

Northwest Wisconsin Concentrated Employment Program Inc. (CEP, Inc)
PO Box 616, Ashland, WI 54806

EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF WELDING BOOT CAMP AND HRSA GRANTS

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Equal Opportunity Employer

Proposal Issue Date: June 25, 2009

Proposal Due Date: July 10, 2009

Approximate Proposal Award Notification Date: July 15, 2009

Proposal Contact: Steve Terry (715) 682-9141

E-mail: sterry@nwcep.org

This RFP is for the external evaluation of both the Office of Rural Health Policy, in the Health Resources and Services Administration grant and the FY 2008 U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration earmark grant for the Northwest Wisconsin Welding Boot Camp

CEP, Inc. External Evaluation of FY 2008 U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration earmark grant for the Northwest Wisconsin Welding Boot Camp

The Northwest Wisconsin Concentrated Employment Program Inc. (CEP, Inc) is seeking proposals for the services of an External Program Evaluator who will conduct an evaluation of the FY 2008 U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration earmark grant program by conducting evaluation requirements, reporting progress, and making recommendations that will assure that the Welding Boot Camp project conducts a thorough local evaluation. Eligible applicants are those that can demonstrate experience in the successful development and management of grant program evaluations. Any person or organization that is already involved in the Welding Boot Camp program is excluded from bidding on this RFP. CEP, Inc. will award one (1) contract with a term of two (2) years, contingent upon continued federal funding of the project. The original contract will run from June 15, 2009 – September 30, 2010.

CEP, Inc. External Evaluation Office of Rural Health Policy, in the Health Resources and Services Administration grant

The Northwest Wisconsin Concentrated Employment Program Inc. (CEP, Inc) is seeking proposals for the services of an External Program Evaluator who will conduct an evaluation of the Direct Care Worker Initiative grant, awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services (HRSA) Administration. The evaluator will ensure that the Direct Care Worker Initiative meets reporting and evaluating requirements of the grantor. This is a one year grant award, with the potential for two additional years of funding. Therefore, the evaluator will have ongoing responsibilities to evaluate progress and make recommendations for the program's fulfillment of its goals.

Eligible applicants are those who can demonstrate experience in the successful development and management of grant program evaluations. Any person or organization that is already involved in the Direct Care Worker Initiative program is excluded from bidding on this RFP. CEP, Inc. will award one (1) contract with a term of up to three and a half years (3.5), contingent upon continued federal funding of the project. The original contract will run from June 15, 2009 – November 2010.

Submission Guidelines

For a proposal to be considered the following requirements must be met with this RFP Application.

1. One Word document proposal with appropriate original signatures.
2. Two complete photocopies of original RFP.
3. One electronic copy, in Word or PDF format, of the complete RFP with or without signatures.
4. The proposal needs to be page numbered and have an index and/or a table of contents referencing the appropriate page number.

An electronic copy of the RFP application must be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m. on July 10, 2009., and one hard copy (with original signatures) either post-marked by July 10, 2009 or hand-delivered by the 4:00 p.m. deadline.

Mail or hand-deliver the completed proposals to:

Mr. Steve Terry
CEP, Inc.
PO Box 616
Ashland, WI 54806
sterry@nwcep.org

CEP, Inc. is not responsible for transmittal time or irregularities in delivery on the part of the US Postal Service or other courier services. Faxed proposals will not be accepted.

CEP, Inc. reserves the right to reject any and all submissions received as a result of this application process or to negotiate separately with the individual respondents.

Questions regarding this RFP can be submitted to the following contacts:

Mari Kay-Nabozny
715-682-9141
mkay@nwcep.org

Proposal Requirements – Part I:

FY 2008 U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration earmark grant for the Northwest Wisconsin Welding Boot Camp

The welding boot camp project, facilitated by Northwest Wisconsin Concentrated Employment Program, Inc allows for workforce development training in Northwest Wisconsin which responds to an identified need from regional manufacturers and related industries for more trained welders to fill immediate openings that threaten production, and reacts to the impending retirement of a large segment of the welding workforce.

The purpose of this RFP is to procure expertise in and coordination for evaluation methodologies for the funded grants. The external evaluator will ensure that the Welding Boot Camp project evaluation plan addresses the following goals and outcomes:

****Please note: The dates and timelines below are from the original grant submission. The grant award was delayed by six months so the goal timelines are now different that those listed below.***

GOALS	HOW MEASURED	DATA TO BE COLLECTED	DATA SOURCE	WHEN/WHO
Goal #1: By October 1, 2008, 45 participants will have successfully completed the 5-week, 150 hour Fast-Track Welding Boot Camp and six-weeks of On the Job Training (OJT) with a local employer, and 10 hours of workplace mentoring and case management.	45 or more completing participants by the end of the grant	Number of completing participants	Participant registration records and classroom training and worksite training completion records	Months 3-18 CEP Team WITC Instructor
Goal #2: 80% of the 45 participants who successfully completed the training will meet basic competencies in welding and will be able to accomplish a list of industry-specific skills.	Each student will have a classroom record of progress and skills mastered	Student classroom records for each participant who successfully completes training	WITC classroom records	Month 3-18 WITC Instructor CEP Team

Goal #3: Within six months of the completion of the Welding Boot Camp, 50% of the participants who successfully completed the training will have acquired jobs in the welding/metal fabrication field.	Six months after training completion all completing participants will be sent an employment survey. UI data will also be used.	Name of participant, current employment title, length of time employed at business	Survey	<i>Months 3-18</i> CEP Team
Goal #4: By December 31, 2009, 70% of the participants who successfully completed the training will have acquired jobs in the welding/metal fabrication field.	The week of December 31, 2009 all completing participants will be sent an employment survey. UI data will also be used.	Name of participant, current employment title, length of time employed at business	Survey	<i>Months 3-18</i> CEP Team
Goal #5: 70% of the participants who successfully completed the training will state that they are satisfied or extremely satisfied with the services received through the grant	Participants will be given a written survey to complete two weeks prior to the end of the grant period.	Satisfaction survey data records	Survey	<i>Months 18</i> Evaluator CEP Team

The final evaluation report will provide details about the challenges and solutions inherent in expansion of the Welding Boot Camp concept. The report will provide cost for placement of job seekers. The report will include recommendations for additional opportunities for expansion of the Welding Boot Camp regionally. While this project is expected to highlight the features and benefits of the short-term training and skill development in welding, we also expect the report will address the potential for expansion of the system into other sectors. Sustainability of the Boot Camp program will likely entail, or even demand, financial investments from employers, and we expect that a case for effective Return On Investment (ROI) will be forthcoming from the collected experiences of the employers involved.

The external evaluator responsibilities and study design will include:

A. Data collection instruments

- ✓ Employment placement data
- ✓ Training completion rate
- ✓ Competency attainment rate
- ✓ Employment retention rate

- ✓ Participant training satisfaction survey (developed and collected by evaluator)
- ✓ Employer impact success survey (developed and collected by evaluator)

B. Management Plan

- ✓ Identify qualifications related to this project;
- ✓ Develop timelines for data collection;
- ✓ Clearly define roles and responsibilities of staff to carry out evaluation;
- ✓ Prepare monthly, mid-year and final reports;
- ✓ Consult with CEP, Inc. regarding federal reporting requirements; provide data as needed for federal reports; and
- ✓ Participate in face-to-face and teleconference meetings with CEP, Inc.
- ✓ Additional meetings as needed

Proposal Requirements – Part II:

CEP, Inc. External Evaluation Office of Rural Health Policy, in the Health Resources and Services Administration grant

The Direct Care Worker Initiative seeks to address the need in Northwest Wisconsin for direct care, in-home assistance for elderly and disabled adults. It also provides workforce development training for residents interested in employment as direct care workers, with potential laddering into other health care fields. There is currently a waiting list of over 1320 individuals needing in-home personal care services. This initiative works closely with the service providers and Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College, which will be one of the primary sources for the direct care worker training sessions.

The purpose of this RFP is to procure expertise in and coordination for evaluation methodologies for the funded grants. The external evaluator will ensure that the Direct Care Worker Initiative addresses the following goals and outcomes:

Goal 1. To evaluate the project's degree of progress toward achieving the first goal, to increase the number of eligible persons receiving direct care services, the work plan includes both process and outcome measures. There will initially be a bench mark document, showing the numbers of eligible person, by geographical location, who are waiting for in home services at the time the grant is awarded. The consortium members and NWCEP staff will compile this information by August 30, 2009. As the project gets underway, the NWCEP program manager will monitor these numbers to determine the movement of people from the waiting list to receiving in home services. The consortium members and NWCEP staff can then track this process measure in bi-annual progress reports. The project focus and work plan may need adjustment based on the information revealed through this process measure. An outcome measure will be derived from service providers data on clients moved off waiting lists and receiving services and numbers of new referrals receiving services. Every six months, the program manager then determines the percent receiving services relative to those waiting, the average length of time on the waiting list, and the average time for new referrals to receive the in-home services. By noting the percent change in the waiting list numbers every year, with a final cumulative percent at the end of the grant period, the program staff and consortium members can evaluate the project's level of success in increasing the number of people receiving home health care services in Northwest Wisconsin.

Goal 2. The second goal has concrete output numbers: 300 new direct care workers will be trained and certified by the end of the grant period. That is the ultimate outcome measure, and the evaluation will measure the degree to which this project meets this goal. The numbers to be trained vary for each year of the grant, due to the varied work activities in each year. The first year has an initial focus on recruiting training participants in the identified areas of greatest need and in developing marketing and recruitment materials. Progress toward meeting these objectives will be evaluated by monitoring the locations of recruited and trained direct care workers to determine if recruiting efforts are effective. This will also indicate the effectiveness of Job Center staff is utilizing the marketing materials and recruiting trainees. There will also be tracking of the number of scheduled trainings and attendance rates, which again indicate whether or not the recruiting efforts are successful. Ultimate outcome measures are the bi-annual monthly reports of the numbers recruited, trained and placed with health care providers as home health. The placement rate is very important here to determine the degree to which the recruiting and training efforts lead to increasing the numbers of in home care workers. A final grant-end report will summarize the project's degree of success in meeting this initial goal of training 300 new workers and percent of those entering the home health care work force.

Goal 3. In order to increase the numbers of people receiving direct care services, and address the needs of the 1320 Northwest Wisconsin residents currently waiting for these services, the region needs additional home health workers recruited, trained, and placed in the profession. However, these efforts will not be sustainable if there is a lack of retention of the direct care workers. The last goal of this grant project addresses the need to enhance job satisfaction and retention. To do this, the first step is to ensure that the recruited potential trainees are actually suited for the job, by conducting pre-training testing, surveys, and interviews. This objective will be measured by monitoring the number of recruits who complete training and, of those, the number placed in jobs and employed at six month after the job placement. Even people suited for particular jobs do not always stay in the jobs, however. Many employees also need to feel valued and that she or he is doing valuable work; addressing these two factors often helps with employee retention. The grant project's evaluation component will measure the percent of health care providers with employee recognition programs, annual reviews, and merit pay increases. The use of stipends is another means to make the trainee feel valued, that her or his contribution is important, and that the job itself is needed and valued. Again, the success of these efforts will be shown by the percent of recruits completing training and employed at six months.

Additional Objectives: There are three additional objectives related to the goal of enhanced job satisfaction and worker, two of which have to do with training and development. First, workers are more likely to stay in a job if they have a good relationship with their supervisors. For this reason, the grant project includes ongoing skills development training for thirty to fifty supervisors by the end of the grant period. The effectiveness of this effort will be partially measured by the numbers attending the training; it will also be addressed in a worker satisfaction survey given after six months in the direct care job. The blind survey will include questions regarding the worker's degree of satisfaction with her or his job and skill areas the supervisor exhibits. The supervisors' will also receive a survey regarding the usefulness of their training. As more supervisors receive training, there should be an increasingly positive response from workers.

In addition to supervisors' trainings, the grant project includes skills development training for the direct care workers. As employees grow in job knowledge and proficiency, they become more committed to their job as a long term career, thereby improving their job retention. Additional skills also open doors to career laddering and promotions, again leading to long term commitment to the health care field. This objective will be measured by numbers attending the specialized, additional trainings, and direct care workers' survey responses.

The final objective connected to enhanced job satisfaction and worker retention relates to communicating the grant project's findings to health care providers. In that way, the direct care service providers will understand the elements that work for, and against, good worker retention. By gathering, analyzing, and disseminating the survey results to the employers, both the project staff and the providers will get a clear measurement of the effectiveness of the retention efforts. Program staff will provide results every six months, as a process measure. The final report will be an outcome measure of the workers' job satisfaction and the effectiveness of retention efforts. Currently there is only anecdotal information from provider agencies about retention rates. The Direct Care Worker Initiative seeks specific data, with a goal of 50% of the direct care workers trained through this grant project still on the job six months after job placement.

The final evaluation report will provide details about the degree to which the three primary goals were met, during year one, two, and three of the grant period (assuming continued funding). It will note any challenges, solutions, and information gained during the implementation of the Initiative. The report will include recommendations regarding the feasibility of expanding this Initiative across the state.

The external evaluator responsibilities and study design will include:

A. Data collection instruments

- ✓ Waiting list data to determine if reductions occur
- ✓ Training completion rate
- ✓ Job placement & location data w/relationship to areas with highest need
- ✓ Numbers of trainings w/number attending
- ✓ Employment retention rate at 6 months post training and until grant period ends
- ✓ Participant training satisfaction survey (developed and collected by evaluator)
- ✓ Job satisfaction survey (developed and collected by evaluator)
- ✓ Employer impact success survey (developed and collected by evaluator)

B. Management Plan

- ✓ Identify qualifications related to this project;
- ✓ Develop timelines for data collection;
- ✓ Clearly define roles and responsibilities of staff to carry out evaluation;
- ✓ Prepare monthly, mid-year and final reports, in coordination with grant's work plan;
- ✓ Consult with CEP, Inc. regarding federal reporting requirements; provide data as needed for federal reports; and
- ✓ Participate in face-to-face and teleconference meetings with CEP, Inc.
- ✓ Additional meetings as needed

Proposal Response Format

All proposals must be organized and tabbed with labels for the following headings:

1. **Executive Summary** (20 points) The executive summary is to briefly describe the proposal and should be no longer than two pages in length. This summary should highlight the major features

of the proposal. The reader should be able to determine the essence of the proposal by reading the executive summary.

2. **Detailed Response** (50 points) This section should constitute the major portion of the proposal and must contain at least the following information:
 - a. A complete narrative of the evaluator's assessment of the work to be performed, the evaluator's ability and approach, and the resources necessary to fulfill the requirements. This should demonstrate the evaluators understanding of the desired overall performance expectations.
 - b. A specific point-by-point response to the "Services to be Performed".
 - c. A clear description of any options or alternatives proposed.
3. **Budget/Budget Narrative** (30 points) All costs related to the provision of the required services must be included in the provided budget form. Provide a budget narrative containing sufficient details to justify costs.

Proposal Evaluation and Award Process

After determining that a proposal satisfies the mandatory requirements stated in the RFP, the evaluator(s) shall use subjective judgment in conducting a comparative assessment of the proposal by considering the: Executive Summary, Detailed Response and Budget/Budget Narrative. CEP, Inc. reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive technicalities, and make awards as deemed to be in the best interest of CEP, Inc.

The contents of this RFP, any subsequent correspondence during the proposal evaluation period, and such other stipulations as agreed upon may be made a part of the final contract developed by CEP, Inc.

FY 2008 U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration earmark grant for the Northwest Wisconsin Welding Boot Camp

Two Year Projected Budget

Evaluator: _____

Category	Budget Year 1	Budget Year 2	Total
Salaries			
Employee Benefits			
Purchased Services			
Travel			
Supplies and Materials			
Subtotal			
Indirect Costs			
Total			

CEP, Inc. External Evaluation Office of Rural Health Policy, in the Health Resources and Services Administration grant

Three Year Projected Budget

Evaluator: _____

Category	Budget Year 1	Budget Year 2	Budget Year 3	Total
Salaries				
Employee Benefits				
Purchased Services				
Travel				
Supplies and Materials				
Subtotal				
Indirect Costs				
Total				

