



REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Rebuild Florida Workforce Recovery Training Program for Hurricane Michael



Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
<http://www.floridajobs.org>

**APPLICATION DEADLINE:
DECEMBER 15, 2020
5:00 PM, EASTERN STANDARD TIME**

NOTE: This grant opportunity is not a competitive solicitation subject to the notice or challenge provisions of Section 120.57(3), Florida Statutes.

SECTION A

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1. Overview

Following a major disaster, Congress can appropriate funds through the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program to satisfy a portion of unmet need that remains after other federal assistance such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Small Business Administration (SBA) or private insurance have been allocated. Utilizing funding provided through the *Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2018* (Public Law 115-254) and the *Additional Supplemental Appropriations Act for Disaster Relief Act, 2019* (Public Law 116-20), the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced that the state of Florida would receive an allocation of \$735,553,000 in CDBG-DR funds to assist in long-term recovery from Hurricane Michael. DEO is the lead agency and responsible entity for administering the CDBG-DR funds allocated to the State of Florida. The availability of the funding was formally announced by publication in the Federal Register, Volume 85, Number 17 on January 27, 2020. Federal Register requirements clearly state that funds may be used only for disaster relief and long-term recovery in communities affected by the specified disaster.

DEO is implementing the program and allocating funding as provided in the *State of Florida Action Plan for Disaster Recovery (Action Plan)*. \$8 million from this Hurricane Michael funding has been allocated for the Rebuild Florida Workforce Recovery Training Program (WRTP). This Request for Applications (RFA) is to solicit proposals from eligible applicants to provide workforce training projects that support Hurricane Michael recovery. Projects to be funded under this program will provide workforce training to low- and moderate-income (LMI) individuals in the Hurricane Michael Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) areas, through job training in construction occupations and customized training tailored to the specific economic revitalization needs of a particular region. Projects to be funded under this program must also provide career services, including job readiness and job placement services. Support services may also be provided to remove barriers to successful participation in training or obtaining employment.

1.1 Funds Available: \$8 million in CDBG-DR funding is available for WRTP projects. The minimum award is \$200,000 and the maximum award is \$3 million.

1.2 Award Period: All WRTP training activities must be completed by May 31, 2023.

2. Project Requirements

Applicants must meet the full project requirements provided in the WRTP Hurricane Michael Guidelines, as published on www.floridajobs.org/CDBG-DR. Information provided below is a summary only.

2.1 WRTP projects must meet the following criteria:

2.1.1 Provide workforce training in construction occupations and/or customized training tailored to the specific economic revitalization needs of a particular region.

- 2.1.2** Provide career services, including job readiness and job placement assistance, to support successful graduates in obtaining employment.
- 2.1.3** Support overall program requirement to spend 80% of funds in the HUD-identified MID areas for Hurricane Michael: Bay, Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Jackson, Liberty, Wakulla, and Washington counties. 20% of funds may be spent in state-identified MID areas that received both an individual assistance and public assistance declaration: Holmes, Leon, and Taylor counties.
- 2.1.4** Serve at least 70% LMI individuals, to meet the LMI national objective.
- 2.1.5** Meet HUD requirements for public service programs, which must be either a new service or a quantifiable increase in the level of an existing service above that provided through state or local funds in the year before the *Action Plan* was submitted.
- 2.1.6** Meet DEO Language Access Plan requirements for Hurricane Michael impacted areas by providing services in English and Spanish.
- 2.2 Eligible Applicants:** DEO seeks applications **only** from the following types of entities:
- Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) whose service area includes a portion of the HUD-identified MID areas for Hurricane Michael. This includes LWDBs 3, 4, and 5.
 - Educational institutions with physical locations within the HUD-identified MID areas for Hurricane Michael. Educational institution is defined as any public school, center, institution, or any other entity that is part of Florida's education system under public K-12 schools, public postsecondary educational institution, and the Florida Virtual School; and
 - Technical centers with physical locations within the HUD-identified MID areas for Hurricane Michael. Technical center is defined as a public school or public technical center operated under a charter granted by a district school board or Florida College System institution board of trustees or a consortium, including one or more district school boards and Florida College System institution boards of trustees, that includes the district in which the facility is located, that is nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and operations, and is managed by a board of directors.
- 2.3 Use of Grant Funds:** All costs must be CDBG-DR eligible. All costs must comply with the requirements of 24 CFR 570 and 2 CFR 200. As outlined in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E, all costs must meet four criteria: necessary, reasonable, allowable, and allocable.
- 2.3.1** Eligible costs for the WRTP include, but are not limited to:
- Workforce training;
 - Career services, including job readiness and job placement services;
 - Support services;
 - Materials and supplies related to WRTP training activities;
 - Equipment, if directly relating to delivery of WRTP training activities;
 - Participant outreach; and
 - Program management and administration.

2.3.2 Grant recipients may only be reimbursed for allowable project costs resulting from obligations incurred during the Agreement period.

2.3.3 Further detail of eligible costs and ineligible costs is included in the WRTP Hurricane Michael Guidelines, Section 2.9 Eligible Costs, as published on www.floridajobs.org/CDBG-DR.

2.3.4 Funding will be provided on a cost reimbursement basis.

2.3.5 Other fiscal requirements may be provided in state or federal laws or regulations, or guidance from HUD or DEO.

2.4 Submission of Multiple Applications: A Respondent may be the prime Grant recipient for more than one Response. A Respondent may be a supporting partner for another entity's proposal.

3. Number of Awards

DEO anticipates that multiple grant awards will be awarded pursuant to this solicitation. DEO will determine the number of grant awards, at DEO's sole and absolute discretion, based on the availability of funds and the quality of the submitted applications. DEO reserves the right to offer grant awards for less than the amount requested in the Respondents' responses as DEO deems is in the best interest of the State of Florida and DEO. The receipt of proposals in response to this RFA does not imply or guarantee that any one or all proposals will be awarded a Grant.

SECTION B SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION OF RESPONSES

- | | | |
|-----------|---------------------------|---|
| 1. | Solicitation Title | CDBG-DR Hurricane Michael Workforce Recovery Training Program |
| 2. | Solicitation Type | Request for Application |
| 3. | Issuing Office | Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
Office of Disaster Recovery
Attn: Elisa Weber
Caldwell Building, 107 East Madison Street, MSC-400
Tallahassee, Florida 32399
(850) 717-8407
workforcerecovery@deo.myflorida.com |

4. Calendar of Events

The application cycle opens October 1, 2020, and closes December 15, 2020, at 5:00 pm Eastern Standard Time (EST). If DEO finds it necessary to change any of these dates/times, then DEO will include such changes in a subsequently-published addendum.

Please note that any updates, addenda, and clarifications to this RFA will be posted as an addendum on DEO's website at www.FloridaJobs.org/CDBG-DR. **It is the Respondent's responsibility to monitor DEO's website at www.FloridaJobs.org/CDBG-DR for any RFA updates.**

5. Pre-Response Webinar

DEO will post a webinar providing an overview of the WRTP and the application requirements on Thursday, October 15, 2020, at 2:00 pm EST. The webinar will be posted on the DEO website at www.FloridaJobs.org/CDBG-DR. Respondents are strongly encouraged to view the webinar. Respondents are advised to review the solicitation documents and other supporting materials in this RFA prior to viewing the webinar.

6. Questions and Technical Assistance

DEO will take questions about the WRTP throughout the application process. Respondents should email their questions to: workforcerecovery@deo.myflorida.com and clearly identify the author of each such e-mail.

DEO shall not be responsible and legally liable for any delays and/or resulting impacts, associated with Respondents' failures to obtain the information made available through DEO's website at www.FloridaJobs.org/CDBG-DR or to timely submit a question with sufficient period for DEO research and response.

ORAL AND TELEPHONE INFORMATION

Oral and telephone information shall not bind DEO. Respondents must not rely upon oral and telephone information.

7. Cost of Preparing Respondent's Response

DEO is not liable for any costs Respondent incurred in responding to this RFA, including, but not limited to, those for oral presentations, if applicable.

8. Disclosure and Ownership of Responses by the Department

A Respondent's response is a public record subject to the production, disclosure, inspection, and copy provisions of Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, and Section 24(a) Article I of the Florida Constitution. A Respondent's response, upon submission, and any resulting Agreement therefrom shall be DEO's property except with respect to those parts asserted with the formalities described in Section B.9., Respondent's Duties to Assert Exemption from Disclosure as a Public Record, to be confidential or exempt pursuant to Chapter 119, Florida Statutes. DEO, in DEO's sole and absolute discretion, shall have the right to use, reproduce, and publish all Responses and Agreements.

9. Respondent's Duties to Assert Exemption from Disclosure as a Public Record

Respondents must submit Responses' contents which are asserted to be exempted by law from disclosure as a public record on a page or pages separately from the rest of the Responses' submissions, and must clearly mark each such alleged exempted parts "exempt," "confidential," or "trade secret" (as applicable), including the statutory basis for each such claim of exemption specifically identified in writing on each and every such page by an authorized representative of the Respondent's organization with legal authority to make this determination on behalf of the Respondent. Failure to segregate and so identify any such content shall constitute a waiver of any claimed exemption as applied to the portion of the response submission or other document

in which the content is set forth. Concurrently, Respondent must provide DEO with a separate redacted copy of its Response clearly titled "Redacted Copy," containing DEO's solicitation name, number, and the name of the Respondent. **If Respondent fails to submit a Redacted Copy with its response, DEO is authorized to produce the entire document(s), data or records submitted by Respondent in answer to a public records request.**

10. Type of Agreement Contemplated

Respondents should anticipate that all Agreements awarded hereunder will be paid on a cost-reimbursement basis. DEO reserves the right, in DEO's sole and absolute discretion, to award another type of Agreement if doing so will be most advantageous to DEO and the State of Florida, price and other factors considered.

11. Response Acceptance Period

DEO intends to execute the Agreement(s) as soon as practicable after posting of DEO's award decision. DEO, at DEO's sole and absolute discretion, may rescind DEO's award to Respondent and terminate discussions with Respondent(s) if Respondent does not sign the proposed agreement within sixty (60) days after receipt for execution.

12. Laws and Permits

Respondents should anticipate that Respondents will be required to comply with all local, state and federal laws, rules, regulations and codes whenever work is being performed under resulting Agreements, and Respondents shall have the obligation to obtain and maintain all permits and licenses for the duration of the Agreements.

13. Submission of Responses

Responses must be in compliance with the instructions given herein. Respondents must submit their Responses to this RFA electronically to: workforcerecovery@deo.myflorida.com by the date and time specified in Section B.4., Calendar of Events.

RESPONSES RECEIVED AFTER THE EXACT TIME SPECIFIED MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED.

14. Submittal Requirements

Respondents shall submit one (1) complete, electronic copy of the signed original Grant Application Response, including all required attachments and documentation, compiled into a single file, and transmitted via e-mail as required in Section B.13., Submission of Responses. The file shall be labeled "[Insert Entity Name] Michael WRTP Application Response."

As more particularly detailed in Section B.9., Respondent's Duties to Assert Exemption from Disclosure as a Public Record, if Respondent considers any portion of its Grant Application response to be confidential, the Respondent shall **also** submit one (1) electronic **redacted** copy of the response suitable for release to the public, transmitted via e-mail as required in Section B.13., Submission of Responses. The redacted copy shall be labeled "[Insert Entity Name] Redacted Copy" and must include a transmittal letter authorizing release of the redacted version of the response in the event that DEO receives a public records request.

15. Instructions for Preparation of the Response

Respondents must prepare Responses with the following items included, in the order outlined below:

- **Transmittal Cover Letter**

The Transmittal Cover Letter must include the following information:

- Solicitation Title;
- Respondent's (entity's) name and address;
- Name, title, address, telephone number, email address, and signature of a representative who is authorized to contractually bind the Respondent; and
- Name, title, address, telephone number, and email address of the individual designated by the Respondent as the primary contact for the duration of the application period. This individual must have the authority to discuss the Respondent's response and must be available to be contacted by telephone and to attend meetings as may be appropriate.

- **Table of Contents**

The Table of Contents must contain section headings and corresponding page numbers for all documents included in the response.

- **Applicant Information Form** – Attachment A

- **Proposal Detail Form** – Attachment B

- **Proposal Budget Form** – Attachment C

- **Attachments**

Mandatory Attachments

Each Respondent must include the following mandatory required documents for Evaluation as Attachments to the Application using the Attachments' titles referenced below.

a. Staffing and Capacity

Listing of Respondent leadership and staff to support the proposed WRTP activities and documentation that the identified leadership and staff demonstrate the skill, experience, and capacity/resources necessary for implementing the proposed services and performing all grant functions, including financial management and compliance. Job descriptions, staff qualifications, and an organizational chart may be provided in support of this portion of the application.

Optional Attachments

Each Respondent should include the following optional documents for Evaluation as Attachments to the Application, if applicable. Additional attachments and appendices should be kept to a minimum.

a. Supplemental Data

If necessary, supplemental data not accommodated within the format of Attachments A, B, or C may be attached. Supplemental data should be clearly identified as to the corresponding item of the application it is provided in support of.

b. CMBE Certification

Attach a copy of the CMBE Certification, if certified with DMS.

16. Respondent's Responsibility

The Respondent hereby agrees to be solely responsible for obtaining all materials and determining the best methods that will be utilized to meet the intent of the requirements of this solicitation.

17. Definitions

- Agreement: A written agreement between DEO and the Subrecipient, including all documents, exhibits and attachments specifying services to be performed or provided by the Subrecipient, billing rates for these services and the manner in which the Subrecipient shall be reimbursed for these services, which shall be executed by both the Subrecipient and DEO.
- DEO: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.
- Respondent: The person or entity submitting a reply in response to this RFA.
- Response: The offer extended to DEO in response to this RFA.
- Responsible Respondent: A Respondent who has the capability in all respects to fully perform the Agreement requirements and the integrity and reliability that will assure good faith performance.
- Responsive Reply: A reply submitted by a responsive and responsible vendor that conforms in all material respects to the solicitation.
- Responsive Respondent: A Respondent that has submitted a bid, proposal, or reply that conforms in all material respects to the solicitation.
- Subrecipient: The person or entity that enters into an Agreement with DEO to provide WRTP services.

18. Strict Enforcement

DEO reserves the right to enforce strict compliance with any requirement of this solicitation.

**SECTION C
EVALUATION AND AWARD**

1. RFA Process

The RFA process consists of four sequential phases: 1) Response Preparation; 2) Threshold Compliance Check; 3) Evaluation; and 4) Award, as further delineated below.

- 1.1. **In the Response Preparation Phase**, the Respondents will prepare and submit a response to DEO based on the requirements identified in Section B.15., Instructions for Preparation of the Response, the WRTP Hurricane Michael Guidelines, and any addenda to the RFA.

In the Threshold Compliance Check, an evaluation team will review the responses according to the Threshold Compliance Criteria published in the WRTP Hurricane Michael Guidelines, Section 2.7 Award Determination, as published on www.floridajobs.org/CDBG-DR.

In the Evaluation Phase, an evaluation team will evaluate and score the responses according to the Program Scoring Criteria published in the WRTP Hurricane Michael Guidelines, Section 2.7 Award Determination, as published on www.floridajobs.org/CDBG-DR.

In the Award Phase, responses will be ranked by score and funds awarded based on ranking.

2. Evaluation Criteria

2.1. General

- a. DEO reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses received and reserves the right to make an award without further discussion or evaluation of the responses submitted.
- b. A non-responsive proposal shall include, but are not limited to, those that:
 - Fail to comply with any statutory or regulatory requirements;
 - Are not materially conforming with the requirements and instructions contained herein;
 - Fail to utilize or complete prescribed forms; or
 - Have improper or undated signatures.
- c. In determining whether a Respondent is responsible, DEO may consider any information or evidence which comes to its attention and which reflects upon a Respondent's capability to fully perform any resulting Agreement requirements and/or the Respondent's demonstration of the level of integrity and reliability which DEO determines to be required to assure performance of any resulting Agreement. DEO may deem the Respondent as non-responsible.

2.2. Evaluation Criteria

For complete evaluation criteria, including Threshold Compliance Criteria and Program Scoring Criteria, see the WRTP Hurricane Michael Guidelines, Section 2.7 Award Determination, as published on www.floridajobs.org/CDBG-DR.

2.3. Evaluation Committee

The Evaluation Committee will evaluate Application responses and assign points based on the criteria described in WRTP Hurricane Michael Guidelines, Section 2.7 Award Determination, to assure Application responses are uniformly rated. Each Evaluation

Committee member will prepare the initial Application response evaluations independently.

Respondents will be ranked numerically (1, 2, 3, etc.) from highest to lowest order based on the overall Application response score average. DEO may conduct site visits and reserves the opportunity to interview applicants and request follow-up clarification information. DEO will notify Respondents in writing if DEO intends to conduct site visits and/or oral discussions prior to the final determination of any prospective award with selected Respondents.

In the best interest of the State, DEO reserves the right to reject any and all responses or waive any minor irregularity or technicality in responses received.

3. Award

Upon completion of the negotiations process, if applicable, the Evaluation Team will reach a consensus on which Respondent(s) it believes offers the best value to the State and recommend award(s) accordingly. Upon consideration of the recommendation, the Executive Director of DEO, or a duly authorized designee, shall make the award decision. DEO reserves the right to award any or all parts of the solicitation to a single or multiple Respondents.

WRTP awardees will be notified in writing by DEO.

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