

Request for Qualifications
Career Pathways for English Language Learners

April 21, 2014



To organizations, businesses, and community colleges in the Seattle area working with English language learner populations:

Seattle Jobs Initiative (SJI) is issuing this request for qualifications (RFQ) to non-profit/for-profit organizations, businesses, labor organizations and community colleges with programs that serve English language learners (ELL) residing in the City of Seattle. The objective of the funding is to increase the capacity of existing programs that help ELLs advance toward economic self-sufficiency through the attainment of higher levels of English language proficiency, job skills, and/or credentials that are directly tied to career advancement. The total funding available for this work is \$100,000 over a one-year period with the possibility of a second year of funding based on performance and City of Seattle 2015 budget authorization.

OVERVIEW

Seattle Jobs Initiative (SJI) is a workforce intermediary that seeks to open doors to living-wage careers through both direct program services and systems improvement efforts. Our current *Career Pathways* strategy provides low-income, low-skill adults with short- and longer-term job skills training in growing industry sectors in partnership with area community colleges. Participants are supported through sector-based training and into jobs via career navigation and wrap around support services. SJI's systems work is focused on improving access to and persistence in community college for our target population. This is accomplished through research, as well as convening and spurring better alignment and collaboration among systems stakeholders.

Beginning in 2014, SJI, with support from the City of Seattle Office of Economic Development (OED), is making \$100,000 available annually for one year, with the possibility of a second year, to support an organization in delivering high-quality workforce development services that fosters the economic advancement of English Language Learners (ELLs) within the City of Seattle. Funds will be contracted to the organization selected by SJI through a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The overall purpose of the project is to support ELLs residing within the City of Seattle to advance toward economic self-sufficiency through the attainment of higher-level English language skills, job skills and/or credentials/industry certifications that are directly tied to career advancement opportunities within in-demand industries and occupations. As funding

is limited, it is intended to expand/increase the impact of a currently successful program, not to seed a new project.

Desired Outcomes:

Funding is intended to support the following key outcomes for ELLs:

- Entry and/or Progression within In-Demand Occupations with Career Pathways
- English Language and Literacy Gains
- Skill Development/Educational Attainment

Targeted Populations:

Funding will target one or more of the following populations (not mutually-exclusive):

- English Language Learners
- Linguistically Isolated Professionals
- Incumbent ELL Workers
- Low-Income ELLs

QUALIFICATIONS

Eligible Organizations:

The following types of organizations are eligible for project funding:

- Non-profit/For-Profit Organizations
- Businesses
- Labor Organizations
- Community Colleges

Core Criteria:

Organizations are required to demonstrate that they meet all of the following core criteria in order to qualify for project funding:

1. Demonstrated Efficacy Providing Target Population Career Progression/Skill Attainment Services

Qualified organizations must demonstrate recent, measurable success in providing services to the target population related to the services they propose to offer through this project.

2. Sustainability Plan and Scaling of Existing Services

Qualified organizations must demonstrate how awarded funds will assist them to expand/improve existing and successful services – to take programs to the next level. They must also provide a plan for how they will sustain expanded/improved services after the two-year funding cycle.

3. *Measurable Outcomes and Demonstrated Ability to Track Outcomes*

Qualified organizations must clearly demonstrate the outcomes their proposed program is currently achieving, as well as the anticipated outcomes it will achieve as a result of project funding and how these will be measured. They must demonstrate a current ability to track and report on these outcomes.

4. *Connection to the City of Seattle*

Qualified organizations must serve City of Seattle residents and/or be connected to a City of Seattle business.

Additional Factors to Improve Competitiveness (Not Required):

While not required, organizations demonstrating one or more of the following factors within their responses will improve their competitiveness:

1. *On-Ramps to Demonstrated Career Path and/or Contextualized English Language Program*

The proposed project prepares ELLs for – and directly connects them to – 1) employment with demonstrated pathways to career advancement (the project may support this advancement), and/or 2) contextualized English language programs (e.g., a community college I-BEST or similar program).

2. *Attainment of Industry Certifications*

The proposed project prepares ELLs to attain specific industry certifications that will lead to greater employment opportunities within those industries.

3. *Demonstrated Wage Progression*

The proposed project provides services that it can demonstrate will lead to measurable wage gains for ELLs as a result of services provided.

4. *Improves Knowledge in Field*

The proposed project will improve knowledge of best practices for assisting ELLs to advance to better employment outcomes through the targeted intervention(s). The organization can describe the innovative intervention(s) to be deployed, how its effectiveness will be measured against a baseline, and how knowledge gained will be documented and shared with the field at the local level.

5. *Demonstrates processes that increases capacity and efficiency through partnership*

The project should demonstrate processes that leverage capacity from partner organizations by decreasing duplicated functions. For example, can assessment or

training be done in ways that shorten a customer's time on a college campus? Can potential students be pre-qualified for college in ways that increase retention?

BUDGET

The total funding available for this work is \$100,000 over a one-year period starting July 1st, 2014. A second year of funding may be available depending on performance in the first year and authorization of the City of Seattle's 2015 budget.

FIDUCIARY REQUIREMENTS

All bidders responding to the ELL RFQ are asked to provide responses to all of the following questions.

1. Credit Information

Using Exhibit C - Credit Information, provide credit history information for your organization.

2. Fiduciary Requirements

Please submit the following financial statements with your proposal:

- a. Balance sheet through December 31, 2013.
- b. Revenues and expenditures for the period from January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013.
- c. Most current audited financial statements.

If your organization is selected to contract with Seattle Jobs Initiative, we require that the organization be adequately insured. SJI must be named as an additional insured and a copy of the insurance binder must be mailed to SJI prior to any contract payments. Our minimum insurance requirements are:

- a. Worker's Compensation complying with the laws of the State of Washington and Employer's Liability Insurance as well as similar coverage required by applicable federal or state law.
- b. Commercial Liability for the protection against bodily injury and property damage claims arising from work done under the SJI contract at a limit no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate.
- c. Business Automobile Liability with a combined single limit for bodily injury and property damage no less than \$500,000 each occurrence to include coverage for all owned, non-owned and hired vehicles.
- d. If your organization provides professional services, either directly, or indirectly, the organization shall maintain Professional Liability Insurance, including coverage for losses caused by errors and omissions, with the following minimum limits: Each Occurrence - \$1,000,000; General Aggregate - \$2,000,000.
- e. Any other insurance necessary to provide coverage for risks assumed by your organization pursuant to any work done under the SJI contract.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Preparing a Letter of Qualifications

If your organization is interested in competing for this work, please prepare a letter of no more than 10 pages outlining qualifications.

Submissions should specifically address the following:

1. *Brief Organization Background*

2. *Demonstration of Qualifications*

How does your organization meet the Core Criteria and any Additional Factors described above? (Your qualifications can be expanded upon within the Project Description section of your response, below).

3. *Project Description*

Describe the services you propose to provide. Please include the following:

- The specific ELL target population(s) you plan to serve
- The needs of the specific target population for the services you will provide (a brief "needs statement")
- A description of the services you will be providing (please include a description of the services you are currently providing and how specifically you will expand/improve these services with the funding provided)
- The specific outcomes you seek to achieve and how you will measure these (please demonstrate the outcomes your program is currently achieving and what additional outcomes you anticipate achieving with the funding provided)
- A description of the data you track on participants and outcomes, as well as the method by which you capture data
- If you are, or plan to partner with other organizations in delivering services, please describe their roles and qualifications to perform roles
- Any additional information supporting your organization's qualifications.

4. *Proposed Budget*

- Please include a budget for your current program.
- Complete Exhibit B: Program Budget Template and Staffing Detail with your proposed project expansion/enhancement that clearly portrays the amount of funds you are requesting and how those funds will be allocated.

- Indicate whether the proposed expansion/enhancement of services will be supported exclusively by funds request through this RFQ, or whether additional funding will be used (and whether that funding has been secured).

Attachments and Exhibits:

The following are **required** Exhibits and Attachments:

Exhibits:

- Exhibit A: SJI RFQ Cover Sheet
- Exhibit B: Project Budget Template and Staffing Detail
- Exhibit C: Credit Information

Attachments:

- Financial Statements:
 - Balance sheet through December 31, 2013.
 - Revenues and expenditures for the period from January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013.
 - Most current audited financial statements.

A limited number of other attachments may be provided as part of your response, including:

- Memorandum of Agreement or Letter of Partnership (for projects involving partnerships with other organizations)
- Data Sheet on Past Outcomes (to demonstrate past efficacy achieving positive outcomes for the target population)
- Research/data that supports the need for the services to be provided among the targeted population and/or that supports the specific services to be implemented with funding as effective practices
- Labor market data or research supporting the specific industries and career pathways to be targeted

Format and Submission

All responses must be typed in 12-point font on white paper with one-inch margins. SJI strongly encourages bidders to present information clearly and succinctly and avoid lengthy narrative.

Six (6) hard copies and an electronic submission of your response must arrive no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, May 19, 2014 to:

Attention: English Language Learners RFQ
Seattle Jobs Initiative
830 – 4th Avenue S, #206
Seattle, WA 98134
RFP_RFQ@seattlejobsinit.com

Late proposals will not be accepted.

EVALUATION OF RESPONSES

All contract decisions will be based on the information provided in the response to the questions posed in this RFQ. A selection committee will review responses to this request, select finalists to interview, conduct finalist interviews, and select the awardee. SJI retains the right to reject any responses and is not required to award any funds if in its opinion the response failed to meet its requirements.

SCHEDULE

- **RFQ released** Monday, April 21, 2014
- **Final opportunity to submit RFQ questions** 5:00 p.m. Friday, May 9, 2014
- **RFQ Proposals/Responses Due** 5:00 p.m. Monday, May 19, 2014
- **Potential Interviews with Bidders (tentative)** June 2 - 3, 2014
- **Award Notifications** Friday, June 6, 2014
- **Contract Negotiation & Finalization** June 9 - 13, 2014
- **Contracts Begin** Tuesday, July 1, 2014

QUESTIONS REGARDING THE RFQ

Questions about this RFQ will be accepted in writing only and must be emailed to RFP_RFQ@seattlejobsinit.com. Answers to all emailed questions will be compiled and posted weekly on the SJI website. The first questions and answers will be posted online by 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 29, 2014. No new questions will be accepted after 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 9, 2014.

CONTRACT

Seattle Jobs Initiative will develop a contract with the successful organization and the time of performance will be July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015. The contract will include scope of work, project milestones and projected outcomes. Reimbursement will be through a monthly invoicing process that will include a report based on scope of work and measures in the contract. Prior to the end of the contracted period, a review of project outcomes will occur.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The following grievance procedure shall apply to all contracts awarded by Seattle Jobs Initiative ("SJI"). Therefore, SJI will, at its sole option, entertain appeals to the RFQ process as follows:

1. Unsuccessful applicants may appeal the award of an RFQ. Appeals must be submitted in accordance with this procedure. SJI will review the appeals; however, the appeal might not affect the outcome decision.

2. Appeals must contain a brief statement of the facts and the basis for the grievance in clear terms. The basis of the grievance must be a violation of a state or federal contracting law, rule or regulation, which is applicable to the contracting process; AND/OR be a violation of the stated review process published within the original RFQ.
3. SJI retains the right to reject any and all proposals and is not required to award any contract if in its opinion the proposal received failed to meet its requirements, if the proposal is non-responsive or if the bidder is not responsible.
4. All appeals must be in writing, must comply with the requirements set forth in this appeal procedure and must be received or postmarked by SJI within five (5) business days of receipt of notification of the successful respondent.
5. Appeals must be sent either by first class U.S. mail or via delivery service, to SJI Executive Director, Seattle Jobs Initiative, 830 4th Avenue S #206, Seattle, WA 98134. If the appeal is sent via first class U.S. mail, Appellants must also send a copy of the appeal via facsimile to (206) 628-6986.
6. Appellants will be allowed to review the proposals submitted on site at SJI offices. All propriety information will be deleted such as financial statements and audits, and no photocopies of the proposals will be allowed.
7. All protests are public information after the protest period ends.
8. The SJI Executive Director will review grievances that meet the above conditions. The Executive Director will provide a written determination within 5 business days of receipt of the appeal or receipt of additional information that may be required by SJI, whichever is later.
9. During any part of the review or consideration, the protester may be asked to clarify or amplify statements or to provide proof of claims or other statements. Any such requests must be fully responded to within the time designated by the Executive Director. In the event a protester fails to respond, the grievance will be dismissed and no further protest will be accepted.
10. The Executive Director's written response is final, unless appealed as provided below to the SJI Board of Directors within the time frame set forth below.
11. The decision of the Executive Director may be appealed to the SJI Board of Directors. Any such second level appeal must be submitted in writing to the President of the SJI Board of Directors and received or postmarked within five (5) working days of the protester's receipt of the decision of the Executive Director. Failure to comply with this time period is a complete waiver of the appellant's ability to appeal, and the Executive Director's decision shall become final and binding on the parties. This appeal must contain the same information and follow the same procedure as the

original appeal and, in addition, must clearly state how the decision of the Executive Director is in error or based on a misunderstanding of fact.

12. Prior to the release of the RFQ, the SJI Board President will appoint three members to serve on a review committee. The review committee will review all applicable materials.
13. The SJI Board Review Committee may request additional information from the appellant.
14. The final written decision of the SJI Board Review Committee will be conveyed to the protestor within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the second level appeal or receipt of any additional information requested by the SJI Board Review Committee whichever is later.
15. Unless the appellant has a right to appeal or protest pursuant to state or federal law, the written decision by the SJI Board Review Committee is the final and binding resolution to the protest. If the appellant has a right to appeal or protest pursuant to state or federal law, the appellant must follow the laws, rules and regulations applicable to such protests.
16. If an appeal is filed, no new contracts resulting from the solicitation will be finalized until the appeal process is completed or the appeal resolved (although SJI may continue to negotiate contracts with the apparently successful bidder). An appeal will not prevent SJI from issuing an interim contract for services to meet critical client needs.
17. Except for those contracts where SJI is required to award contracts through competitive procurement, SJI retains the right to award contracts to those entities whom, in SJI's sole discretion, submit the most beneficial proposal. SJI may reject any and all bids and is not required to award bids to the lowest bidder. For those contracts required to be awarded through a competitive procurement process, SJI reserves the right to reject any and all bids for non-responsiveness or to re-bid the procurement. SJI also reserves its right to reject any bids in accordance with the competitive procurement process. For all contracts, SJI recognizes that unsuccessful bidders may want to discuss the award of the RFQ and provide further information for SJI's consideration.

EXHIBIT A: SJI RFQ COVER SHEET

Please include a copy of this cover sheet on the top of the proposal submitted by your organization.

Name of Organization:	
Mailing Address:	
Primary Contact Person:	
Primary Contact's Title:	
Primary Contact's Phone Number:	
Primary Contact's Email Address:	
Name & Title of Proposal Writer:	

To the best of my knowledge and belief, all information in this proposal is true and correct, the document has been duly authorized by the governing body of the applicant, and the applicant will comply with SJI's contracting policies if a contract is awarded.

Typed Name of Authorized Representative

Title of Authorized Representative

Signature of Authorized Representative

Date

EXHIBIT B: PROJECT BUDGET AND STAFFING DETAIL
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Organization:

Project Budget:

For the Period of:

	Budget
Project Funding Sources	
Government	
Corporation & Business	
Foundations	
United Way	
Individuals	
Endowment	
Fees	
Other	_____
Total Revenues	_____
Expenses	
<i>Project Personnel (See Program Staffing Budget Detail)</i>	
Salaries & Wages	
Fringe Benefits	_____
	Subtotal Project Personnel
<i>Other Project Expenses</i>	
Project Services Costs (describe)	
Professional Fees	
Supplies including software	
Equipment (includes lease & maintenance)	
Occupancy	
Communications	
Travel-Mileage & Parking	
Insurance	
Miscellaneous (describe)	_____
	Subtotal Other Project
Total Expenses	_____
Overhead Expense Share	_____
Project Excess (Deficit)	_____

EXHIBIT C: CREDIT INFORMATION

- 1. Please list three businesses that submit regular invoices to your accounting department. SJI may contact these vendors if your proposal is selected to participate in the negotiation process.

Company Name	Company Address	Contact Person	Contact Phone Number

- 2. SJI will not contact your bank unless your organization is selected to participate in the negotiation process. At that time we may contact your bank to confirm your account number, your daily average balance, and your overdraft and NSF history.

Name of bank: _____

Account number: _____

Name of banking representative who handles your account: _____

On behalf of _____
Name of organization

I authorize Seattle Jobs Initiative to contact the above-mentioned organizations.

Printed name

Signature