacity will be demonstrated by listing the education, certifications, and work experience of the firm's staff and describing in-house capabilities.

A high priority is placed on customer service. While every effort is made to ensure work product is managed within typical business hours, responding firms must be able to provide communications support as needed after hours and on weekends if special circumstances or deadlines warrant.

3. Workforce and Education Experience. In addition to the general firm experience mentioned above, preference will be given to firms with practical knowledge and experience working with a workforce development organization(s), and statewide partner organizations such as those outlined above under the section "Purpose". Knowledge of and experience in outreach to both rural and urban customers of focus under the federal WIOA Act, including but not limited to veterans and military spouses, low-income individuals, individuals with disabilities, older individuals, ex-offenders, and youth aging out of foster care, will be important, as will demonstrated work product and successful outcomes working with statewide collaborative partners with complementary talent development goals and roles.
4. Noteworthy Accomplishments & Awards. As a partial measure of the firm's quality of performance, it would be appropriate to highlight instances where the firm and/or individuals within the firm who are still employed by the firm have been recognized for exemplary achievement.

**SUBMISSION OF RESPONSES**. Firms interested in submitting a response to this Invitation to Negotiate must electronically submit the following documents:

1. "Firm Questionnaire" – Respondents will provide information about the firm that addresses the preferences listed above. This information will be provided by completing [this form](#).
2. "Examples of Work Product" – Respondents will provide examples of work that best illustrate the capabilities and talents of the firm and its individual members. This work product may include examples of advertising created for digital, print, radio, and other outlets, videos, printed collateral such as informational brochures and reports, media kit materials, and outreach materials that illustrate strategy-to-campaign execution on behalf of clients.

The work product should have been produced within the last two years. Each product that a respondent chooses to submit should reflect the work of staff members who developed the product and are still with the firm.

3. Presentations – CareerSource Florida may request a personal presentation by one or more of the responding firms, which would allow an opportunity to provide more examples of work product.
4. CareerSource Florida is subject to Florida's Government in the Sunshine Law, which requires that materials made or received by an agency, in connection with official business and used to perpetuate, communicate, or formalize knowledge, are considered public records. All responses to this ITN will be considered public records.

Respondents should complete the form, including uploading any examples of work products they may wish to provide no later than **3 p.m. ET, Thursday, May 16, 2024**.

### **PROPOSAL FORMAT**

For a proposal to receive funding consideration, the application included in this packet must be answered completely. Proposers should take care in following the format of the application. Use narrative and/or include attachments where requested. Adherence to this format is essential since evaluation criteria is based on the structure of the ITN. Failure to follow the requested format could result in the disqualification of your proposal. Proposals should be prepared as simply as possible and provide a concise description of the bidder's capabilities to produce deliverables. The proposal should be no longer than twenty-five (25) pages total and include the following:

1. Cover page
2. Executive summary
3. Past performance and experience
4. Examples of work products
5. Description of deliverables
6. Staffing with related experience
7. Timeline
8. Total cost

Proposals should include a statement that all Intellectual property rights will be owned by CareerSource Florida and that other work may be added to the contract upon a mutually signed agreement. Proposals should also include a commitment to open communication with CareerSource Florida about delivery dates, launch dates, and any contingency plans should delivery dates need to be adjusted.

All proposals to this ITN should also include itemized pricing (the hourly rates for each) for the above work as well as bundled pricing options that could provide any cost savings. Responses should be organized by main topic area listed above. If the proposal does not include the above noted statements and pricing structure breakdown, the proposal may be disqualified from the bidding process.

**SELECTION.** CareerSource Florida will assemble an objective proposal evaluation team to review the responses and evaluate proposals based on which responses CareerSource Florida deems to be the most suitable and qualified. CareerSource Florida retains the sole authority for developing and applying the criteria used by the team to evaluate proposals. Responding firms should be prepared to provide, upon request, at least three references from clients with whom the firm has worked within the past 12 months.

CareerSource Florida may choose to request that one or more of the responding firms make a face-to-face presentation to an individual or individuals reviewing responses. If needed, every effort will be made to schedule the presentation(s) at a time and on a date satisfactory to the respondent. Presentations, if necessary, will be scheduled in Tallahassee at CareerSource Florida headquarters. CareerSource Florida, at its sole discretion, may determine that a personal presentation(s) is not necessary. Tentatively, CareerSource Florida plans to schedule presentations, if necessary, for the weeks of **June 3 - 14, 2024**.

**NOTE:** When CareerSource Florida decides which firm it deems to be the most suitable and qualified for this project, upon receipt of evaluations by the ITN review team, it will notify all respondents of that decision. CareerSource Florida will then set up a meeting with the company it selects and commence negotiations relative to specific 1) scope of services, 2) timetables for implementation and 3) costs. If negotiations are unsuccessful, CareerSource Florida retains the right to initiate contract negotiations with the next most suitable firm and continue that process until it successfully negotiates a contract. CareerSource Florida retains the sole authority to make its selection based on what it determines to be its best interest. CareerSource Florida, at its sole discretion, may reject any and all responses as not meeting the needs of this project. **CareerSource Florida anticipates that a selection decision will be made no later than June 21, 2024**

## **PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS**

The application is a preliminary mechanism used to determine the suitability of a service provider for funding. The review process involves:

- A. Preliminary Screening –
  - a. To be considered for funding, you must complete the entire application. Based on your response, an evaluation team will determine whether further consideration of the application is warranted.
- B. Follow-up/Fact-finding Documentation –
  - a. Upon analysis of your completed application and budget, you may be asked to submit additional information or details to the evaluation team.
  - b. You may be asked to provide a presentation or demonstration of your organization's abilities to successfully fulfill the proposal requirements.
- C. Evaluation Process –
  - a. Proposals will be scored using a predetermined scoring matrix by a formal evaluation committee. Vendors with the top proposals may be asked to participate in an interview or asked to provide further information/clarification.

## **PROPOSAL CONTENT AND EVALUATION**

Based on information submitted, your suitability to deliver service will be rated in the following manner:

- A. Past performance and experience: 25 points maximum
- B. Description of deliverables: 15 points maximum
- C. Staffing: 25 points maximum
- D. Timeline: 10 points maximum
- E. Total Cost: 25 points maximum

**CONTRACT(S)**. The contract(s) resulting from this ITN will be a two-party contract between CareerSource Florida and the selected firm(s). Any subcontractors the firm may use from time to time throughout the contract will not be a party to the firm's contract with CareerSource Florida and should be identified when outside assistance is needed.

The contract(s) will establish pricing to be used for various aspects of the services provided by the contractor. The contract period will be determined by CareerSource Florida. As noted above, it is anticipated that there is an opportunity for contractual agreements for a period of up to three years including renewals. The actual length of the contract and any possible renewal options will be terms to be negotiated by the parties.

**CONTACT**. Firms should direct inquiries regarding this ITN to [contracts@careersourceflorida.com](mailto:contracts@careersourceflorida.com).

**Please do not contact CareerSource Florida to check on the status of proposals.**

**No phone calls please.**