



***COUNTY of VENTURA  
HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY  
&  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD***

Present a Request for Proposals For

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity  
Act  
Outreach Services  
(RFP # 1718.01)**

**RELEASE DATE:** August 28, 2017

**DUE DATE:** 5:00 p.m. - September 25, 2017

**BIDDERS CONFERENCE:** 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. – September 8, 2017  
Peppertree Conference Room  
Human Services Agency  
855 Partridge Drive  
Ventura, CA 93003

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## **SECTION I – PROGRAM INFORMATION**

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The Workforce Development Board (WDB) of Ventura County, in conjunction with the Human Services Agency (HSA), is releasing this competitive solicitation to secure a contractor to provide the services described in this RFP and related materials. Respondents to this RFP will compete for funds by complying with the requirements contained herein. The WDB intends to award only one contract for Outreach Services under this RFP.

### **A. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

The Workforce Development Board of Ventura County (WDB) is seeking proposals from qualified, experienced public relations firms to enhance the Board's regional communication strategy in raising awareness and engagement in Ventura County's overall economic vitality and workforce development. WDB is the regional lead for facilitating collaboration across regional workforce and economic development networks. Proposals are being accepted for marketing and public relations firms that demonstrate expertise in professional marketing and public relations work and familiarity with Ventura County economic and workforce issues. Interested bidders will demonstrate knowledge of workforce development needs of employers, job seekers and out of school youth and show experience in building connections between the private and public sectors for regional collaboration.

In partnership with the Ventura County Board of Supervisors, WDB administers the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in Ventura County, oversees the WIOA aspects of the County of Ventura America's Job Center of California (AJCC) and establishes programs in response to the needs of Ventura County employers, job seekers and out of school youth. WDB members include representatives from private businesses, education, labor, economic development, government agencies and community based organizations. The Board of Supervisors appoints WDB members who serve as volunteers.

WDB actively works on the following outreach-related responsibilities:

- To identify and articulate the workforce development needs of the Ventura County region
- To promote collaboration and alignment among the multiple local stakeholders for workforce preparation and development
- To facilitate consensus-building on workforce needs and identify priorities
- To provide current and relevant information on which to base decisions
- To be an engaged advocate and decision-maker in the development of public policy decisions affecting the local workforce and business productivity

To carry forward this agenda, it is essential that WDB have an effective regional communications and outreach strategy that aligns with the Ventura County Regional Strategic Workforce Development Plan 2017-2020. That strategy involves the continuous development of a strong, positive public image that encourages employer, job seeker and out of school youth participation in WIOA programs, fosters private/public sector collaboration for workforce development and generates support at the local, state and federal levels.

## **B. PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

Outreach support for the WDB requires planning, creativity and flexibility in developing and delivering timely, effective communications to the following targeted audiences:

- *Job Seekers:* attracting to the America's Job Center of California those who are laid off, in transition, need training to upgrade skills and need to re-enter the workforce
- *Out-of-School Youth:* attracting and engaging at-risk youth and those from low-income communities to develop and achieve career pathways and/or workforce training
- *Employers:* encouraging employer use of the America's Job Center of California, for recruitment support, meeting rooms, business consulting assistance for layoff aversion and layoff transition services
- *General:* raising awareness of Ventura County's workforce development needs and how WDB, through WIOA-funded programs and collaborative actions, is addressing those needs

## **C. FUNDING SOURCE**

Funding for this vendor contract is available from the County's allocation of WIOA Rapid Response funding (CFDA #17.278). The initial base-year contract will not exceed \$150,000. Federal funding is provided under WIOA and allocated through the State of California and the County of Ventura to WDB for WIOA programs and services. All contract activities must be allowable under WIOA.

## **D. PERIOD OF SERVICE AND TYPE OF CONTRACT**

The Workforce Development Board may enter into a contract with the successful bidder for a base term beginning July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2019, with two options years (extending through June 30, 2021) to be exercised at the discretion of the Workforce Development Board and the County Board of Supervisors. Should a new contract be awarded for subsequent years, the County reserves the right to contract with the selected contractor for this service without the need for further competitive procurement, subject to approval by WDB and Ventura County Board of Supervisors and the availability of sufficient funds and satisfactory performance by the contractor.

## **E. SCOPE OF SERVICES**

The selected firm will demonstrate through their response to this RFP that the work will be performed to the satisfaction of WDB. The firm will be expected to work with County Workforce Administration staff and the WDB Outreach Committee in the development and implementation of an overall outreach strategy to promote the programs, services and accomplishments of the WDB and the America's Job Center of California (AJCC).

Effective outreach services are required to assist the Workforce Development Board in its marketing and public relations activities to include the following areas:

1. Creative Design, Copywriting and Production
  - Research (quantitative and qualitative)
  - Comprehensive messaging strategy

- Development and continuity of branding identity
  - Advertising (print, online, broadcast and social media)
  - Brochures, flyers and posters
  - Direct mail
  - Website development and maintenance
2. Media Negotiation and Placement
    - Print, online, broadcast and outdoor
    - English and Spanish language media
    - Social media placement, maintenance and advertising
    - Value-added impressions and dollars
  3. Public Relations
    - Press releases
    - Public service announcements
    - Bylines
    - Case history development
  4. Reporting
    - Regular status reports on all projects
    - Estimates and timelines for approval prior to each project
    - Media flowcharts (including impressions and dollars by medium) for approval before purchase
    - Compilation of job outlook and employment data
    - Clipping reports
    - Billing summaries
    - Attendance at meetings of WDB, WDB Outreach Committee, WDB sector committees and others as appropriate

Providers should ensure that outreach strategies are targeted to populations identified in WDB Regional Development Plan 2017-2020. Bidders are encouraged to describe the extend of partnerships with community-based organizations that have established histories of serving and communicating to these populations, including organizations with a physical presence in targeted neighborhoods.

## **F. EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

Success of the project will be measured against the following performance goals:

1. Development of a job seeker, out-of-school youth, and employer outreach plan consistent with WDB goals and focus areas and approved by the WDB (or WDB Executive Committee) for implementation
2. Implementation of the plan on time and on budget
3. Bi-monthly written reports on plan implementation
4. Overall minimum of 25% value-added in-kind impressions and dollars
5. Timely and appropriate adjustments to plan, as requested by the WDB Outreach Committee or Workforce Administration

## G. BIDDERS CONFERENCE/TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

A Bidders' Conference to answer questions about the RFP, the application process, program specifications and contract requirements will be held on **September 8, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. at HSA, 855 Partridge Drive, Ventura, CA 93003**. If, as a result of the Bidders' Conference, there are any significant interpretations, direction or revisions to the RFP, such information will be posted on the HSA website. Attendance at the Bidders' Conference is optional, but strongly recommended.

All inquiries regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing no later than September 12, 2017, to allow sufficient time for preparing responses. Submit questions to Tina Knight, HSA Contracts & Grants Manager, at the address specified above or by e-mail at [tina.knight@ventura.org](mailto:tina.knight@ventura.org) or by fax at (805) 477-5490. Questions and answers regarding this RFP will be posted on the HSA website continually throughout the grant application process.

## H. AWARD PROCESS TIMETABLE

Activity	Date
Bidders' Conference*	<b>September 8, 2017, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.</b>
Last Date to Submit Questions	<b>September 12, 2017, 4:00 p.m.</b>
Proposal Submission Deadline*	<b>September 25, 2017, 5:00 p.m.</b>
Notification to Selected Contractors	<b>by March 1, 2018</b>
Contract Approval by the Board of Supervisors (tentative)**	<b>May- June 2018</b>
Contract Start Date	<b>July 1, 2018</b>

\* Human Services Agency, Administrative Offices, 855 Partridge Dr., Ventura, CA 93003

## SECTION II – RFP GUIDELINES

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### A. RESPONSIVE PROPOSAL

A "responsive proposal" means one that substantially complies with all requirements of the RFP, including evidence that the bidder will adhere to all required State and County regulations, required insurance coverage limits, fiscal responsibilities, contract conditions and reporting requirements governing the proposed activity.

Any proposal may be declared non-responsive if it fails to conform to the essential requirements of the RFP and submission process and will not be considered or evaluated.

The bidder agrees to provide the County with any other information the County determines as necessary for an accurate determination of the prospective contractor's qualifications to perform services.

### B. ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSAL CONTENT

The contents of a successful proposal shall become contractual obligations if procurement action ensues. Failure of a successful bidder to accept these obligations in a contractual agreement may result in cancellation of the award. The County of Ventura reserves the right to negotiate additional provisions to those stipulated in the proposal; recommend and/or award in

amount(s) less than stated in the RFP and negotiate a reduction or increase in service levels commensurate with funding availability.

The successful bidder must have the ability to negotiate the terms of the contract agreement with the County within thirty days following selection. The County of Ventura will make the final decision on contract award.

**C. REJECTION OF PROPOSALS**

Failure to furnish all information requested in this RFP or to follow the proposal format requested may disqualify the proposal. Any exceptions to the Scope of Services required by this RFP must be justified in the proposal.

The County reserves the sole and exclusive right to reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP, or to cancel this RFP, in whole or in part, with or without cause, if it is in the best interest of the County to do so.

A bidder's submitted proposal may be withdrawn by written request prior to the proposal submission deadline.

**D. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS**

All proposals will be subject to a standard review process. An initial review of each proposal will be conducted by County staff to determine if it is complete, in the required format and in compliance with all requirements of this RFP. Failure to meet all of these requirements may result in a rejected proposal.

Each proposal that passes the initial review will be evaluated and scored by a review panel comprised of WDB members, County Workforce Administration staff and/or other outside workforce or marketing professionals. The review panel may interview bidders as part of the review process. Panel members will review and score each proposal using the assigned weights listed below. Final scores will be reviewed by County staff and presented to the WDB Executive Director in developing a final recommendation to the WDB and Board of Supervisors for award of a contract.

It is County of Ventura policy that review panelists not solicit or receive any oral communication from any potential contractor regarding any proposal under consideration, with the exception of a formal panel interview, if requested.

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Point Value</b>
Project Design and Implementation	45
Knowledge and Expertise	35
Budget and Cost Effectiveness	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 Points</b>

Narrative responses to each section of the application, any attachments and the completed budget forms will be reviewed to determine compliance with the requested information and the feasibility and reasonableness of proposed program design, cost and expected outcomes. Each evaluation criterion is described in full in Section III-Submission Package.

**E. PROTEST RIGHTS**

Upon written request, any unsuccessful bidder is entitled to an explanation as to why its proposal may have been irregular and/or the basis for the award of the contract to the

successful bidder. Protests shall be in writing and received within ten (10) calendar days following the announcement of intent to award contract.

It is the bidder's responsibility to ensure receipt by County to the designated address. A postmark will NOT be accepted as meeting the deadline requirements. No extensions may be provided to this protest provision. Protests shall be addressed to:

Tina Knight, Contracts & Grants Manager  
County of Ventura  
Human Services Agency  
855 Partridge Dr.  
Ventura, CA 93003

The protest shall state the reason for the protest, citing the law, rule, regulation, or practice on which the protest is based. A written response will be sent to the protester within ten (10) working days after receipt of the written protest. Prior to the award of a contract, if any bidder files protest against the awarding of the contract, the contract may not be awarded until either the protest has been withdrawn or HSA has decided the matter.

**F. AWARD AND COMMENCEMENT OF WORK**

1. Recommendation for award is contingent upon successful negotiation of the contract and resolution of any protests. The successful bidder shall be required to sign the negotiated contract, which will be in the form and content as approved by County.
2. The final authority to award a contract rests solely with the County of Ventura. The successful bidder shall not be allowed to begin work under any negotiated contract until such time as the contract has been approved by the County of Ventura.
3. The successful bidder must agree to all terms, insurance coverage provisions and conditions of the contract with HSA.
4. If only one proposal is received and it is deemed that such proposal meets requirements for funding, County reserves the option to award such entity a contract on a sole-source basis. In the event no proposals are received, or proposals received do not meet requirements for funding under this RFP, County reserves the right to be the contractor of last resort, or to designate another qualified entity to operate the program on a sole-source basis.

**G. LIMITATIONS**

This RFP does not obligate the County of Ventura to award a contract, to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal, or to procure or contract for services or supplies.

The County reserves the sole and exclusive right to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this RFP, to negotiate with all qualified sources, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP, with or without cause, or to issue a new RFP, if it is in the interest of the County to do so. A bidder may be required to enter into negotiations and to submit any price, technical or other revisions of the proposal as may result from negotiations.

**H. METHOD OF PAYMENT**

A fee-for-service contract will be developed. The contractor will be paid for completion and submission of evidence of deliverables completed in accordance with the approved contract schedule of activities and services. Applicants must have the ability to maintain sufficient cash



flow (*i.e.* lines of credit, cash reserve on hand) to meet ongoing financial obligations of program operation, pending payment from the County. No cash advances are provided.

**I. PROHIBITION OF COLLUSION**

Respondents to this Request for Proposals shall not engage in any actions, conversations or agreements with other parties that would be considered in restraint of free and open competition. Such activities that are intended to limit open competition by deceiving, misleading, or attempting to otherwise divide the market for the services being requested through this RFP are prohibited. If collusion is determined, it may be grounds for disqualification from the competitive process.

**J. PROPOSALS PROPERTY OF COUNTY**

All proposals become the property of the County of Ventura upon opening and shall not be returned to the bidder. Proposals shall remain confidential until the evaluation process is completed and tentative award has been posted by HSA. All proposals will be considered public documents, subject to review and inspection by the public at the County's discretion, in accordance with the Public Records Act.

**K. ADDENDA AND SUPPLEMENT TO RFP**

If revisions or additional information to this RFP become necessary, HSA will post the addenda, supplements or revised RFP on the HSA website.

**L. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

1. The selected contractor(s) shall operate the project continuously throughout the term of the contract with HSA. Personnel shall be qualified in accordance with the applicable requirements of the agreement and any future amendments thereto.
2. All bidders responding to this RFP are specifically prohibited from soliciting letters of support from HSA staff. Bidders are hereby notified that HSA maintains a policy that prohibits its employees from providing letters of support, recommendations or advocacy for an outside agency, firm, or individual engaged in a competitive procurement process managed by HSA.
3. The County shall have the right to review the work being performed by the Contractor(s) at any time during the Contractor's usual working hours.
4. If a bidder is recommended for contract award under this RFP, they shall be required to certify and provide certain documents as identified below *prior* to contract award.

Signed copies of each of the following forms:

- Drug Free Workplace certification pursuant to 20 CFR Section 667.200(d)
- Debarment and Suspension pursuant to regulations implementing Executive Order 12549
- Certification Regarding Prohibition on Lobbying using federal funds.

5. The recommended bidder will need to submit evidence of the following insurance requirements effective on or before start of the contract:

- A. Commercial General Liability "occurrence" coverage, naming the County of Ventura as additionally insured, in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000 combined single limit (CSL) bodily injury & property damage each occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate, including personal injury, broad form property

damage, products/completed operations, broad form blanket contractual and \$50,000 fire legal liability.

- B. Commercial Automobile Liability coverage in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000 CSL bodily injury & property damage, including owned, non-owned and hired automobiles. Also to include Uninsured/Underinsured Motorists coverage in the minimum amount of \$100,000 when there are owned vehicles. Contractor must have on file evidence of auto insurance in the minimum amount of \$100,000 CSL bodily injury & property damage for all employees and volunteers associated with the contract.
- C. Workers' Compensation coverage, including a Waiver of Subrogation in full compliance with California statutory requirements, for all employees of Contractor and Employer's Liability in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000.

Additional information regarding insurance requirements can be found in the Human Services Agency Contracts Manual. A copy of the Contracts Manual is available at [www.vchsa.org](http://www.vchsa.org) on the Request for Proposals page. Click on the Partners & Providers link on the left navigation bar; then click on the Request for Proposals link for RFP-related items.

6. The recommended Contractor will be subject to the County of Ventura Living Wage Ordinance. The Ordinance requires the payment of a living wage and accompanying paid time off to all covered employees engaged in providing services pursuant to a service contract as defined in Sec. 4952(f) of the County's Living Wage Ordinance.

7. Misrepresentation during the procurement or contracting process in order to secure the contract will disqualify a bidder or contractor from further consideration in the procurement or contracting process. Failure to comply with contract requirements once a contract has been awarded will constitute a material breach of the contract and may result in the suspension or termination of the affected contract and debarment from future County contracting opportunities for a period not to exceed three years. Other penalties may also apply.

8. As applicable, the successful bidder shall also submit to the County prior to contract award the following documents:

- Most recent Audit
- Articles of Incorporation or business license
- Grievance procedures for participants
- Handicapped Access Survey

## SECTION III – SUBMISSION PACKAGE

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### APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Applications submitted in response to this RFP must include the items and be in the order as listed below. All of the items combined comprise your completed Application pursuant to this RFP.

- 1. Executive Summary:** Complete as directed – indicate what program activity you are applying for.
- 2. Narrative Section:** Complete and submit a response to the narrative section that fully addresses each of the evaluation criteria listed. The narrative must be typed in 12 point font, paginated on 8½” x 11” white paper. The narrative section is limited to 12 pages.
- 3. Program Budget:** Complete the line item budget forms for the services proposed (note - an electronic version of the EXCEL budget worksheet is available at [www.vchsa.org](http://www.vchsa.org)). No other budget forms will be accepted. Matching resources (cash or in-kind contributions), if any as well as their source should be identified in the budget. The budget should be reasonable and accurate and provide a clear and concise description of your costs relating to the proposed project. Applicants should provide a narrative to justify their budget detail expenses.
- 4. Financial Audit:** Please submit one copy of your most recent financial audit prepared in accordance with the applicable requirements of your fund source(s). For example, compliance with the Single Audit Act and 2 CFR 200 may be requirements relating to the preparation of your annual audit. If an audit has not been completed, your most recent tax return, 990 or financial statement may be substituted, as well as your prior year's audit. The audit will be reviewed to determine applicant's financial position, compliance with regulatory requirements and documentation of solvency. If within the last three years there has been an audit exception, disallowed cost and/or questioned costs for the performance of any government (*i.e.*, Federal, State, County) contract or grant, applicant must provide an explanation along with the audit.
- 5. Other attachments, as applicable:** Please include any supplemental information that will provide further information about the proposal or your firm, as applicable: *e.g.* staff resumes, portfolio of media materials, *etc.*

It is the responsibility of the bidder to ensure the proposal is submitted by the time and date and location as specified. Postmarks will not be accepted in lieu of this requirement. Therefore, use of the U.S. Mail is at the bidder's own risk. Proposals submitted to any other office will not be accepted. To be considered for funding, all proposals submitted in response to this RFP must be received no later than **5:00 p.m. on September 25, 2017** with **one complete application package with original signature and nine copies** excluding audit documents, either delivered in person or mailed to:

Tina Knight, Contracts & Grants Manager  
County of Ventura  
Human Services Agency  
855 Partridge Drive, Ventura, CA 93003



**Attachment 1 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. Bidders Legal Name

Firm Name	
Address	
Telephone	
E-mail Address	

2. Program Name:	3. Funding Requested: \$
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4. Briefly summarize your proposed program design (700 character max):

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5. Chief Executive Contact

Name of Chief Executive	
Title	
Telephone	

6. Primary Application Contact

Name of Primary Contact	
Title	
Telephone	

7. Legal Status Information

Federal Employer Identification (FIN)	
California Tax I.D. No.	

**An unsigned proposal will be rejected**

I certify that the information provided in this proposal is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and that I have been duly authorized by this applicants' governing body or other authority to file this proposal. This proposal is submitted as firm and fixed offer valid for a minimum of 120 days of the submission date.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name and Title \_\_\_\_\_

## Attachment 2 – NARRATIVE SECTION

Please provide a written response to each section. Your proposal will be reviewed and scored according to the following evaluation criteria. All proposals will be reviewed for demonstrated capacity to provide the services/activities sought through this solicitation.

- 1. Project Design and Implementation** **45 points**
- Provide a summary of your proposed outreach strategy and expected outcomes that address each of the target audiences identified in Section I. B. PROGRAM OVERVIEW through the activities described in section I. E. SCOPE OF SERVICES (25 points)
  - Provide a Work Plan and Implementation Schedule for the recommended deliverables. Include timelines and progress reports for key dates or major milestones. (20 points)
- 2. Knowledge, Experience, and Performance** **35 points**
- Describe your firm's experience and qualifications to perform the services described in Section I. E. SCOPE OF SERVICES. Include information that demonstrates the bidder's successful experience and length of time in coordinating with business, education, organized labor, government and community-based organizations. (15 points)
  - Provide an organization chart and a brief description of the qualifications and experience of members of your firm, including relevant subcontractors. (10 points)
  - Provide information on your firm's performance under similar previous or current contracts, and the performance outcomes of any proposed subcontractors. (5 points)
  - Provide references from three current or previous clients (not including the WDB/County of Ventura) and describe the services provided by the bidder. Include client contact information. (5 points)
- 3. Budget and Cost Effectiveness** **20 points**
- Provide a line item budget for conducting the proposed project using the budget template included on the HSA website. (5 points)
  - List hourly service fees, billing practices and estimated costs for providing the various services under the proposed strategy. (5 points)
  - Identify the dollar value of any in-kind contributions of services that will be provided as part of the project and describe how such value is calculated. (5 points)
  - Provide pertinent information that will help to evaluate the proposed project's cost effectiveness and justify that costs are reasonable and necessary. (5 points)

**Total Points 100**

**Attachment 3- BUDGET**

Complete the line item budget attached to this RFP. An electronic version of the budget is available for downloading and use at <http://www.ventura.org/human-services-agency/request-for-proposal-rfps>

**Attachment 4- AUDIT**

Include one copy of your most recent financial audit, IRS 990 form, or tax return.

**Attachment 5- OTHER EXHIBITS, ATTACHMENTS AND/OR APPENDICES**

Include any supplemental documents as applicable to support your application.