

Thomas P. Miller and Associates

Serving as Independent Procurement Entity For:



**WorkSource**

**M O N T G O M E R Y**

*Connecting Employers & Job Seekers*

*Serving Montgomery County, Maryland*

**WORKFORCE RECOVERY NETWORK  
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

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Release Date: January 21, 2022

Proposals Due: February 28, 2022 at 9:00 am ET

Contract Period: July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023\*

*\*A one-year extension of July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024 may be possible based on performance.*

*WorkSource Montgomery (WSM), its programs and contract service providers are Equal Opportunity employers/programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Programs and initiatives offered by WSM are supported in part by Montgomery County and the American Recovery Plan Act.*



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## Section I: Program Description & Background

### 1. The American Rescue Plan Act

The Workforce Recovery Network RFP is supported in part by the Federal American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) as well as funding from Montgomery County. WorkSource Montgomery (WSM) received funding from the Career Advancement Program (CAP) through Montgomery County and the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation.

As part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the Department of the Treasury directed \$3.7 billion in federal aid to Maryland for the State Fiscal Relief Fund. Governor Larry Hogan and legislative leaders agreed to a bipartisan funding agreement that outlined how the State's ARPA funding would be invested to help Maryland recover from the public health crisis. Efforts are being made to ensure that the funding is going directly to the people, the businesses, and programs where it will provide positive impact including efforts to improve public health, address negative economic impacts, and enhance services to those communities hit most disproportionately by the pandemic. In regard to workforce development, examples include expansion of apprenticeship and employment training programs, business support programs, and other programs and supports to assist those negatively impacted by the pandemic.

### 2. WorkSource Montgomery

[WorkSource Montgomery](#) (WSM) focuses on linking local and regional economic development and workforce efforts in Montgomery County, Maryland. WSM develops a deep understanding of target and emerging industry demands, creating sustainable workforce solutions that are tailored to the region. This increases the ability of individuals to compete for higher-quality jobs and employers to compete within the marketplace.

#### **Vision:**

- Economic development, education, and the system of talent development are aligned locally and regionally to sustain a vibrant economy in Montgomery County.

#### **Mission:**

- To meet the talent attraction, development, and retention needs of strategic industries.
- To meet the needs of the underemployed and unemployed.
- To develop career pathways that lead to sustainable wage jobs and support a thriving mission.

#### **WorkSource Montgomery's Roles:**

- We catalyze change in the community to build an effective workforce development system.
- We are a community facilitator and convener to identify issues and act collectively with partners to address them.
- We act as an intermediary/broker between the supply and demand sides of the workforce system about current and future skill needs to ensure mutually beneficial relationships and outcomes.
- We advocate addressing workforce development issues at the local, state, and national levels.



### 3. Thomas P. Miller & Associates, LLC

[Thomas P. Miller & Associates](http://www.tpma-inc.com) (TPMA) has been contracted by WSM to lead the procurement process for scoring and selecting providers to award. TPMA is a full-service consulting firm based in Indianapolis, Indiana with over 30 years of experience in workforce development activities, including helping workforce boards in third party procurements. Through analysis, alignment, and action, TPMA applies our mission statement of empowering organizations and communities through strategic partnerships and informed solutions that create positive, sustainable change to every project assigned. For more information of TPMA's experience and expertise, please visit us at <http://www.tpma-inc.com>.

As the contracted entity to lead this procurement process, TPMA serves as a separate and independent outside entity to conduct the procurement process. TPMA will review all submitted proposals and evaluate them on a scale coordinated and agreed upon by the WSM. Based on its evaluation, TPMA will submit its selections and recommendations, along with a description of the selection process and scoring justification, to the Board for approval.

### 4. RFP Overview

The intent of the Workforce Recovery Network funding is to support organizations serving Montgomery County residents that have been negatively impacted by the pandemic. WSM has \$1,000,000 (\$1 Million) available for year 1 and anticipates award amounts ranging from \$25,000 to \$100,000. **Requests over \$100,000 will not be reviewed and scored.**

Programs should be focused on strategic workforce initiatives that assist Montgomery County residents who have experienced hardship due to the pandemic. In addition to serving individuals negatively impacted by the pandemic the programs may also serve individuals who are: low-income, have criminal backgrounds, have disabilities, homeless, Veterans, English language learners, youth, public assistance recipients, or have barriers to employment. Programs and services targeting individuals in Montgomery County's high poverty rate census tracks as well as the communities near the pending Purple Metro Line are encouraged.

WSM is seeking proposals that are innovative and creative. Funding requests could include expansion of traditional services such as recruitment, assessment, case management, training, subsidized employment placements, internships, and supportive services. However, WSM's funding for this initiative is designed to be flexible and encourage new ways of offering programs and serving individuals in the county. Funds cannot be used for capital improvement or to purchase real estate or large equipment. Programming should fill in gaps brought to light by the pandemic, address issues magnified as a result of the pandemic, and/or expand innovative ideas piloted during the pandemic.

Examples of innovative Workforce Recovery Network projects could include, but are not limited to:

- A workforce readiness program that addresses legal barriers with micro-grants to pay license reinstatement fees, expungement legal fees, and more.
- A digital equity initiative that provides technology infrastructure through micro-grants for program participants who have demonstrated a need for broadband connection to support remote job search, remote education access, or remote work. Digital literacy skills attainment training programs to support e-commerce opportunities, virtual services and career exploration.



- Pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs in high-demand industries to get individuals exposure and entry into high-wage career pathways with work-based learning and earn-and-learn opportunities.
- Education and training programs that include support for stackable credentials.
- Investment in social enterprise models to address a key community need such as childcare, transportation, food insecurity, housing, etc. that, if implemented successfully, would lead to proof-of-concept and provide opportunities to scale with additional investments from other funding sources. The models should include training and clearly define benefit to the participant.
- Initiatives related to entrepreneurship to support individuals with entrepreneurial endeavors through coaching, education, and support.
- Virtual reality learning and training models to reach underserved populations.

The selected partners will be required to provide monthly metric reports utilizing WSM's data system, WSMEdge, and quarterly narrative reports to WorkSource Montgomery. The quarterly narrative reports will inform the Board and staff of recent activities, events, successes, obstacles or challenges, and plans for the upcoming quarter. Criteria used to demonstrate performance may include, but is not limited to, total number of participants served; enrollments in education, training, pre-apprenticeship, or apprenticeship programs; employment placements; earnings; credential attainment; and supportive services rendered. In order to gather data on wider positive impact of the programming, WSM may require additional metrics. During the contracting process, WSM will work with the recipient organizations to identify appropriate performance measures based on funded programming.

## 5. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include entities or consortiums of entities based in Montgomery County as well as those based in neighboring communities but with a clear history of effective service delivery within Montgomery county. Neighborhood-level non-profits, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, workforce intermediaries, or training providers are eligible to apply. For-profit entities are not eligible to apply. The applicant must be able to demonstrate relevant previous experience, staffing capacity, and the commitment to successfully implement or expand a program or initiative. WSM recognizes that smaller organizations may not have the capacity to manage large, federally-funded contracts but have distinct expertise working with job seekers facing significant barriers. In this circumstance, WSM will be available to provide coaching and technical assistance to ensure successful grant management and execution.

NOTE: All applicants must disclose any potential conflicts of interest arising from their relationships with training or other service providers. In addition, all applicants must ensure that they do not and will not establish practices that create disincentives to providing services to individuals with barriers to employment that may require longer-term services, such as intensive employment, training, and education services.

Further, WSM will declare entities ineligible if they are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any State or Federal department or agency. Respondents must disclose any legal judgments, claims, arbitration proceedings, lawsuits or other legal proceedings pending or outstanding (unresolved) against the organization, its owners, officers, or principals. Respondents must comply with Section 504 of the



Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, and the Americans with Disabilities Act to be eligible.

## 6. Project Timeline & Funding

The table below provides a timeline of activities for this procurement. In the event dates are changed, TPMA will provide notice through the procurement portal: <https://www.tpma-inc.com/procurement-worksource-montgomery/>.

Activity	Date
RFP Release	01/21/2022
Bidder's Conference	02/02/2022 at 10:00 am ET
Deadline for Bidder Questions	02/04/2022 by 4:00 pm ET
Response to Bidder Questions Posted	02/11/2022
Proposal Deadline (email only)	02/28/2022 by 9:00 am ET
WorkSource Montgomery Approval	04/20/2022
Notification to All Bidders	04/25/2022
Contract Begin Date	07/01/2022

WorkSource Montgomery will notify contract awards to the successful respondents effective no later than April 25, 2022. The contract amount for the 12 months shall not exceed \$100,000.

- Subject to performance and fund availability, the selected contractor(s) may be eligible for up to one (1), 1-year extension with an updated budget subject to WSM approval.
- Specific line items require detailed explanation.
- All funding of this RFP is contingent upon WSM having fund availability and may change based on increases/decreases in federal, state, or local allocations, de-obligation of funds, new initiatives, and decisions of WSM.
- For the awarded contract, the submitted proposal, with any negotiations, will become part of the official contract file. Any commitments made in the proposal will be part of the contract and will be binding on the contractor.
- The contract will be awarded as a line-item cost reimbursement. No expenses are reimbursable until a contract or letter of authorization has been issued to incur cost as of a specific date.
- The issuance of this solicitation in no way commits WSM to pay any cost for the preparation and submission of a proposal. The Bidder assumes all costs of preparation of the proposal and any presentation necessary for the proposal process.
- WSM may elect to reject all proposals if scope of work is not adequately addressed, fund request is not appropriate for scope of services, or for other reasons deemed appropriate by WSM.

## Section 2: Scope of Work

### Statement of Need (10 points)

1. Clearly identify the problem you are trying to solve, or the need you are attempting to meet. Include quantitative data to tell your story.
2. Briefly describe your proposed programming and solution and how it will address the statement of need including the positive impact you will have on the community and pandemic impacted, Montgomery County residents.



### **Organizational Experience & Capacity (15 points)**

1. Describe your organization's mission, goals, activities, accomplishments, and expertise. Identify the number of years that your organization has been in business under the present name, as well as related prior business names.
2. Describe the organization's experience and success in delivering services in similar programs and/or to similar populations.
  - a. Provide detailed information regarding your organization's experience contracting with federally funded agencies for the same or similar services.
  - b. Include current and past contracts that were in effect within the last three (3) years. Specify whether such contracts are currently in effect, were successfully completed, or were terminated prior to completion.
3. Describe the organization's staffing plan and include an organizational chart.
  - a. What are (or will be) the qualifications of all key management and program staff who will conduct the proposed services? Describe expertise in managing, coaching, and motivating participants with unique needs and significant barriers.
  - b. For positions already filled, attach a current resume of the staff person serving in such capacity. Indicate the percentage amount of the position's total work time to be devoted to this program.
4. Describe the facility or facilities where the program is to be principally operated.

### **Performance & Accountability (15 points)**

1. List and explain the intended outcomes for your proposed program service delivery model with and without the requested funding. Include how many participants you intend to serve throughout the duration of the contract period. (Examples of other success metrics and outcomes measurements may include, number of individuals placed in education, training, employment, apprenticeship, etc.; number earning credentials, etc.) Describe wider and/or longer term impact your program may have to Montgomery County and residents.
2. Describe how your organization will manage measurement, achievement, and documentation of performance standards.
3. Describe the project's case management strategy for providing consistent support, follow-through for service plans and referrals, and tracking for individual clients.
4. Indicate your plan for ensuring performance outcomes are attained and data is used to achieve continuous quality improvement.

### **Partnerships & Community Engagement (15 points)**

1. Describe existing relationships that the organization may have with area employers, community-based organizations, and agencies and how those relationships will benefit individuals in the program.
2. Describe any community partnerships needed to ensure successful implementation of the program service delivery model (described in detail below).
  - a. Do you have relationships with these agencies/organizations already? If not, please explain your plan to solidify those partnerships swiftly to begin programming by the intended



contract start date. Please include signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) where possible.

3. Describe how you recruit and use volunteers and partners to expand services and offerings beyond what staff can provide.

### **Program Service Delivery Model (20 points)**

1. Describe how you will help ensure an efficient use of the funding while maximizing services provided for individuals in your program.
2. Describe the target geographic area for your proposed program, including specific neighborhood and resident needs.
3. Services for Jobseekers:
  - a. Describe the problems, due to the pandemic, faced by your clients and identify your target population, explaining the challenges and barriers they will have to overcome to succeed.
  - b. What are your plans regarding outreach to promote services to target populations?
  - c. How will your program assess and understand participants' basic skills and educational levels, technical competencies, work experience, career interests and goals, and specific barriers to successful completion of training and/or attainment of employment.
  - d. What strategies will you employ to promote participant retention for the duration of programming?
  - e. How will best practices with both jobseekers and employers be incorporated in the design and delivery of services?
4. Services for Employers (as applicable):
  - a. How will employer engagement be handled to identify and improve employer resources in connecting with your programs and services? Include any previous experience with employers.
  - b. Describe your vision for area employers and how workforce needs can be utilized to strengthen existing system.
  - c. What plans do you have to promote and sustain business engagement? What methods will be used to explain and communicate successes with WSM, as well as to the public?
  - d. What plans will be made to integrate various business engagement strategies and programs, and how will these be handled to avoid duplication and the risk of multiple partners calling on the same employer(s)?
5. What methods of service delivery will be implemented to ensure that WSM goals regarding placement and credentials are met or exceeded?

### **Technology, Data, & Reporting (10 points)**

1. Describe past success with tracking program performance and/or outcomes. Include a description of previous performance measures and outcomes from other successful initiatives.
2. Describe your experience with capturing and reporting performance information.
3. Will your proposed program service delivery model require data sharing agreements with other agencies to accurately report on participant outcomes? If so, please describe how you will obtain and enforce such agreements to ensure quality data and reporting.





4. Describe your organization's approach to management of information systems, connectivity, and confidentiality?

### **Financial & Fiscal Capabilities & Budget (15 points)**

1. Describe experience your organization has in managing federal and/or state funds, philanthropic grants, and other types of financial resources.
  - a. Please include the experience of currently employed fiscal staff have in administering such programs.
2. Describe how your organization ensures compliance with Federal financial management standards.
  - a. How will financial information be made available for monitoring and auditing purposes?
3. Explain your anticipated per-participant cost levels for the proposed program.
  - a. Please include reasoning behind this in the Budget Narrative.
4. The amount requested through this Request for Proposals must not exceed \$100,000.00 for the contract year and be submitted by completing the Budget Form (Attachment C).
  - a. The Budget Narrative must be typed and placed in the proposal following the Budget Form (Attachment C). The amount requested should at no point in time exceed the amount of the contract. The Budget Narrative should provide a detailed description of each line item. Administrative costs and indirect cost rates should not exceed 10%. Additionally, funds cannot be used for capital improvement or to purchase real estate or large equipment. Clearly identify Please identify the use of any in-kind services or description of leveraged funds being used to support the activities.
    - i. Provide your latest audit report.



## Section 3: Submission & Evaluation

### 1. Bidder's Conference

A bidder's conference will be held virtually on February 2, 2022 at 10:00 AM ET. TPMA and WSM staff will present the RFP requirements and accept questions during the bidder's conference to offer technical assistance to respondents. Following is the Zoom information for the conference.

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82977768257?pwd=Ml92TUxEa1lqcC9ZRxc4MnlxK3pLUT09>

Meeting ID: 829 7776 8257

Passcode: 263094

Dial by your location: +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

### 2. Bidder's Questions

All questions that interested parties may have can be directed to the third-party procurement agent, TPMA at [procurement@tpma-inc.com](mailto:procurement@tpma-inc.com) with the subject line: *Questions for WorkSource Montgomery Workforce Recovery Network RFP*. Questions must be submitted via email between January 21, 2022, and February 4, 2022. Responses to questions will be posted by February 11, 2022, on the TPMA procurement portal website, along with other relevant information, including the RFP, attachments, procurement timeline, contact information, etc. The procurement portal website is: <https://www.tpma-inc.com/procurement-worksource-montgomery/>.

An entity's failure to submit a complete proposal or to respond in whole to RFP requirements will result in the proposal being deemed non-responsive and thus ineligible for funding. A proposal may also be deemed "non-responsive" if the submitted price is found to be excessive or inadequate as measured by criteria stated in the RFP, or the proposal is clearly not within the scope of the project described and required in the RFP. Again, requests for over \$100,000 will not be reviewed and scored. WSM reserves the right to cancel this procurement at any time, for any reason.

### 3. Proposal Instructions

The Scope of Work should be completed entirely, should not exceed 15 pages, and be typed in 12-point font, single-spaced, 1" margins on all sides, page numbers, and table of contents. Once completed, interested parties must submit their proposal electronically as one PDF file to TPMA at [procurement@tpma-inc.com](mailto:procurement@tpma-inc.com). The subject line should read: *WorkSource Montgomery Workforce Recovery Network Proposal*. Please organize your proposal in the following manner for each component:

- Attachment A: Cover Page
- Attachment B: Conflict of Interest Form
- Attachment C: Budget Form & Narrative
- Attachment D: Reference Form and Letters
- One Year of Audited Financial History
- Organizational Chart & Staff Resumes
- Documentation of organization registration
- Proposal (scope of work)

Bids that fail to follow this order will be risk losing points in their overall score.



#### 4. Evaluation and Award

Proposals will be evaluated by TPMA, as the third-party procurement agent, to ensure each submission meets all criteria outlined in this RFP. The procurement team will develop and use a scoring matrix that is agreed upon by WorkSource Montgomery to evaluate each proposal. Each section of the Scope of Work is worth the following number of points:

Section	Points
Statement of Need	10
Organizational Experience & Capacity	15
Performance & Accountability	15
Partnerships & Community Engagement	15
Program Service Delivery Model	20
Technology, Data, & Reporting	10
Financial & Fiscal Capabilities & Budget	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

All items that are mandatory (e.g., inclusion of attachments, financials, etc.) are considered pass/fail.

#### 5. Notice of Award

All respondents will be notified by email as to their award status. Unsuccessful respondents who wish to obtain information on the evaluation of their proposal should submit a written request to: Nate' Gordon, Director of Administration & Finance, WorkSource Montgomery, [ngordon@worksourcemontgomery.com](mailto:ngordon@worksourcemontgomery.com). Unsuccessful respondents are encouraged to re-apply for future opportunities.

#### 6. Appeals Process

Any disagreements resulting from this procurement process can be addressed to: Nate' Gordon, Director of Administration & Finance, WorkSource Montgomery, [ngordon@worksourcemontgomery.com](mailto:ngordon@worksourcemontgomery.com). Appeals must be made within 14 calendar days of notification of non-award.

#### 7. Fiscal Review

TPMA, in coordination with WorkSource Montgomery will also conduct a fiscal review of all qualified proposals. We will review proposal budgets, organization audits, and responses to questions related to fiscal operations. WorkSource Montgomery reserves the right to review and request further information regarding the respondent's financial situation. WorkSource Montgomery reserves the right to assess the risk posed by any recent, current, or potential litigation, court action, investigation, audit, bankruptcy, receivership, financial insolvency, merger, acquisition, or other event that might affect an organization's ability to operate the requested program.

#### 8. Past Program Performance

TPMA may review a respondent's performance on any previous and/or existing grant agreement(s) as well as check references submitted from other grantors. Achievement of grant agreement outcomes, along with compliance with programmatic and fiscal guidelines and timelines may be evaluated. The review team may perform an in-depth evaluation of all responsive proposals based upon the criteria herein. Prior to its final funding decision, WorkSource Montgomery may also: 1) meet with representatives of the responding entity to discuss the proposed program and budget; 2) identify and/or



negotiate program or budget changes the responding entity must make as a condition of funding; and 3) identify other documentation the entity must provide as a condition of funding.

### **9. Accessibility and Equal Opportunity**

TPMA and WSM is committed to equal access for all customers to all services. All contractors must ensure equal opportunity to all individuals. No individual shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act or American Rescue Plan Act funded program or activity because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, English proficiency, sexual orientation, political affiliation or belief. All entities are expected to demonstrate full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) and all other equal opportunity laws. This includes ensuring contract staff receive accessibility training and may involve developing accessibility plans. All respondents must ensure all written materials and communications include the statement: “Reasonable accommodations and auxiliary equipment and services are available upon request.”



### Attachment A: Cover Sheet

Please complete this **mandatory** cover sheet accordingly.

Organization Name				
Address				
Phone Number				
Number of Years in Business				
FEIN #				
DUNS #				
Acknowledgement that Proposing Entity is up to date on taxes and not currently debarred or suspended.		YES		NO
Type of Organization (check all that apply)				
Contact Person				
Contact Person's Email Address				
Signatory Authority Signature				

**Proposed Budget Amount:**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_



### Attachment B: Conflict of Interest Form

By submitting a proposal, the authorized signatory authority of the bidding entity certifies to his/her knowledge and belief that there is no conflict of interest (real or apparent) inherent in the bid or in delivering the scope of work if WorkSource Montgomery awards a contract. A conflict of interest would arise if any individual involved in the preparation of this proposal and delivery of services has a financial or other interest or would be likely to gain financially or personally from the award of a contract. The same would hold true for any member of the individual's family, partner, or an organization employing or about to employ any of the above as a direct result of the successful award of a contract under the RFP. WorkSource Montgomery reserves the right to disqualify a bidding entity should a conflict of interest be discovered during the solicitation process.

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Signatory Authority Name	Signature	Date
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*Note: This form is a **mandatory** required document to be considered for the contract.*



### Attachment C: Budget

Please complete the **mandatory** budget form and narrative explanation below for applicable line items.

Program Staff Salaries	\$
Program Staff Benefits	\$
Staff Travel	\$
Operational (supplies, communication, etc.)	\$
Facilities and Technology Costs	\$
Work Experience Costs	\$
Participant Training Costs	\$
Supportive Services Costs	\$
Other Program Costs	\$
Administrative or Indirect Expenses (maximum is 10% of personnel costs)	\$
<b>TOTAL BUDGET REQUEST (max. \$100,000.00)</b>	\$

**Budget Narrative:** Please provide a detailed explanation for each budget line item to justify the cost. Examples of explanations include job titles, wage rate, hours worked/charged, types of benefits and rates, estimated mileage/visits to locations, office and other supplies, and agency program operation or program costs.

**All funding of this RFP is contingent upon WorkSource Montgomery and/or partner agreements having fund availability and may change based on increase/decrease in allocations, de-obligation of funds, new initiatives, and decisions of the WorkSource Montgomery.**



### Attachment D: References

Bidders are required to provide three letters of references who can verify their experience, along with a contact phone number or email. References should be for experience in the past 5 years.

**Reference #1 Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Title and Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # and email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference #2 Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Title and Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # and email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference #3 Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Title and Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # or email \_\_\_\_\_

List the agency contact information for all current contracts or contracts for the past 3 years. Do not duplicate those listed as references.