State of Connecticut Department of Social Services
Bureau of Rehabilitation Services
Procurement Notice

The State of Connecticut Department of Social Services Bureau of Rehabilitation Services has issued this Request for Proposals to obtain services to implement and administer an Industry Specific Training and Placement Program.

Eligible Proposers shall be:

- A public/private non-profit or for profit provider, organization or company; or
- School Districts; or
- Colleges and Universities; or
- Community Colleges; or
- Current Contractors of Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

This Request for Proposals presents an exceptional opportunity for a single organization/provider or a consortium of organizations/providers that possess or can provide the requirements in Appendix A, Application and BRS Criteria for Approval and Appendix B**,** Profile of Proposer's Experience - Vocational Services for Persons with Disabilities, to propose new and innovative approaches for assessment, training and placement of people with disabilities into entry level positions at a Host Employer predetermined by the Proposer.

It is the goal of Bureau of Rehabilitation Services through the issuance of this Request for Proposal to ensure equal access to local markets by awarding two, (2) Industry Specific Training and Placement Programs per Region. The following are the Regions as defined by the Department of Social Services and encompass the State of Connecticut in its entirety: Northern Region, Southern Region and Western Region.

The Department will fund up to six (6) Industry Specific Training and Placement Programs, Statewide. The training will take place at a Host Employer, predetermined by the Proposer, and will result in permanent Bureau of Rehabilitation Services BRS participant job placement within the Host Employer or a similar employer within the same industry.

The resultant contract term is expected to be a two year (2) contract, to begin June 1, 2011 and end May 31, 2013.

Potential Proposers must submit a Mandatory Letter of Intent to the Department no later than 3:00 pm eastern standard time on **March 1, 2011**. Failure to submit the mandatory Letter of Intent in a timely manner will preclude the Proposer from further consideration. Proposal submissions must be received at the Department no later than 3:00 pm eastern standard time on **March 28, 2011**. Proposal submissions received after the stated due date and time may be accepted by the Department as a clerical function but will not be evaluated.

Proposals that are not evaluated shall be retained for thirty (30) days after the resultant contract is executed, after which the proposals will be destroyed.

All proposals must be in sealed envelopes or sealed boxes clearly identified as:

"Industry Specific Training and Placement Programs Request for Proposals" (ISTPP RFP)

A Request for Proposals Conference will be held at the Department of Social Services located at 25 Sigourney Street Hartford, CT 06106, on **February 18, 2011,** 10am-12pm in the Mezzanine Level Room 1 to answer questions from prospective Proposers.

Attendance at the Conference is not mandatory for prospective Proposers and optional for interested Host Employers.

A photo I.D and signature are required at the security desk for entry into the conference.

The Request for Proposals is available in electronic format on the State Contracting Portal at http://www.das.state.ct.us/Purchase/Portal/Portal_Home.asp or from the Department's Official Contact:

Name:	Marcia McDonough
Address:	25 Sigourney Street Hartford, CT 06106
Phone:	860.424.5214
Fax:	860.424. 5800
E-Mail:	Marcia.McDonough@ct.gov
TDD:	1-800-842-4524

The RFP is also available on the Department's website at http://www.ct.gov/dss/site/default.asp, under the "Vendors / Contractors" link. A printed copy of the RFP can be obtained from the Official Contact upon request.

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. INTRODUCTION

1. **RFP Name or Number.** Industry Specific Training and Placement Programs Request for Proposals (ISTPP RFP), ISTPP_RFP_013111.

2. **Summary.** The State of Connecticut Department of Social Services Bureau of Rehabilitation Services has issued this Request for Proposals to obtain services to implement and administer an Industry Specific Training and Placement Program.

   Eligible Proposers shall be:

   - A public/private non-profit or for profit provider, organization or company; or
   - School Districts; or
   - Colleges and Universities; or
   - Community Colleges; or
   - Current Contractors of Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

   This Request for Proposals presents an exceptional opportunity for a single organization/provider or a consortium of organizations/providers that possess or can provide the requirements in Appendix A, Application and BRS Criteria for Approval and Appendix B**,** Profile of Proposer's Experience - Vocational Services for Persons with Disabilities, to propose new and innovative approaches for assessment, training and placement of people with disabilities into entry level positions at a Host Employer predetermined by the Proposer.

3. It is the goal of Bureau of Rehabilitation Services through the issuance of this Request for Proposal to ensure equal access to local markets by awarding two, (2) Industry Specific Training and Placement Programs per Region. The following are the Regions as defined by the Department of Social Services and encompass the State of Connecticut in its entirety: Northern Region, Southern Region and Western Region.

   The Department will fund up to six (6) Industry Specific Training and Placement Programs, Statewide. The training will take place at a Host Employer, predetermined by the Proposer, and will result in permanent Bureau of Rehabilitation Services BRS participant job placement within the Host Employer or a similar employer within the same industry.

   The resultant contract term is expected to be a two year (2) contract, to begin June 1, 2011 and end May 31, 2013.

4. **Commodity Codes.** The services that the Department wishes to procure through this RFP are as follows:

   - 2000: Community and Social Services
   - 3000: Education and Training
   - 1000: Healthcare Services
   - 0600: Services: (Professional, Consulting, Support)

■ B. ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS / DEFINITIONS

1. AbilityOne - Formerly Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD), AbilityOne is a program that requires government agencies to contract with non-profit organizations employing persons with disabilities for the provision of goods or services

2. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 - A comprehensive, Federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in employment, state and local government programs and activities, public accommodations, transportation, and telecommunications

3. BRS - Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

4. Classroom training - Instruction provided to a group of persons with disabilities, primarily through verbal means and generally without the benefit of hands-on experience

5. Commissioner - The Commissioner of the Department of Social Services, as defined in Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) §17b-3

6. Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) - A program that provides vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities, enabling the individual to maximize opportunities for employment: (A) vocational services; (B) assessments of vocational potential and vocational rehabilitation needs; (C) job development, placement, and retention services; (D) supported employment services and/or (E) services similar to the services described in paragraphs (A) through (E) of this definition. For the purposes of this definition, the word "program" means an agency, organization, or institution, or unit of an agency, organization, or institution, that provides directly or facilitates the provision of vocational rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities as one of its major functions

7. Consumer(s) - A person or persons with a disability that are served by the Department of Social Services and specifically the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

8. Contractor - A private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality that enters into a Purchase of Service Contract with the Department as a result of this Request for Proposals

9. Department - State of Connecticut Department of Social Services

10. Direct Transportation Services - Transportation provided directly or paid for by the Contractor

11. Disability - With respect to an individual, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual, a record of such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment

12. Disability Determination Services (DDS) - The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services unit responsible for determining eligibility for the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Insurance (SSI) programs (these programs provide cash benefits to persons unable to maintain employment due to the severity of their disabilities)

13. Governor - Someone who has a controlling interest in the entity

14. Group employment - Employment in the community in which a group of two or more persons with disabilities work at the same company, during the same shift and under the supervision of the same job coach. In group employment, participants are generally paid by the community rehabilitation program providing the support services, rather than by the host company. The most common examples of group employment are enclaves and work crews

15. Host Employer (HE) - Company that commits to having the training conducted by the Contractor at a location owned by the company in a fully integrated and competitive setting

16. Independent Living (IL) - The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services program that provides comprehensive independent living services through contracts with Connecticut's five community-based independent living centers (these centers offer core independent living services, peer support, information and referral, individual and systems advocacy, and independent living skills training)

17. Indirect Transportation Services - Assistance with securing transportation from other sources. Examples may include: travel training; assisting an individual in accessing Rideshare or an alternative vanpool; or development of natural supports for the provision of transportation

18. Individualized job placements - An employment position held by a person with a disability where the individual does not work in a group with or adjacent to other persons with disabilities. Persons in individualized job placements are paid competitive wages and work for employers other than a community rehabilitation program providing support services to the individual

19. Industry Specific Training and Placement Programs (ISTPP) - Training and placement programs conducted by Contractors on location at a host employer with the expectation that the BRS participant will be employed with the Host Employer or with another similar company within the industry upon completion of the training

20. Job Coach - Someone who assists a trainee to learn job functions or skills that he or she would have had difficulty learning, or not at all if left alone throughout the training

21. Natural supports - Natural supports are any assistance, relationships or interactions that allow a person to secure, maintain and advance in a job or in the community in ways that correspond to the typical routines and social actions of other people and that enhance the

individual's relationships. The use of natural supports involves assisting an individual to develop a sense of social belonging, dignity and self-esteem. Examples include: a co-worker or supervisor assisting an individual on the job; a neighbor, friend, or co-worker providing transportation

22. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) - The United States Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration, which establishes and enforces workplace safety and health standards

23. Purchase of Service (POS) Contract - is used to purchase ongoing and routine human services for clients of the State from private providers, such as residential client care for the Department of Developmental Services, halfway house beds for the Department of Correction, and shelter, transitional living, and childcare services for the Department of Social Services. Procurements must comply with Statewide Cost Standards published by the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management

24. Proposer - For the purposes of this Request for Proposals-
    - A public/private non-profit or for profit provider, organization or company; or
    - School Districts; or
    - Colleges and Universities; or Community Colleges; or
    - Current Contractors of Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

25. Prospective Proposer - A Proposer as defined above that may submit a proposal to the Department in response to this RFP, but has not yet done so

26. Public Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program - The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services program that assists persons with significant physical and mental disabilities to prepare for, obtain, and maintain employment (through the provision of individualized services, persons with disabilities eligible for vocational rehabilitation are supported in planning for and achieving job goals)

27. RFP - Request for Proposals

28. Sheltered employment - Employment within a community rehabilitation program facility whereby the majority of the workers are persons with disabilities. In sheltered employment, the workers are generally paid under a wage certificate in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act

29. Situational assessments - An assessment of an individual's work skills and behaviors in a real, rather than simulated, work environment

30. Subcontract - Any written agreement between the Resultant Contractor and another party to fulfill any contract requirements

31. Subcontractor - An individual (other than an employee of the Contractor) or business entity hired by a Contractor to provide a specific health or human service as part of a POS contract with the Department as a result of this RFP

32. Transitional Training Period - The Phase where BRS participants will be working at a host employer site and will be paid and trained by the Resultant Contractor

33. Tuition-Based Training - A self-sustaining training program that will continue to be available at the Host Employer's facility under a fee-for-service purchasing model. Under this model, the resultant contractor will be paid per BRS participant for the Industry Specific Training Program that has been created

34. Universal Design - The design of products and environments to be useable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design

35. Universal Design for Instruction - A teaching process that involves considering the potential needs of all learners when designing and delivering instruction through identifying and eliminating unnecessary barriers to teaching and learning while maintaining competitive standards

36. Vocational assessment - An evaluation specifically designed to assess an individual's strengths and needs related to employment

37. Vocational services - For purposes of this RFP, "vocational services" means services that are specifically designed to enable a person with a disability to enter, gain or maintain employment. The term may include vocational assessments, job placement, job coaching, vocational counseling, job skill training or vocationally-related classroom training for persons with disabilities

38. Workers Compensation - A form of insurance that provides income and medical care benefits for employees who are injured in the course of employment, in exchange for mandatory relinquishment of the employee's right to sue his or her employer for the tort of negligence

C. INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Official Contact.** The Department has designated the individual below as the Official Contact for purposes of this RFP. The Official Contact is the **only authorized contact** for this procurement and, as such, handles all related communications on behalf of the Department. Proposers, prospective proposers, and other interested parties are advised that any communication with any other Department employee(s) (including appointed officials) or personnel under contract to the Department about this RFP is strictly prohibited. Proposers or prospective proposers who violate this instruction may risk disqualification from further consideration.

   Name: Marcia McDonough
   Address: 25 Sigourney Street Hartford, CT 06106
   Phone: 860.424.5214
   Fax: 860.424.5800
   E-Mail: Marcia.McDonough@ct.gov

   Please ensure that e-mail screening software (if used) recognizes and accepts e-mails from the Official Contact.

The Department/DSS is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may use a TDD by calling 1-800-842-4524. Questions or requests for information in alternative formats must be directed to the Contract Administration Office at 860-424-5214.

2. **RFP Information.** The RFP, amendments to the RFP, and other information associated with this procurement are available in electronic format from the Official Contact or from the Internet at the following locations:

   - Department's RFP Web Page
     http://www.ct.gov/dss, under the "Vendors / Contractors" link

   - State Contracting Portal
     http://www.das.state.ct.us/Purchase/Portal/Portal_Home.asp

   It is strongly recommended that any proposer or prospective proposer interested in this procurement subscribe to receive e-mail alerts from the State Contracting Portal. Subscribers will receive a daily e-mail announcing procurements and addendums that are posted on the portal. This service is provided as a courtesy to assist in monitoring activities associated with State procurements, including this RFP.

   Printed copies of all documents are also available from the Official Contact upon request.

   Microsoft Office Word 2003 version of forms for Proposer's convenience for input required information is available from the Official Contact.

3. **Contract Awards.** The award of any contract pursuant to this RFP is dependent upon the availability of funding to the Department. The Department anticipates the following:

   - Total Funding Available: Confidential until execution of contract
   - Number of Awards: Up to six (6)
   - Contract Cost: Confidential until execution of contract
   - Contract Term: Two (2) years

4. **Eligibility.** Eligible Proposers shall be:

   - A public/private non-profit or for profit provider, organization or company; or
   - School Districts; or
   - Colleges and Universities; or
   - Community Colleges; or
   - Current Contractors of Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

5. **Minimum Qualifications of Proposers.** To qualify for a contract award, an eligible Proposer must have the following minimum qualifications:

   - Application and BRS Criteria for Approval, Appendix A;
   - Profile of Proposer's Experience - Vocational Services for Persons with Disabilities, Appendix B;
   - Proposers must have a documented relationship, with a Host Employer that has a current and ongoing demand for trained and qualified employees, as presented in Proposer and Host Employer Agreement, Appendix C;

- The program can be a new training program or an existing one that expands or adjusts to include qualified participants with disabilities.

The Department reserves the right to reject the submission of any Proposer in default of any current or prior contract.

6. **Procurement Schedule.** See below. Dates after the due date for proposals ("Proposals Due") are target dates only (*). The Department may amend the schedule, as needed. Any change will be made by means of an amendment to this RFP and will be posted on the State Contracting Portal and the Department's RFP Web Page.

• RFP Planning Start Date:	11/02/2010	
• RFP Released:	**01/31/2011**	
• Deadline for Questions:	02/14/2011	3:00 pm eastern standard time (EST)
• RFP Conference:	02/18/2011	10:00 am-12:00 pm EST
• Official Answers Posted:	02/25/2011	
• Mandatory Letter of Intent:	03/01/2011	3:00 pm EST
• Proposals Due:	**03/28/2011**	3:00 pm EST
• Proposer Selection:	04/25/2011	
• Start of Contract Negotiations:	05/09/2011	
• Start of Contract:	**06/01/2011**	

7. **Letter of Intent.** A Letter of Intent, (LOI) is required by this RFP. The LOI is non-binding and does not obligate the sender to submit a proposal. The LOI must be submitted to the Official Contact by U.S. mail, fax, or e-mail by the deadline established in the Procurement Schedule. The LOI must clearly identify the sender, including name, postal address, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address. It is the sender's responsibility to confirm the Department's receipt of the LOI.
The LOI must identify the Region or Regions that the Proposer is targeting for an ISTPP. ***(Please refer to the following for Region identification:*** Northern Region, Southern Region, and Western Region) Failure to submit the required LOI in accordance with the requirements set forth herein shall result in disqualification from further consideration.

8. **Inquiry Procedures.** All questions regarding this RFP or the Department's procurement process must be directed, in writing, e-mail or fax to the Official Contact before the deadline specified in the Procurement Schedule. The early submission of questions is encouraged. Questions will not be accepted or answered verbally – neither in person nor over the telephone. All questions received before the deadline(s) will be answered. However, the Department will not answer questions when the source is unknown (i.e., nuisance or anonymous questions). Questions deemed unrelated to the RFP or the procurement process will not be answered. At its discretion, the Department may or may not respond to questions received after the deadline. If this RFP requires a Letter of Intent, the Department reserves the right to answer questions only from those who have submitted such a letter. The Department may combine similar questions and give only one answer. All questions and answers will be compiled into a written amendment to this RFP. If any answer to any question constitutes a material change to the RFP, the question and answer will be placed at the beginning of the amendment and duly noted as such. The agency will release the answers to questions on the date(s) established in the Procurement Schedule. The Department will publish any and all amendments to this RFP on the State Contracting Portal and on the Department's RFP Web Page. At its discretion, the Department may distribute any amendments to this RFP to prospective proposers who

submitted a Letter of Intent or attended the RFP Conference. **Proposals must include the Addendum Acknowledgement, which will be placed at the end of any and all amendments to this RFP.**

9. **RFP Conference.** The Department will sponsor an optional RFP Conference with regard to this RFP on February 18, 2011 at 10am-12 pm in the Mezzanine Level Room 1 to answer questions from prospective Proposers. The Department encourages Proposers to submit questions in advance of the conference. Questions submitted in advance will allow staff to research issues in preparation for the conference. The Department will accept questions submitted by 3:00 PM EST Time on February 14, 2011.
All questions including oral questions raised at the Conference will not be officially answered until the Department issues a written reply on February 25, 2011.

   Copies of the RFP will not be available at the RFP Conference. Prospective Proposers are asked to bring a copy of the RFP to the conference. Any oral answers given at the conference by the Department's representatives are tentative and not binding on the Department. All questions submitted will be answered in a written amendment to this RFP, which will serve as the Department's official response to questions asked at the conference. If any answer to any question constitutes a material change to the RFP, the question and answer will be placed at the beginning of the amendment and duly noted as such. The agency will release the amendment on the date established in the Procurement Schedule. The Department will publish any and all amendments to this RFP on the State Contracting Portal and, if available, on the Department's RFP Web Page.

   Conference Schedule is as follows:

   - Date: 02/18/2011
   - Time: 10am-12pm eastern standard time
   - Location: 25 Sigourney Street Hartford, CT 06106 in the Mezzanine Level Room 1

10. **Proposal Due Date and Time.** The Official Contact is the **only authorized recipient** of proposals submitted in response to this RFP. Proposals must be received by the Official Contact on or before the due date and time:

   - Due Date: 03/28/2011
   - Time: 3:00 pm eastern standard time

   Faxed or e-mailed proposals will not be evaluated. When hand-delivering proposals by courier or in person, allow extra time due to building security procedures. The Department will not accept a postmark date as the basis for meeting the submission due date and time. Proposals received after the due date and time may be accepted by the Department as a clerical function, but late proposals will not be evaluated. At the discretion of the Department, late proposals may be destroyed or retained for pick-up by the submitters.

   An acceptable submission must include the following:

   - one (1) original proposal;
   - five (5) conforming copies of the original proposal; and
   - one (1) conforming electronic copy (Compact Disk) of the original proposal.

   The original proposal must carry original signatures and be clearly marked on the cover as "Original." Unsigned proposals will not be evaluated. The original proposal and each conforming copy of the proposal must be complete, properly formatted and outlined, and

ready for evaluation by the Screening Committee. The electronic copy of the proposal must be compatible with Microsoft Office Word 2003. For the electronic copy, required forms and appendices except the Budget Summary and Budget Support may be scanned and submitted in Portable Document Format (PDF) or similar file format.

11. **Multiple Proposals.** The submission of multiple proposals is an option with this procurement. A Proposer may submit a separate proposal with each Host Employer. A Proposer may submit one or more Regions with one Host Employer. A Host Employer may also be a Proposer.

12. **Declaration of Confidential Information.** Proposers are advised that all materials associated with this procurement are subject to the terms of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the Privacy Act, and all rules, regulations and interpretations resulting from them. If a proposer deems that certain information required by this RFP is confidential, the proposer must label such information as CONFIDENTIAL. As instructed in Proposal outline, Section C of the proposal submission, the proposer must reference where the information labeled CONFIDENTIAL is located in the proposal. *EXAMPLE: Section G.1.a.* For each subsection so referenced, the proposer must provide a convincing explanation and rationale sufficient to justify an exemption of the information from release under the FOIA. The explanation and rationale must be stated in terms of (a) the prospective harm to the competitive position of the proposer that would result if the identified information were to be released and (b) the reasons why the information is legally exempt from release pursuant to C.G.S. § 1-210(b).

13. **Conflict of Interest - Disclosure Statement.** Proposers must include a disclosure statement concerning any current business relationships (within the last three (3) years) that pose a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85. A conflict of interest exists when a relationship exists between the proposer and a public official (including an elected official) or State employee that may interfere with fair competition or may be adverse to the interests of the State. The existence of a conflict of interest is not, in and of itself, evidence of wrongdoing. A conflict of interest may, however, become a legal matter if a proposer tries to influence, or succeeds in influencing, the outcome of an official decision for their personal or corporate benefit. The Department will determine whether any disclosed conflict of interest poses a substantial advantage to the proposer over the competition, decreases the overall competitiveness of this procurement, or is not in the best interests of the State. In the absence of any conflict of interest, a proposer must affirm such in the disclosure statement. *Example: "[name of proposer] has no current business relationship (within the last three (3) years) that poses a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85."*

■ D. PROPOSAL FORMAT

1. **Required Outline.** All proposals must follow the required outline presented in Section IV – Proposal Outline. Proposals that fail to follow the required outline will be deemed non-responsive and not evaluated.

2. **Cover Sheet.** The proposer must develop OR utilize a Cover Sheet that includes the information below. *Legal Name* is defined as the name of private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality submitting the proposal. *Contact Person* is defined as the individual who can provide additional information about the proposal or who has immediate responsibility for the proposal. *Authorized Official* is defined as the individual empowered to submit a binding offer on behalf of the proposer to provide services in accordance with the terms and provisions described in this RFP and any amendments or attachments hereto.

- RFP Name or Number:
- Legal Name:
- FEIN:
- Street Address:
- Town/City/State/Zip:

- Contact Person:
- Title:
- Phone Number:
- FAX Number:
- E-Mail Address:

- Authorized Official:
- Title:
- Signature:

The Cover Sheet is Page 1 of the proposal.

3. **Table of Contents.** All proposals must include a Table of Contents that conforms to the required proposal outline. (See Section IV.)

4. **Executive Summary.** Proposals must include a high-level summary, not exceeding two (2), 2-sided pages, a total of four (4) pages of the main proposal and the cost proposal.

   The Executive Summary, at a minimum, must identify the following requirements set forth in this RFP:

   1. The status of the Proposer as presented in Appendices A and B;

   2. The identity of the Host Employer as presented in Appendix C**;**

   3. The identity of the State Region(s) targeted in its proposal to provide ISTPP services;

   4. An overview of the training program proposed; and

   5. If currently contracted in a program of this type.

5. **Attachments.** Attachments other than the required Appendices or Forms identified in Section IV are not permitted and will not be evaluated. Further, the required Appendices or Forms must not be altered or used to extend, enhance, or replace any component required by this RFP. Failure to abide by these instructions will result in disqualification.

6. **Style Requirements.** Submitted proposals must conform to the following specifications:

   - Binding Type: Loose leaf or spiral-bound notebooks
   - Dividers: A tab sheet keyed to the Table of Contents (TOC) must separate each major part of the proposal. The title of each part must appear on the tab sheet
   - Paper Size: Text shall be on 8½” x 11” paper, portrait orientation
   - Page Limit: Specified in ISTPP RFP excluding Appendices & Forms
   - Print Style: <u>2-sided</u>
   - Font Size: Font shall be a minimum of twelve point
   - Font Type: Font shall be either Arial or Times New Roman

- Margins: The binding edge margin of all pages shall be a minimum of 1½ inches; all other margins shall be one inch
- Line Spacing: Single-spaced

7. **Pagination.** The proposer's name must be displayed in the header of each page. All pages, from the Cover Sheet through the required Appendices and Forms, must be numbered consecutively in the footer.

8. **Packaging and Labeling Requirements.** All proposals must be submitted in sealed envelopes or packages and be addressed to the Official Contact. The Legal Name and Address of the proposer must appear in the upper left corner of the envelope or package. The RFP Name or Number must be clearly displayed on the envelope or package. Any received proposal that does not conform to these packaging or labeling instructions will be opened as general mail. Such a proposal may be accepted by the Department as a clerical function, but it will not be evaluated. At the discretion of the Department, such a proposal may be destroyed or retained for pick-up by the submitters.

■ E. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

1. **Evaluation Process.** It is the intent of the Department to conduct a comprehensive, fair, and impartial evaluation of proposals received in response to this RFP. When evaluating proposals, negotiating with successful proposers, and awarding contracts, the Department will conform to its written procedures for POS procurements (pursuant to C.G.S. § 4-217) and the State's Code of Ethics (pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 1-84 and 1-85).

2. **Screening Committee.** The Department will designate a Screening Committee to evaluate proposals submitted in response to this RFP. The contents of all submitted proposals, including any confidential information, will be shared with the Screening Committee. Only proposals found to be responsive (that is, complying with all instructions and requirements described herein) will be reviewed, rated, and scored. Proposals that fail to comply with all instructions will be rejected without further consideration. Attempts by any proposer (or representative of any proposer) to contact or influence any member of the Screening Committee may result in disqualification of the proposer.

3. **Minimum Submission Requirements.** All proposals must comply with the requirements specified in this RFP. To be eligible for evaluation, proposals must (1) be received on or before the due date and time; (2) meet the Proposal Format requirements; (3) follow the required Proposal Outline; and (4) be complete. Proposals that fail to follow instructions or satisfy the minimum submission requirements or (1)-(4) as stated, will not be reviewed further. The Department will reject any proposal that deviates significantly from the requirements of this RFP.

4. **Evaluation Criteria (and Weights).** Proposals meeting the Minimum Submission Requirements will be evaluated according to the established criteria. The criteria are the objective standards that the Screening Committee will use to evaluate the technical merits of the proposals. Only the criteria listed below will be used to evaluate proposals. The criteria are weighted according to their relative importance. The weights are disclosed below.

   - Organizational Profile Requirements - 15 points or 15%
   - Service Requirements - 30 points or 30%
   - Staffing Requirements - 10 points or 10%, *see note*

- Reporting Requirements- 5 points or 5%
- Subcontracts - 0 points or 0%
- Implementation Plan - 20 points or 20%
- Financial Profile - 5 points or 5%
- Itemized Budget and Budget Narrative -15 points or 15%
- Appendices - 0 or 0%

Note: As part of its evaluation of the Staffing Plan, the Screening Committee will consider the proposer's demonstrated commitment to affirmative action, as required by the Regulations of CT State Agencies § 46A-68j-30(10).

Cost Submission Requirements: The Financial Profile, Itemized Budget, and Budget Narrative of the proposal will be evaluated only for proposals that have achieved the minimum requirement **of 75% of the 80 available points for the preceding criteria, or 60 points**.

5. **Proposer Selection.** Upon completing its evaluation of proposals, the Screening Committee will submit the rankings of all proposals to the Department head. The final selection of a successful proposer is at the discretion of the Department head. Any proposer selected will be so notified and awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract with the Department. Such negotiations may, but will not automatically, result in a contract. Pursuant to Governor M. Jodi Rell's Executive Order No. 3, any resulting contract will be posted on the State Contracting Portal. All unsuccessful proposers will be notified by e-mail or U.S. mail, at the Department's discretion, about the outcome of the evaluation and proposer selection process.

6. **Debriefing.** The Department will notify all Proposers of any award issued as a result of this RFP. Unsuccessful Proposers may, within thirty (30) days of the signing of the resultant contract(s), request a Debriefing of the procurement process and its submission by contacting the Official Agency Contact in writing at the address previously given. A Debriefing may include a request for and distribution of instructions to the evaluators, a copy of the evaluation tool, and a copy of the Proposer's scores including any notes pertaining to the Proposer's submission. Debriefing information that has been properly requested shall be released within five (5) business days of the Department's receipt of the request.

   Proposers may request a Debriefing meeting to discuss the procurement process by contacting the Official Agency Contact in writing at the address previously given. Debriefing meetings that have been properly requested shall be scheduled within fifteen (15) days of the Department's receipt of a request.

   A Debriefing will not include any comparisons of unsuccessful proposals with other proposals.

7. **Appeal Process.** The Proposer may appeal any aspect of the competitive procurement; however, such appeal must be in writing and must set forth facts or evidence in sufficient and convincing detail for the Department to determine whether during any aspect of the competitive procurement there was a failure to comply with the State's statutes, regulations, or standards concerning competitive procurement or the provisions of the Procurement Document. Appeals must be submitted by the Proposer to the Agency Head, with a copy to the Contract Administrator.

Proposers may submit an Appeal to the Department any time after the submission due date, but not later than thirty (30) days after the Department notifies Proposers about the outcome of a competitive procurement. The e-mail sent date or the postmark date on the notification envelope will be considered "day one" of the thirty (30) days.

Following the review process of the documentation submitted, but not later than thirty (30) days after receipt of any such Appeal, a written decision will be issued and delivered to the Proposer who filed the Appeal and any other interested party. The decision will summarize the Department's process for the procurement in question; and Indicate the Agency Head's finding(s) as to the merits of the Proposer's Appeal.

Any additional information regarding the Debriefing and/or the Appeal processes may be requested from the Official Agency Contact for this RFP.

8. **Contest of Solicitation or Award.** Pursuant to Section 4e-36 of the Connecticut General Statutes, "Any bidder or proposer on a state contract may contest the solicitation or award of a contract to a subcommittee of the State Contracting Standards Board…" Refer to the State Contracting Standards Board website at www.ct.gov/scsb.

9. **Contract Execution.** Any contract developed and executed as a result of this RFP is subject to the Department's contracting procedures, which may include approval by the Office of the Attorney General.

II. MANDATORY PROVISIONS

A. POS STANDARD CONTRACT, PARTS I AND II

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the proposer implicitly agrees to comply with the provisions of Parts I and II of the State's "standard contract" for POS:

Part I of the standard contract is maintained by the Department and will include the scope of services, contract performance, quality assurance, reports, terms of payment, budget, and other program-specific provisions of any resulting POS contract. A sample of Part I is available from the Department's Official Contact upon request.

Part II of the standard contract is maintained by OPM and includes the mandatory terms and conditions of the POS contract. Part II is available on OPM's website at: http://www.ct.gov/opm/fin/standard_contract

Note:
Included in Part II of the standard contract is the State Elections Enforcement Commission's notice (pursuant to C.G.S. § 9-612(g)(2)) advising executive branch State Contractors and prospective State Contractors of the ban on campaign contributions and solicitations. If a proposer is awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract with the Department and the resulting contract has an anticipated value in a calendar year of $50,000 or more, or a combination or series of such agreements or contracts has an anticipated value of $100,000 or more, the proposer must inform the proposer's principals of the contents of the SEEC notice.

Part I of the standard contract may be amended by means of a written instrument signed by the Department, the selected proposer (Contractor), and, if required, the Attorney General's Office. Part II of the standard contract may be amended only in consultation with, and with the approval of, the Office of Policy and Management and the Attorney General's Office.

B. ASSURANCES

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly gives the following assurances:

1. **Collusion.** The proposer represents and warrants that the proposer did not participate in any part of the RFP development process and had no knowledge of the specific contents of the RFP prior to its issuance. The proposer further represents and warrants that no agent, representative, or employee of the State participated directly in the preparation of the proposer's proposal. The proposer also represents and warrants that the submitted proposal is in all respects fair and is made without collusion or fraud.

2. **State Officials and Employees.** The proposer certifies that no elected or appointed official or employee of the State has or will benefit financially or materially from any contract resulting from this RFP. The Department may terminate a resulting contract if it is determined that gratuities of any kind were either offered or received by any of the aforementioned officials or employees from the proposer, Contractor, or its agents or employees.

3. **Competitors.** The proposer assures that the submitted proposal is not made in connection with any competing organization or competitor submitting a separate proposal in response to this RFP. No attempt has been made, or will be made, by the proposer to induce any other organization or competitor to submit, or not submit, a proposal for the

purpose of restricting competition. The proposer further assures that the proposed costs have been arrived at independently, without consultation, communication, or agreement with any other organization or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition. Nor has the proposer knowingly disclosed the proposed costs on a prior basis, either directly or indirectly, to any other organization or competitor.

4. **Validity of Proposal.** The proposer certifies that the proposal represents a valid and binding offer to provide services in accordance with the terms and provisions described in this RFP and any amendments or attachments hereto. The proposal shall remain valid for a period of 180 days after the submission due date and may be extended beyond that time by mutual agreement. At its sole discretion, the Department may include the proposal, by reference or otherwise, into any contract with the successful proposer.

5. **Press Releases.** The proposer agrees to obtain prior written consent and approval of the Department for press releases that relate in any manner to this RFP or any resultant contract.

■ C. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly agrees to comply with the following terms and conditions:

1. **Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action.** The State is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action employer and does not discriminate in its hiring, employment, or business practices. The State is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs, services, or activities.

2. **Preparation Expenses.** Neither the State nor the Department shall assume any liability for expenses incurred by a proposer in preparing, submitting, or clarifying any proposal submitted in response to this RFP.

3. **Exclusion of Taxes.** The Department is exempt from the payment of excise and sales taxes imposed by the federal government and the State. Proposers are liable for any other applicable taxes.

4. **Proposed Costs.** No cost submissions that are contingent upon a State action will be accepted. All proposed costs must be fixed through the entire term of the contract.

5. **Changes to Proposal.** No additions or changes to the original proposal will be allowed after submission. While changes are not permitted, the Department may request and authorize proposers to submit written clarification of their proposals, in a manner or format prescribed by the Department, and at the proposer's expense.

6. **Supplemental Information.** Supplemental information will not be considered after the deadline for submission of proposals, unless specifically requested by the Department. The Department may ask a proposer to give demonstrations, interviews, oral presentations or further explanations to clarify information contained in a proposal. Any such demonstration, interview, or oral presentation will be at a time selected and in a place provided by the Department. At its sole discretion, the Department may limit the number of proposers invited to make such a demonstration, interview, or oral presentation and may limit the number of attendees per proposer.

7. **Presentation of Supporting Evidence.** If requested by the Department, a proposer must be prepared to present evidence of experience, ability, data reporting capabilities, financial standing, or other information necessary to satisfactorily meet the requirements set forth or implied in this RFP. The Department may make onsite visits to an operational facility or facilities of a proposer to evaluate further the proposer's capability to perform the duties required by this RFP. At its discretion, the Department may also check or contact any reference provided by the proposer.

8. **RFP Is Not An Offer.** Neither this RFP nor any subsequent discussions shall give rise to any commitment on the part of the State or the Department or confer any rights on any proposer unless and until a contract is fully executed by the necessary parties. The contract document will represent the entire agreement between the proposer and the Department and will supersede all prior negotiations, representations or agreements, alleged or made, between the parties. The State shall assume no liability for costs incurred by the proposer or for payment of services under the terms of the contract until the successful proposer is notified that the contract has been accepted and approved by the Department and, if required, by the Attorney General's Office.

■ D. RIGHTS RESERVED TO THE STATE

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly accepts that the following rights are reserved to the State:

1. **Timing Sequence.** The timing and sequence of events associated with this RFP shall ultimately be determined by the Department.

2. **Amending or Canceling RFP.** The Department reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFP on any date and at any time, if the Department deems it to be necessary, appropriate, or otherwise in the best interests of the State.

3. **No Acceptable Proposals.** In the event that no acceptable proposals are submitted in response to this RFP, the Department may reopen the procurement process, if it is determined to be in the best interests of the State.

4. **Award and Rejection of Proposals.** The Department reserves the right to award in part, to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part, for misrepresentation or if the proposal limits or modifies any of the terms, conditions, or specifications of this RFP. The Department may waive minor technical defects, irregularities, or omissions, if in its judgment the best interests of the State will be served. The Department reserves the right to reject the proposal of any proposer who submits a proposal after the submission date and time.

5. **Sole Property of the State.** All proposals submitted in response to this RFP are to be the sole property of the State. Any product, whether acceptable or unacceptable, developed under a contract awarded as a result of this RFP shall be the sole property of the State, unless stated otherwise in this RFP or subsequent contract. The right to publish, distribute, or disseminate any and all information or reports, or part thereof, shall accrue to the State without recourse.

6. **Contract Negotiation.** The Department reserves the right to negotiate or contract for all or any portion of the services contained in this RFP. The Department further reserves the right to contract with one or more proposer for such services. After reviewing the scored

criteria, the Department may seek Best and Final Offers (BFO) on cost from proposers. The Department may set parameters on any BFOs received.

7. **Clerical Errors in Award.** The Department reserves the right to correct inaccurate awards resulting from its clerical errors. This may include, in extreme circumstances, revoking the awarding of a contract already made to a proposer and subsequently awarding the contract to another proposer. Such action on the part of the State shall not constitute a breach of contract on the part of the State since the contract with the initial proposer is deemed to be void *ab initio* and of no effect as if no contract ever existed between the State and the proposer.

8. **Key Personnel.** When the Department is the sole funder of a purchased service, the Department reserves the right to approve any additions, deletions, or changes in key personnel, with the exception of key personnel who have terminated employment. The Department also reserves the right to approve replacements for key personnel who have terminated employment. The Department further reserves the right to require the removal and replacement of any of the proposer's key personnel who do not perform adequately, regardless of whether they were previously approved by the Department.

■ E. STATUTORY AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the proposer implicitly agrees to comply with all applicable State and federal laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. **Freedom of Information, C.G.S. § 1-210(b).** The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) generally requires the disclosure of documents in the possession of the State upon request of any citizen, unless the content of the document falls within certain categories of exemption, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-210(b). Proposers are generally advised not to include in their proposals any confidential information. If the proposer indicates that certain documentation, as required by this RFP, is submitted in confidence, the State will endeavor to keep said information confidential to the extent permitted by law. The State has no obligation to initiate, prosecute, or defend any legal proceeding or to seek a protective order or other similar relief to prevent disclosure of any information pursuant to a FOIA request. The proposer has the burden of establishing the availability of any FOIA exemption in any proceeding where it is an issue. While a proposer may claim an exemption to the State's FOIA, the final administrative authority to release or exempt any or all material so identified rests with the State. In no event shall the State or any of its employees have any liability for disclosure of documents or information in the possession of the State and which the State or its employees believe(s) to be required pursuant to the FOIA or other requirements of law.

2. **Certification Regarding Lobbying** - To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL** provide a signed statement to the effect that no funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

3. **Notification to Proposers, Parts I – V (CHRO) Contract Compliance, C.G.S. § 4a-60 and Regulations of CT State Agencies § 46a-68j-21 thru 43, inclusive.** CT statute and regulations impose certain obligations on State agencies

(as well as Contractors and subcontractors doing business with the State) to insure that State agencies do not enter into contracts with organizations or businesses that discriminate against protected class persons. To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL** complete and submit with proposal.

4. **Consulting Agreement Affidavit (OPM Ethics Form 5)Consulting Agreements, C.G.S. § 4a-81.** Proposals for State contracts with a value of $50,000 or more in a calendar or fiscal year, excluding leases and licensing agreements of any value, shall include a consulting agreement affidavit attesting to whether any consulting agreement has been entered into in connection with the proposal. As used herein "consulting agreement" means any written or oral agreement to retain the services, for a fee, of a consultant for the purposes of (A) providing counsel to a Contractor, vendor, consultant or other entity seeking to conduct, or conducting, business with the State, (B) contacting, whether in writing or orally, any executive, judicial, or administrative office of the State, including any department, institution, bureau, board, commission, authority, official or employee for the purpose of solicitation, dispute resolution, introduction, requests for information or (C) any other similar activity related to such contract. Consulting agreement does not include any agreements entered into with a consultant who is registered under the provisions of C.G.S. Chapter 10 as of the date such affidavit is submitted in accordance with the provisions of C.G.S. § 4a-81. The Consulting Agreement Affidavit (OPM Ethics Form 5) is available on OPM's website at http://www.ct.gov/opm/fin/ethics_forms
I**MPORTANT NOTE:** To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL** complete and submit OPM Ethics Form 5 to the Department with the proposal.

5. **Gift and Campaign Contributions, C.G.S. §§ 4-250 and 4-252(c); Governor M. Jodi Rell's Executive Orders No. 1, Para. 8 and No. 7C, Para. 10; C.G.S. § 9-612(g)(2).** If a proposer is awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract with an anticipated value of $50,000 or more in a calendar or fiscal year, the proposer must fully disclose any gifts or lawful contributions made to campaigns of candidates for statewide public office or the General Assembly. Municipalities and CT State agencies are exempt from this requirement. The gift and campaign contributions certification (OPM Ethics Form 1) is available on OPM's website at http://www.ct.gov/opm/fin/ethics_forms
IMPORTANT NOTE: The successful proposer must complete and submit OPM Ethics Form 1 to the Department prior to contract execution.

6. **Nondiscrimination Certification, C.G.S. §§ 4a-60(a)(1) and 4a-60a(a)(1).** If a proposer is awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract, the proposer must provide the Department with *written representation* or *documentation* that certifies the proposer complies with the State's nondiscrimination agreements and warranties. A nondiscrimination certification is required for all State contracts – regardless of type, term, cost, or value. Municipalities and CT State agencies are exempt from this requirement. The nondiscrimination certification forms are available on OPM's website at http://www.ct.gov/opm/fin/nondiscrim_forms
IMPORTANT NOTE: The successful proposer must complete and submit the appropriate nondiscrimination certification form to the awarding Department prior to contract execution.

7. SEEC FORM 11- attached.

III. PROGRAM INFORMATION

A. DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Department of Social Services (Department) provides a broad range of services to the elderly, persons with disabilities, families, and individuals who need assistance in maintaining or achieving their full potential for self-direction, self-reliance and independent living. It administers over 90 legislatively authorized programs and one third of the State budget. By statute, it is the State agency responsible for administering a number of programs under federal legislation, including the Rehabilitation Act, the Food Stamp Act, the Older Americans Act, and the Social Security Act. The Department is also designated as a public housing agency for the purpose of administering the Section 8 program under the Federal Housing Act.

The Department is headed by the Commissioner of Social Services, and there is a Deputy Commissioner for programs. There is a regional administrator responsible for each of the three service regions. By statute, there is a statewide advisory council to the Commissioner, and each region must have a regional advisory council.

The Department administers most of its programs through offices located throughout the state. Within the Department, the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services provides vocational rehabilitation services for eligible individuals with physical and mental disabilities at 23 offices throughout the State. For the other programs, services are available through 12 offices located in the three regions, with central office support located in Hartford. In addition, many services funded by the Department are available through community-based agencies, including the 156 senior centers throughout Connecticut. The Department has out-stationed employees at hospitals to expedite Medicaid applications, and funds Healthy Start sites, which can accept applications for Medicaid for pregnant women and young children. Many of the services provided by the Department are available via mail or telephone call.

There are four entities attached to the Department for administrative purposes only. They are the Commission on Aging, Commission on Deaf and Hearing Impaired, Board of Education and Services for the Blind, and Child Day Care Council.

Department Mission

The Connecticut Department of Social Services provides a continuum of core services to:

- Meet basic needs of food, shelter, economic support, and health care
- Promote and support the choice to live with dignity in one's own home and community
- Promote and support the achievement of economic viability in the workforce

We gain strength from our diverse environment to promote equal access to all Department programs and services.

Department Vision

The Connecticut Department of Social Services is people working together to support individuals and families to reach their full potential and live better lives. We do this with humanity and integrity.

■ BUREAU OF REHABILITATION SERVICES OVERVIEW

The Department's Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) is a Statewide unit responsible for the administration of the Public Vocational Rehabilitation Program (VR), Supported Employment (SE), Independent Living (IL), and Disability Determination Services (DDS). BRS administers most of its programs through offices located throughout the State. In addition, many services funded by BRS are available through community-based agencies including Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs).

■ B. PROGRAM OVERVIEW and PURPOSE

Program Background - Industry Specific Training and Placement Programs (ISTPP) are workforce development programs designed to give individuals the skills necessary for employment in particular professions or types of business. These programs should be developed with respect to the needs of local economy; therefore, partnerships with community/educational organizations and the industry are essential. For the purposes of this RFP, the ISTPP will be designed to suit specific occupations and careers while utilizing the principles of Universal Design to increase the training program's overall accessibility and potential for successful outcomes. These ISTPP should provide the skills required for employment in a particular career and are intended to place individuals along a career path that will lead to long-term stability. BRS plans to expand the pool of available job training options for vocational rehabilitation BRS participants with disabilities served by BRS.

BRS is seeking new and innovative proposals for assessment, training and placement programs to be conducted by Contractors on location at a Host Employer (HE), determined by the Contractor, with the expectation that the BRS participant will be employed with the HE or with another similar company within the industry upon completion of the training. The goal is for the Contractor to develop a sustainable tuition based training and placement program in a demand industry that continues beyond the life of the contract.
Proposers must have a documented relationship with the businesses or industry, as the HE, that have a current and ongoing demand for trained and qualified employees. The program can be a new training program or an existing training program that expands or adjusts to include qualified participants with disabilities.

ISTPPs are encouraged for the following consumer demand occupational goals in rank order:

1. Stock / Warehouse
2. Janitorial Services
3. Retail Positions
4. Customer Service
5. Administrative Assistant / Clerical
6. Human Services
7. Food Service
8. Health Care
9. Education
10. Information Technology

It is the goal of BRS through the issuance of this RFP to ensure equal access to local markets by awarding two, (2) ISTPP per Region. The following are the Regions as defined by the Department of Social Services and encompass the State of Connecticut in its entirety:

- Northern Region
- Southern Region
- Western Region

C. MAIN PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

Proposers must respond to each content requirement that begins with "To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL"** and those responses must reference the RFP request citation.

1.0 Organizational Profile Requirements

Maximum Page Limitation is FIVE (5) 2-sided pages = TEN (10) pages total

The Proposer's responses to the requirements in the **Organizational Profile Requirements** section must describe the background of the Proposer's organization, experience, and qualifications. The Proposer's responses in this section shall address the details regarding the size and resources of the organization relevant to the functions to be performed under the resultant contract.

Where the Proposer's response to a specific requirement reflects the Proposer's response to another requirement, the Proposer may cite the other response instead of reproducing it.

Proposers that propose the use of subcontractors must present the same information about the subcontractors as for the Proposers.

1.1 Verification of Minimum Qualifications

The Proposer must verify that it meets the minimum qualifications, Section 1, C. Instructions 5. Minimum Qualifications of Proposers - Only those organizations that are either current Contractors of BRS for vocational services or that meet the minimum qualifications set by BRS will be considered. To qualify for a contract award, a Proposer must verify having the following minimum qualifications:

- Application and BRS Criteria for Approval, Appendix A;
- Profile of Proposer's Experience - Vocational Services for Persons with Disabilities, Appendix B;
- Proposers must have a documented relationship, with a Host Employer that has a current and ongoing demand for trained and qualified employees, as presented in Appendix C;
- The program can be a new training program or an existing training program that expands or adjusts to include qualified participants with disabilities.

The Proposer must meet the criteria for one of the options as referenced in Appendix A. Any additional documentation beyond that outlined in other sections of this RFP is specified under the applicable options.

a. For Proposers that are current Contractors for BRS vocational services, "To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL"** provide a copy of the following pages of a current contract for vocational services with BRS:

   1. Contract Summary (Page 1)
   2. Client-Based Outcomes and Measures (Part I, Section D)
   3. Acceptance and Approvals (signature page)

b. For Proposers that are not current Contractors for BRS vocational services, "To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL"** submit verification that it meets the criteria for one of the options as referenced in qualifications outlined in BRS Criteria for Approval, Appendix A.

c. For all Proposers: "To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL"**provide verification of the Minimum Qualifications as listed above, 1.1 Verification of Minimum Qualifications.

1.2 Summary of Organizational Capacity

The Department is seeking to contract with an organization that demonstrates the ability to implement an ISTPP and the capacity to recruit, hire, and maintain sufficiently trained and professional staff to competently perform the tasks outlined in the RFP.

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL** include the following specific details regarding the Proposer:

1. Organization establishment date, the mission statement at time of establishment, the current mission statement, and if the current mission statement is different from the original, a description of the changes in focus that led to the current mission;

2. Organization size including annual budget, revenues, and number and type of personnel;

3. Organizational changes within the last three (3) years including any reorganization and/or turnover of key personnel, acquired contracts for current programs, and lost contracts including the reasons for loss of contracts;

4. Experience relevant to the functions to be performed under the resultant contract and a listing and summary of recent contracts for similar services;

5. A description of the organization's professional skill development program with specific reference to staff development opportunities over the past three (3) years;

6. A description of the organization's evaluation and/or assessment processes/outcomes for special programs or projects within the past two (2) years and demonstrate that these projects have been performed on time with good results and within budget;

7. If the Proposer is currently under contract to carry out this same type of program in Connecticut or in other State(s), that must be declared;

   a. If the Proposer is currently engaged in ISTPP elsewhere, how will this affect its ability to meet Connecticut's needs;
   b. Demonstrate how successful is the general history of the organization regarding services and/or completion of projects; and
   c. Describe an organizational management plan that identifies clear lines of authority, communication and accountability.

1.3 Organizational Chart and Description

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL** include:

1. A functional organizational chart and accompanying narrative detailing how the ISTPP fits within the entire organizational structure. The accompanying narrative must clearly depict lines of authority, title and responsibility, number of dedicated hours to fulfill the requirements of the RFP; and
2. A narrative that describes how the existing organizational programs, services, and structure will support the successful implementation of the ISTPP.

1.4 Experience and Qualifications

To submit a responsive proposal **THE PROPOSER SHALL** describe the organization's overall qualifications to carry out a program of this nature and scope. The detail of experience and success relevant to the ISTPP RFP service requirements for this program should include the following information concerning the Proposer's experience with other contracts or projects, whether ongoing or completed during the past five (5) years:

1. An identification of all contracts during the past five (5) years with other state agencies, in all other states, or commercial vendors, the nature of the contract, and designation as to whether such contract is similar to the service requirements for this program;
2. A description and samples of the projects and work performed under the contracts identified above;
3. A signed release allowing the Department to request and access any evaluative information including but not limited to site reviews conducted by any state agency or commercial entity for which the Proposer has performed work in the past five (5) years;

   Note: The signed release must be located immediately following the Executive Summary located after the Table of Contents.

4. Contacts for each contract identified above including the name, title, address, telephone number, and e-mail address of the customer's project officer;

5. The initial and final contract amounts;

6. Subcontractors used and services provided for each contract;

7. The term of each contract including the date of contract signing, the date of project initiation, the initial scheduled completion date and the actual completion date; and

8. A general description of the scope of each project.

9. List all sanctions, fines, penalties, or letters of noncompliance issued against the Proposer by any of the contracting entities listed above; (the list shall describe the circumstance eliciting the sanction or letter of noncompliance and the corrective action or resolution to the sanction, fine, penalty, or letters of noncompliance; if no sanctions, fines, penalties, or letters of noncompliance were issued, a statement that attests that no sanction, penalty, or compliance action has been imposed on the Proposer within the three years immediately preceding the RFP posting/release date must be submitted) and

10. Describe how the Proposer contributed innovation and problem-solving expertise to a collaborative relationship with the governmental entity or commercial vendor for selected contracts listed above.

1.5 Evidence of Experience in the Provision of Vocational Services for Persons with Disabilities

To submit a responsive proposal **THE PROPOSER SHALL** provide:

1. A description of the Proposer's methodology and experience in providing vocational assessments, including community-based situational assessments;

2. A description of the Proposer's programs and methodology for placement in and provision of community-based vocational services for persons with disabilities, including the length of experience in providing these services;

3. A brief description of the Proposer's current program(s), and the number of persons currently served in each program;

4. A brief description of any classroom training developed and/or provided by the Proposer for persons with disabilities during the past 12 months;

5. A description of the Proposer's vocational program for persons with disabilities that the Proposer believes to be the most innovative, including an explanation of why the program is innovative;

6. A description of any innovative natural supports and workplace accommodations that the Proposer has been responsible for developing or securing for employed persons with disabilities;

7. Completion of the "Profile of Proposer's Experience - Vocational Services for Persons with Disabilities," Appendix B; and

8. If applicable, other information not listed above that provides evidence of the Proposer's qualifications relative to the services outlined in the Program Overview and Purpose.

1.6 References

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL** provide three (3) specific references. References must be persons able to comment on the Proposer's capability to perform the services specified in this RFP. The contact person must be an individual familiar with the organization and its day-to-day performance. If the Proposer has been a State Contractor within the past five (5) years, the Proposer must include a State of Connecticut reference. Proposers are strongly encouraged to call or write their references to ensure the accuracy of their contact information and their willingness and capability to be references. References must include the organization's name, address, current telephone number, e-mail address, and name of a specific contact person. The Department of Social Services expects to use these references in its evaluation process. References cannot be the Proposer's current employees.

1.7 Small, Minority or Women's Business Enterprise

Section 32-9e of the Connecticut General Statutes, superseded by Section 4a-60g sets forth the requirements of each executive branch agency relative to the Connecticut Small Business Set-Aside program. Pursuant to that statute, twenty-five (25%) of the average total of all contracts let for each of the three previous fiscal years must be set aside.

The Department requires that the Resultant Contractor make a "good-faith effort" to set aside a portion of this contract for a small, minority or women's business enterprise as a subcontractor. Such subcontractors may supply goods or services. Prospective Proposers may obtain a list of firms certified to participate in the Set-Aside program by contacting the Department of Administrative Services at the DAS website.

To submit a responsive proposal **THE PROPOSER SHALL** describe its intention to set aside a portion of this contract for a small, minority or women's business enterprise as a subcontractor.

1.8 Department Responsibilities

To submit a responsive proposal **THE PROPOSER SHALL** identify specific support the Proposer requires from the Department to perform the tasks in any resultant contract. The Department of Social Services Bureau of Rehabilitation Services retains the ultimate decision-making authority required to ensure program tasks are completed.

Specific Department responsibilities are:

1. Program Management: A Program Director will be appointed by DSS. This individual will be responsible for monitoring program progress and will have final authority to approve/disapprove program deliverables.
2. Staff Coordination: The Program Director will coordinate all necessary contacts between the Resultant Contractor and Department staff.
3. Approval of Deliverables: The Program Director will review, evaluate, and approve all deliverables prior to the Resultant Contractor being released from further responsibility.

1.9 Evidence of Qualified Entity

To submit a responsive proposal **THE PROPOSER SHALL** provide written assurance to the Department from its legal counsel that it is qualified to conduct business in the State of Connecticut and is not prohibited by its articles of incorporation, bylaws, or the laws under which it is incorporated from performing the services required under any resultant contract.

Note: The Evidence of Qualified Entity must be submitted as a separate sheet and must be located immediately following the signed release that is located immediately following the Executive Summary located after the Table of Contents. The Evidence of Qualified Entity is not included in the page limitation of this section.

2.0 Service Requirements

Maximum Page Limitation is EIGHT (8) 2-sided pages = SIXTEEN (16) pages total

General - Responses for this section must describe the Proposer's capability and competence to perform the requirements specified in this RFP.

No Rewrites - The Department does not want a rewrite of the RFP requirements, since such a proposal would show a lack of understanding of the program and an inability to provide appropriate levels of support and guidance for the implementation of this type of program.

Where the Proposer's response to a specific requirement reflects the Proposer's response to another requirement, the Proposer may cite the other response instead of reproducing it.

Proposers that propose the use of subcontractors must present the same information about the subcontractors as for the Proposers.

2.1 Proposer's Comprehensive Risk Understanding

The Department is seeking to contract with an organization that can demonstrate the ability to implement and administer an ISTPP for individuals with disabilities. To this end, the Resultant Contractor must be sensitive to the needs and circumstances of individuals seeking guidance and training and the policy requirements of the Department and the Federal government. The Department looks forward to a relationship with a Resultant Contractor who will anticipate risks and propose solutions to problems that may arise.

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL**:

a. Show its understanding of the ISTPP requirements by describing potential risks to the Department and risks that the Proposer could encounter if awarded a contract to administer the ISTPP and

b. Propose solutions or approaches for managing those risks that show the Proposer's familiarity and sensitivity with managing ISTPP tasks.

2.2 Collaborating with the Department

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL** propose its approach for collaborating with the Department to provide ISTPP services.

2.3 Task-related Policies and Procedures

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL** acknowledge in writing and agree that:

The success of the Resultant Contractor's performance depends, in part, on the Resultant Contractor's development of and application of clear and accurate policies and procedures that reflect functional interpretations of regulations, quality goals, and directives; and

The Resultant Contractor's policies and procedures must be organized and available to allow seamless access by both the Resultant Contractor and designated Department staff.

2.4 Program Design

The Resultant Contractor will define the employer site, the Host Employer, (HE) and job categories. This commitment from the Resultant Contractor will need to be documented. Based on the types of positions and the training needs of the employer, a curriculum will then be negotiated between the Resultant Contractor and Host Employer in order to determine appropriate candidates as well as enable those candidates who do not have the prerequisite social and work skills to successfully enter these jobs on their own.

1. The training process should include the following areas:

   a. Initial Screening - Prospective job candidates will be identified based on candidates' interest and an initial screening conducted by the referring entity. This screening will include an assessment of the individual's requisite skills using criteria established by Resultant Contractor and the employer. All referrals to the ISTPP will be made through a single point of contact, the Program Director, at BRS who will be designated to work with that particular training program.

   b. Evaluation - A brief work assessment will be completed by the Resultant Contractor to further evaluate the individual's skill level, work tolerance, noise tolerance, social skills, and work habits relative to positions available at each training program. To the extent feasible, this assessment will take place at the HE facility. Persons meeting the minimum qualifications of the positions for which they wish to be considered will be referred for training, as appropriate.

   c. Classroom and/or Equipment Training - The training program should provide technical (job related) and soft skills (work habits, co-workers) training to BRS participants served by BRS on location at the HE. If training cannot take place at the HE site, the Resultant Contractor must receive prior written approval from BRS before providing the training at an alternate site controlled by the HE. If the job involves use of equipment as part of job functions then all efforts should be made to reproduce a setting consistent with equipment used by HE for purposes of training.

      A participant may progress through the training when she or he shows competency regarding job duties, as measured by HE directives and guidelines. Factors to be considered will include the individual's production rate, accuracy, capability to work a complete work shift, knowledge of the work culture, capability to follow all safety procedures and appropriate engagement with others in the workplace. Other areas the training could review are Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) rules, travel training and completion of social skills training. Program staff will work closely with BRS participants to determine participants' readiness for direct hire by HE or placement in similar setting.

   d. Transitional Work Training - After the job candidates have been screened, evaluated and oriented to the program, they can then begin the transitional work period at the HE site. Training on the job site will be provided by Resultant Contractor staff who will be trained by the HE in the targeted industry specific positions and have an established background in providing employment supports in an integrated setting for persons with disabilities. Candidates will be evaluated at regular intervals for their readiness for hire or placement. The Resultant Contractor shall pay candidates a training wage at a rate negotiated between the HE and the Proposer, (minimum wage or more), for which the Resultant Contractor shall be reimbursed by the HE. The Resultant Contractor shall be reimbursed for applicable payroll taxes and Workers' Compensation and Unemployment Compensation insurance costs for participants through program funds from the Department. The candidate may be hired by the HE after she or he displays appropriate work behaviors and meets the HE's production standards.

e. Hire/Placement - Those job candidates successfully completing the training program will be hired by the HE as vacancies occur, and paid at the regular starting wage for the applicable position. During the contract period, the Resultant Contractor shall be responsible for assessing the need for any ongoing support or accommodations. The Resultant Contractor will develop a network of contacts with similar employers for candidate placement who successfully completed the training program but no vacancies are available with HE.

Job candidates with disabilities who do not require the full array of services may be hired without completion of all the above components, as appropriate. Persons with disabilities may also be hired through the regular HE recruitment process, provided they meet the prerequisite experience and skill requirements.

The Resultant Contractor shall be responsible for assisting program participants with transportation, as necessary. Indirect Transportation Services (e.g., travel training, coordination with vanpools, and development of natural supports) will be included in the responsibilities of the job coach and supervisory staff funded through the ISTPP.

To provide the services described above, it is expected that the Resultant Contractor shall need to assign adequate staff to complete the evaluations and to maintain an average staff -to - participant ratio of 1:7 while participants are in the ISTPP. In addition, the Resultant Contractor shall assign a Program Manager to ensure program quality and success.

2.5 Resultant Contractor Responsibilities:

1. It is the responsibility of the Resultant Contractor to ensure that the Host Employer (HE) will provide the following requirements to participate in the ISTPP:

- Provide a safe, accessible and integrated work setting for the trainees to learn entry level skills geared towards employment in its organization or like organizations.

- Pay the BRS trainee at or above minimum wage. This money will be paid to the Resultant Contractor and the trainee will be put on the Resultant Contractor's payroll for the duration of the training period.

- If the BRS trainee is hired upon completion of the training period that BRS participant will be paid at a rate commensurate with non-disabled peers in similar position.

- Work with the Resultant Contractor to identify suitable employment and training opportunities in its industry.

- Assist Resultant Contractor in the development of training modules by providing technical assistance in regard to its knowledge and experience in previous training opportunities, including best practices, company overview and orientation.

- Maintain communication with Resultant Contractor and BRS if any adjustments need to be made regarding the ISTPP and the ability to deliver a quality, hands-on training experience to persons with disabilities.

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL:**

a. Describe its plan and methodology to ensure that the HE is providing the above listed requirements of the HE. The Proposer's plan should include at a minimum the following:
b. Safety regulations of the HE;
c. Wages of the BRS trainee and the collaboration between the Resultant Contractor and the HE to comply with the rate commensurate with non-disabled peers in similar position;
d. The Team approach between the Resultant Contractor and the HE to develop appropriate training methods for the BRS trainee; and
e. The channel of communication between BRS, the Resultant Contractor and the HE.

2. Hiring and maintaining qualified program staff - The Resultant Contractor shall hire and maintain qualified program staff, in accordance with the requirements set forth in this RFP and the job descriptions outlined in the Resultant Contractor's submission. The Resultant Contractor shall ensure that it maintains adequate evaluation and job coaching staff to carry out the ISTPP, as outlined in the Program Design and consistent with the Proposer's submission. In addition, the Resultant Contractor shall assign a Program Manager (PM) to oversee the ISTPP. The Resultant Contractor shall establish a plan for coverage in the event of staff absenteeism and attrition to maintain the 1:7 staff-to-participant ratio limit. The Resultant Contractor shall be required to submit a police background check for all program staff who will work directly with program participants. The Resultant Contractor shall ensure that program staff receives appropriate training from HE regarding use of any equipment and procedures before the provision of services to program participants. Training expenses will be paid by the Resultant Contractor and reimbursed by the Department, in accordance with the ISTPP budget.

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL:**

a. Describe its plan to hire and maintain the qualified program staff needed to meet the requirements as described in this RFP;

b. Describe its plan to ensure that it maintains adequate evaluation and job coaching staff to carry out the ISTPP;

c. Establish a plan for coverage in the event of staff absenteeism and attrition to maintain the 1:7 staff-to-participant ratio limit;

d. Describe its plan to submit the required police background check for all program staff who will work directly with program participants; and

e. Describe its plan to ensure that program staff receives appropriate training from HE regarding use of any equipment and procedures before the provision of services to program participants.

3. Managing Program Referrals - The Resultant Contractor shall only accept referrals for the ISTPP that are generated from the BRS point of contact assigned to the ISTPP. The Resultant Contractor shall be responsible for managing the flow of referrals between initial screening and evaluation.

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL:**

a. Present a collaborative approach with the BRS point of contact to accept referrals for the ISTPP that are generated from the BRS point of contact; and

b. Describe its administrative plan to manage the flow of referrals between initial screening and evaluation.

4. Evaluating and training qualified job candidates - The Resultant Contractor shall be responsible for evaluating all prospective job candidates referred for the ISTPP to determine their potential for success as a potential employee, as well as their program training and employment support needs. To the extent applicable to the positions for which the individual is to be considered, the evaluation will include, but not necessarily limited to, an assessment of the individual's current job skill level and projected capability to learn the required skills, capability to perform required job functions, social skills, work behaviors, attendance, transportation needs, stamina, noise tolerance, and accommodation needs. As appropriate, the evaluation may be based in whole or in part on an analysis of previous vocational assessments or other data obtained regarding the participant's work-related skills. The Resultant Contractor shall be responsible for conducting classroom and on-the-job training, as needed by program participants and outlined in the Program Design. The training will include, but not necessarily be limited to, performance of essential job functions, social skills, OSHA requirements, work tool identification, and appropriate work behaviors.

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL:**

a. Provide a plan for the evaluation of all prospective job candidates;

b. Propose a methodology for the assessment of the individual's current job skill level and projected capability to learn the required skills, capability to perform required job functions, social skills, work behaviors, attendance, transportation needs, stamina, noise tolerance, and accommodation needs;

c. Propose an evaluation process that may be based in whole or in part on an analysis of previous vocational assessments or other data obtained regarding the participant's work-related skills;

d. Describe the plan for conducting classroom and on-the-job training, as needed by program participants and outlined in the Program Design; and

e. Propose training that will include, but not necessarily be limited to, performance of essential job functions, social skills, OSHA requirements, work tool identification, and appropriate work behaviors.

5. Assisting program participants in securing transportation - The Resultant Contractor shall be responsible for assisting program participants in identifying, coordinating and securing transportation to the HE site, as needed. The Resultant Contractor responsibilities will include the provision of travel training, coordination with Rideshare or other vanpools, facilitation of natural supports and to the extent available, assistance with accessing public transportation.

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL:**

a. Describe how the Proposer, if applicable, has previously assisted persons whom it serves with securing transportation for employment, including any innovative solutions to resolving transportation issues;

b. Propose a plan for assisting program participants in identifying, coordinating and securing transportation to the HE site that will include the provision of travel training, coordination with Rideshare or other vanpools, facilitation of natural supports and, to the extent available, assistance with accessing public transportation;

c. A description of what resources the Proposer will make available to assist project participants with securing transportation during the participant's training phase of employment; and

d. If the Proposer is capable of providing transportation to participants, a detailed description of the transportation service(s) to be made available, including but not limited to: the method(s) to be used; overall and per person costs; and any limitations or restrictions such as distance, routes, number of persons served, duration of the service or hours of operation.

6. Providing liability insurance - Before each participant's employment by a potential employer, the Resultant Contractor shall be responsible for supervision of that individual while at the HE site during the Industry Specific Training. Therefore, the Resultant Contractor shall be responsible for liability insurance in the event of injury of program participants during the Industry Specific Training Program. This insurance may be in the form of Workers Compensation or other liability insurance, as appropriate and adequate to cover any work-related illness or injury of participants while under the supervision of the Resultant Contractor.

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL:**

Show evidence of a liability insurance policy document, (current or proposed) in the event of injury of program participants during the Industry Specific Training Program.

7. Performance Measures – BRS will monitor the performance of the contract(s) issued under this RFP. All services required under the contract shall be provided at an acceptable level of quality and in a manner consistent with acceptable standards, customs, and practices. Proper performance shall be assessed by:

1) Number of BRS participants trained compared with projections
2) Number of BRS participants placed in jobs compared with projections
3) BRS participant satisfaction
4) Business satisfaction
5) Potential long-term viability and sustainability of the program

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL:**

Propose a record or log to accommodate BRS in the monitoring of the above required performances of the ISTPP if chosen to negotiate a contract pursuant to the ISTPP.

8. Potential Value of Services Performed -

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL:** complete Potential Value of Services Performed, Appendix D.

3.0 Staffing Requirements

Maximum Page Limitation is THREE (3) 2-sided pages = SIX (6) pages total

ISTPP Staffing Plan - To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL** describe Opportunity 1, a preliminary plan to obtain the services of Staff Training and Program Curricula, **or** Opportunity 2, an already established Staff Training and Program Curricula.

A Job Coach (JC) will be required to know all aspects of the jobs for which they will assist and train participants. HE personnel will instruct the JC on the participant's job and, if relevant, the JC will be certified on any equipment that will be utilized in the training program. The Resultant Contractor's program staff will work closely with HE personnel to maintain an up-to-date knowledge of the job and an understanding of the work culture at the HE. JCs will be required to know all aspects of the jobs for which they will be providing training.

A Program Manager (PM) will be required and be responsible for implementing and managing ISTPP activities and monitoring and ensuring the performance of duties and obligations under the resultant contract. The PM shall be responsible for the supervision of individuals while at the HE site during the Industry Specific Training.

Where the Proposer's response to a specific requirement reflects the Proposer's response to another requirement, the Proposer may cite the other response instead of reproducing it.

Proposers that propose the use of subcontractors must present the same information about the subcontractors as for the Proposers.

3.1 **Opportunity 1** is a preliminary plan to obtain the services of Staff Training and Program Curricula.

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL** describe a staffing plan for the ISTPP that includes at a minimum:

1. A plan for recruitment and training of program staff as identified in 3.0, Staffing Requirements and any other staff that is essential to the success of the ISTPP;

2. The qualifications of a PM as identified in 3.0 Staffing Requirements;

3. A description of additional skills or training for any program staff that may be relevant to this program (e.g., fluency in sign language or Spanish, prior training/experience in other strategies for working with individuals with disabilities, etc.);

4. Plan for refilling temporary or permanent vacancies of program staff;

5. If the positions identified are not currently established and/or filled, include a detailed description and timeline of the steps to be taken by the Proposer to establish and fill the positions before the anticipated start of the resultant contract period; and

6. If applicable, agreements or other plans for collaboration between members of a consortium or other organizations.

3.2 **Opportunity 2** is an already established, an existing Staff Training and Program Curricula.

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL** describe a staffing plan for the ISTPP that includes at a minimum:

1. A description of training that is routinely provided or required for job coaches employed by the Proposer;

2. The qualifications of a PM;

3. A description of additional skills or training for any program staff that may be relevant to this program (e.g., fluency in sign language or Spanish, prior training/experience in other strategies for working with individuals with disabilities, etc.)

4. The number of full and part-time job coaches, (trainers) serving persons in community-based employment who are currently employed by the Proposer;

5. Number of full and part-time job coaches, (trainers) that have resigned or otherwise been terminated from employment with the Proposer during the past 12 months;

6. If applicable, agreements or other plans for collaboration between members of a consortium or other organizations;

7. Plan for refilling temporary or permanent vacancies of program staff; and

8. If the positions identified are not currently established and/or filled, include a detailed description and timeline of the steps to be taken by the Proposer to establish and fill the key positions before the anticipated start of the resultant contract period.

3.3 **Resumes and Job Descriptions** that include a depiction of the contract-related experience, credentials, education and training, and work experience required in the position of the proposed Program Manager (PM), job coach (JC) positions, and any other position essential for the success of the ISTPP.

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL:**

Submit the resume and job description of the Proposer's PM and any other administrative staff who will be responsible for supervision and oversight of the staff to be assigned to this program.

Resumes and Job Descriptions of the positions of the JCs and any other position essential for the success of the ISTPP should also be included.

Resumes for personnel proposed to fill the positions are limited to two (2) pages per resume. Resumes for personnel proposed to fill the positions and job descriptions for proposed positions are **not included in the page limitation** of this section. Proposers must incorporate resumes and

job descriptions into an appropriately tabbed section of the binder sequentially following the previous "Proposer shall" item.
Resumes should include:

1. Experience with Proposer;

2. Experience working in this type of activity or similar, performed in Connecticut or another State, and percentage of time dedicated to a program of this type;

3. Education, experience, and training relevant to the requirements of the RFP; and

4. Names, positions, titles, and telephone numbers of persons able to provide information concerning the persons' experience and competence.

3.4 Job Personnel and Tasks

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL**:

Describe the relationship between specific personnel for whom resumes have been submitted (or job descriptions for proposed positions as identified in Staffing Plan) and the specific tasks and assignments proposed to accomplish the services for the implementation and process of a ISTPP and a justification of the individual's function based on the individual's competence including the Proposer's:

1. Procedures to secure and retain professional staff to meet the resultant contract requirements;

2. Method to evaluate personnel performance; and

3. Absolute numbers and disciplines of dedicated staff.

3.5 Notarized Statement

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL**:

Submit a notarized document attesting that the Administrative/Executive Director, Director of Vocational Services and individuals providing direct services to program participants:

- Have not had a professional license or certification revoked;
- Have not been found guilty of fraud, abuse or ethics violations; and
- Are not currently under investigation for fraud, abuse or ethics violations.

Within that notarized document, the Proposer must also include a statement that indicates whether the organization, Administrative/Executive Director, Director of Vocational Services and/or other known staff member who would be involved with the ISTPP have been investigated in connection with allegations of fraud or ethics violations within the past ten (10) years. If such an investigation has taken place, the Proposer must submit a copy of the official disposition of

the investigation or a description of the circumstances, if an official disposition of the investigation is not available.

4.0 Reporting Requirements

Maximum Page Limitation is TWO (2) 2-sided pages = FOUR (4) pages total

Where the Proposer's response to a specific requirement reflects the Proposer's response to another requirement, the Proposer may cite the other response instead of reproducing it.

Proposers that propose the use of subcontractors must present the same information about the subcontractors as for the Proposers.

The Resultant Contractor shall be required to submit:

1. Evaluation and progress reports on each program participant within fifteen (15) days of completion of Evaluation, Classroom and/or Equipment Training, and Transitional Work Training, in accordance with requirements set forth by the Department;
2. Monthly report of the attendance for each program participant being served in the ISTPP, monthly bills for administration of the ISTPP, in accordance with the terms of the resultant contract;
3. Financial report at the completion of the first and second years of the resultant contract period. This report shall include the actual cost of personnel and overhead expenses incurred in the implementation of the ISTPP submitted in a manner and form as may be required by the Department; and
4. Written update at twelve (12) and eighteen (18) months regarding transition to a sustainable tuition based program at conclusion of the two (2) year resultant contract.

To submit a responsive proposal, **THE PROPOSER SHALL:**

1. Describe the Proposer's capability to comply with the above-stated reporting requirements;
2. Describe the Proposer's equipment type that will be utilized to comply with the above reporting requirements; and
3. Provide sample reports utilized in CT or other States that would be representative and responsive to above requirements.

5.0 Subcontracts

Maximum Page Limitation is TWO (2) 2-sided pages = FOUR (4) pages total

Where the Proposer's response to a specific requirement reflects the Proposer's response to another requirement, the Proposer may cite the other response instead of reproducing it.

The Resultant Contractor:

1. May subcontract for any function described in the Service Requirements. The following provisions of this section apply to those subcontractors retained for the purposes of providing the Contractor's requirements. In any subcontract arrangement, the Resultant Contractor shall comply with following contractual conditions in addition to those Terms and Conditions approved by the Attorney General. The Resultant Contractor:

2. Shall be held directly accountable and liable for all of the contractual provisions resulting from this RFP whether the Resultant Contractor chooses to subcontract its responsibilities to a third party or not;

3. Shall be liable for all contractual obligations irrespective of subcontracted tasks. No subcontract shall negate the legal responsibilities of the Resultant Contractor as articulated in any resultant contract with the Department including those responsibilities that require the Resultant Contractor to assure that all activities carried out by the subcontractor conform to the provisions of the Resultant Contractor's contract with the Department;

4. Shall incorporate the following conditions into any subcontract:

   a. All subcontracts shall be written;

   b. All subcontracts shall include any general requirements of resultant contract with the Department pursuant to this RFP that are appropriate to the services provided by the subcontractor;

   c. All subcontracts shall provide for the right of the Department or other governmental entity to enter the subcontractor's premises to inspect, monitor or otherwise evaluate the work being performed as a delegated duty by the Resultant Contractor;

   d. The Resultant Contractor and its subcontractors shall cooperate in the performance of financial, quality or other audits conducted by the Department or its agent(s); and

   e. The Resultant Contractor shall provide upon the Department's request a copy of any subcontract.

<u>To submit a responsive proposal</u> **<u>THE PROPOSER SHALL</u>**:

1. Identify any of the services where the Proposer intends to or is contemplating utilizing a subcontractor to perform the services or duties of the Resultant Contractor;

2. Identify the name and address of each proposed subcontractor and describe the duties the subcontractor shall perform;

3. If a subcontractor has not been selected to provide a specific service, but a decision has been made to subcontract a particular service, describe the means that the Proposer will use to select the subcontractor; and

4. Describe the Proposer's process to manage and monitor each subcontractor's performance.

6.0 Implementation Plan

Maximum Page Limitation is FIVE (5) 2-sided pages = TEN (10) pages total

Where the Proposer's response to a specific requirement reflects the Proposer's response to another requirement, the Proposer may cite the other response instead of reproducing it.

Proposers that propose the use of subcontractors must present the same information about the subcontractors as for the Proposers.

To submit a responsive proposal **THE PROPOSER SHALL:**

1. Submit a Program Timetable that clearly outlines the task timetable for the implementation process from beginning to end. The timetable must display key dates and events relating to the establishment of the ISTPP implementing the protocols. The timetable must display the position and title of the responsible party for the events and include the percentage of time allocated for all staff throughout the ISTPP; and
2. Submit a narrative of the Implementation Plan that describes the flow of events, outcomes and deliverables required for a successful ISTPP.

■ D. COST PROPOSAL COMPONENT

1.0 Cost Submission Requirements

No cost information or other financial information may be included in any other portion of the submission. Any submission that fails to adhere to this requirement may be disqualified as non-responsive.

Where the Proposer's response to a specific requirement reflects the Proposer's response to another requirement, the Proposer may cite the other response instead of reproducing it.

Proposers that propose the use of subcontractors must present the same information about the proposed subcontractors as for the Proposers.

1.1 Financial Profile

To submit a responsive proposal **THE PROPOSER SHALL** submit:

a. A copy of the Proposer's annual financial statements prepared by an independent Certified Public Accountant, and reviewed or audited in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (USA), for the Proposer's past two (2) years. The copy shall include all applicable financial statements, auditor's reports, management letters, and any corresponding reissued components. Proposers that do not have audited financial statements must submit a business plan and personal financial statements of the Director or Chief Executive Officer including evidence of financial resources or a line of credit sufficient to cover estimated operating expenses for sixty (60) days;

b. The Proposer's budget for the current fiscal year; and

c. If the Proposer currently carries an accumulated deficit, a statement of the amount and the Proposer's plans for elimination of that deficit.

1.2 Itemized Budget and Budget Narrative

To submit a responsive proposal **THE PROPOSER SHALL** submit:

A completed Itemized Budget and Budget Narrative, (please refer to Appendix F). Instructions for completion of Appendix F are provided in Appendix E.

Note: Itemized Budget and Budget Narrative, Appendix F, can be obtained in Word 2003 Version by contacting Marcia.McDonough@ct.gov

1.3 **Program Funding -** Financial support for the Industry Specific Training Program will primarily come from federal funds allocated from the Department of Social Services / Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, to be distributed by the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services.

1.4 **Cost Standards-** All proposed costs are subject to the standards developed by the State's Office of Policy and Management for the purchase of service (POS) and federal cost principles. Be advised that your organization's cost proposal is subject to revision prior to award in order to ensure compliance with the OPM cost standards and federal cost principles. For more information, go to www.ct.gov/opm, click on "Publications," then click on "Purchase of Service (POS) Cost Standards." In the event of any inconsistency between the OPM cost standards and federal cost principles, the federal cost principles shall control.
The Department reserves the right to consider all factors including cost in the final selection of a successful proposer. The opportunity to negotiate a contract with the Department will not be awarded based on cost alone.

Payment Structure - Resultant Contractors shall be paid in accordance with expenditures incurred in accordance with the approved line-item budget. While specific payment terms will be made final during contract negotiations, it is expected that payments will be made monthly, contingent upon the Resultant Contractor's timely compliance with the resultant contract periods including, but not limited to, the Resultant Contractor's submission and Department/DSS' acceptance of all required reports and payment requests.

IV. PROPOSAL OUTLINE

*This section presents the **required** outline that must be followed when submitting a proposal in response to this RFP. Proposals must include a Table of Contents that exactly conforms with the required proposal outline (below). Proposals must include all the components listed below, in the order specified, using the prescribed lettering and numbering scheme. Incomplete proposals will not be evaluated.*

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H. Appendices . . . . . .

1.0 Appendix A Application and BRS Criteria for Approval
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4.0 Appendix D Potential Value of Services Performed
5.0 Appendix E Instructions for Itemized Budget and Budget Narrative
6.0 Appendix F Itemized Budget and Budget Narrative
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3.0 Notification to Proposers, Parts I – V (CHRO)
4.0 Consulting Agreement Affidavit (OPM Ethics Form 5)
5.0 SEEC Form 11, *attached*[1]

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION
20 Trinity Street Hartford, Connecticut 06106—1628

SEEC FORM 11

NOTICE TO EXECUTIVE BRANCH STATE CONTRACTORS AND PROSPECTIVE STATE CONTRACTORS OF CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION AND SOLICITATION BAN

This notice is provided under the authority of Connecticut General Statutes 9-612(g)(2), as amended by P.A. 07-1, and is for the purpose of informing state contractors and prospective state contractors of the following law (italicized words are defined below):

Campaign Contribution and Solicitation Ban

No *state contractor, prospective state contractor, principal of a state contractor or principal of a prospective state contractor*, with regard to a *state contract* or *state contract solicitation* with or from a state agency in the executive branch or a quasi-public agency or a holder, or principal of a holder of a valid prequalification certificate, shall make a contribution to, or *solicit* contributions on behalf of (i) an exploratory committee or candidate committee established by a candidate for nomination or election to the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, State Comptroller, Secretary of the State or State Treasurer, (ii) a political committee authorized to make contributions or expenditures to or for the benefit of such candidates, or (iii) a party committee;

In addition, no holder or principal of a holder of a valid prequalification certificate, shall make a contribution to, or solicit contributions on behalf of (i) an exploratory committee or candidate committee established by a candidate for nomination or election to the office of State senator or State representative, (ii) a political committee authorized to make contributions or expenditures to or for the benefit of such candidates, or (iii) a party committee.

Duty to Inform

State contractors and prospective state contractors are required to inform their principals of the above prohibitions, as applicable, and the possible penalties and other consequences of any violation thereof.

Penalties for Violations

Contributions or solicitations of contributions made in violation of the above prohibitions may result in the following civil and criminal penalties:

Civil penalties--$2000 or twice the amount of the prohibited contribution, whichever is greater, against a principal or a contractor. Any state contractor or prospective state contractor which fails to make reasonable efforts to comply with the provisions requiring notice to its principals of these prohibitions and the possible consequences of their violations may also be subject to civil penalties of $2000 or twice the amount of the prohibited contributions made by their principals.

Criminal penalties—Any knowing and willful violation of the prohibition is a Class D felony, which may subject the violator to imprisonment of not more than 5 years, or $5000 in fines, or both.

Contract Consequences

Contributions made or solicited in violation of the above prohibitions may result, in the case of a state contractor, in the contract being voided.

Contributions made or solicited in violation of the above prohibitions, in the case of a prospective state contractor, shall result in the contract described in the state contract solicitation not being awarded to the prospective state contractor, unless the State Elections Enforcement Commission determines that mitigating circumstances exist concerning such violation.

The State will not award any other state contract to anyone found in violation of the above prohibitions for a period of one year after the election for which such contribution is made or solicited, unless the State Elections Enforcement Commission determines that mitigating circumstances exist concerning such violation.

Additional information and the entire text of P.A 07-1 may be found on the website of the State Elections Enforcement Commission, www.ct.gov/seec. Click on the link to "State Contractor Contribution Ban."

Definitions:

"State contractor" means a person, business entity or nonprofit organization that enters into a state contract. Such person, business entity or nonprofit organization shall be deemed to be a state contractor until December thirty-first of the year in which such contract terminates. "State contractor" does not include a municipality or any other political subdivision of the state, including any entities or associations duly created by the municipality or political subdivision exclusively amongst themselves to further any purpose authorized by statute or charter, or an employee in the executive or legislative branch of state government or a quasi-public agency, whether in the classified or unclassified service and full or part-time, and only in such person's capacity as a state or quasi-public agency employee.

"Prospective state contractor" means a person, business entity or nonprofit organization that (i) submits a response to a state contract solicitation by the state, a state agency or a quasi-public agency, or a proposal in response to a request for proposals by the state, a state agency or a quasi-public agency, until the contract has been entered into, or (ii) holds a valid prequalification certificate issued by the Commissioner of Administrative Services under section 4a-100. "Prospective state contractor" does not include a municipality or any other political subdivision of the state, including any entities or associations duly created by the municipality or political subdivision exclusively amongst themselves to further any purpose authorized by statute or charter, or an employee in the executive or legislative branch of state government or a quasi-public agency, whether in the classified or unclassified service and full or part-time, and only in such person's capacity as a state or quasi-public agency employee.

"Principal of a state contractor or prospective state contractor" means (i) any individual who is a member of the board of directors of, or has an ownership interest of five per cent or more in, a state contractor or prospective state contractor, which is a business entity, except for an individual who is a member of the board of directors of a nonprofit organization, (ii) an individual who is employed by a state contractor or prospective state contractor, which is a business entity, as president, treasurer or executive vice president, (iii) an individual who is the chief executive officer of a state contractor or prospective state contractor, which is not a business entity, or if a state contractor or prospective state contractor has no such officer, then the officer who duly possesses comparable powers and duties, (iv) an officer or an employee of any state contractor or prospective state contractor who has *managerial or discretionary responsibilities with respect to a state contract,* (v) the spouse or a *dependent child* who is eighteen years of age or older of an individual described in this subparagraph, or (vi) a political committee established or controlled by an individual described in this subparagraph or the business entity or nonprofit organization that is the state contractor or prospective state contractor.

"State contract" means an agreement or contract with the state or any state agency or any quasi-public agency, let through a procurement process or otherwise, having a value of fifty thousand dollars or more, or a combination or series of such agreements or contracts having a value of one hundred thousand dollars or more in a calendar year, for (i) the rendition of services, (ii) the furnishing of any goods, material, supplies, equipment or any items of any kind, (iii) the construction, alteration or repair of any public building or public work, (iv) the acquisition, sale or lease of any land or building, (v) a licensing arrangement, or (vi) a grant, loan or loan guarantee. "State contract" does not include any agreement or contract with the state, any state agency or any quasi-public agency that is exclusively federally funded, an education loan or a loan to an individual for other than commercial purposes.

"State contract solicitation" means a request by a state agency or quasi-public agency, in whatever form issued, including, but not limited to, an invitation to bid, request for proposals, request for information or request for quotes, inviting bids, quotes or other types of submittals, through a competitive procurement process or another process authorized by law waiving competitive procurement.

"Managerial or discretionary responsibilities with respect to a state contract" means having direct, extensive and substantive responsibilities with respect to the negotiation of the state contract and not peripheral, clerical or ministerial responsibilities.

"Dependent child" means a child residing in an individual's household who may legally be claimed as a dependent on the federal income tax of such individual.

"Solicit" means (A) requesting that a contribution be made, (B) participating in any fund-raising activities for a candidate committee, exploratory committee, political committee or party committee, including, but not limited to, forwarding tickets to potential contributors, receiving contributions for transmission to any such committee or bundling contributions, (C) serving as chairperson, treasurer or deputy treasurer of any such committee, or (D) establishing a political committee for the sole purpose of soliciting or receiving contributions for any committee. Solicit does not include: (i) making a contribution that is otherwise permitted by Chapter 155 of the Connecticut General Statutes; (ii) informing any person of a position taken by a candidate for public office or a public official, (iii) notifying the person of any activities of, or contact information for, any candidate for public office; or (iv) serving as a member in any party committee or as an officer of such committee that is not otherwise prohibited in this section.