

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

SUBJECT: Website revision for St. Lawrence County One-Stop Career Center (the “One-Stop”) and Workforce Development Board (the “WDB”).

Introduction:

The WDB is seeking proposals from qualified contractors to assist in redesigning its current One-Stop/WDB website (the “Website”). The redesign will entail working with One-Stop and WDB Staff and One-Stop Partners to design a Website that complies with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) and that is graphically appealing, intuitive to users, and comprehensive. The Website redesign will also entail working with the County’s Information Technology Staff to ensure that the Website is fully integrated with and linked to the County’s website.

The current Website’s address is: <http://www.slconestop.com>

Parties with an Interest in the Website

The successful proposer will work, directly and indirectly, with the following parties:

The County: The RFP process will be conducted in accordance with St. Lawrence County’s procurement policies. It will also be conducted so as to ensure that it complies with applicable State and federal procurement requirements since the funds to pay for the work to be done will originate from the State and federal governments. Personnel from the County will be members of the Website Development Committee referred to below.

County IT Staff: Though the Website will not be hosted by the County, the successful proposer must collaborate with the staff of the County’s Information Technology Department to ensure that the two-way links between the Website and the County’s website are updated and meet County’s technical requirements.

One-Stop Staff: Daily management responsibilities for the One-Stop are for the most part handled by employees of the SLC Department of Social Services who act on behalf of the One-Stop Partners. Several of the One-Stop staff will serve on the Website Development Committee referred to below.

Partners: For the purposes of this RFP, the term One-Stop Partners include the following organizations: Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR), the New York State Department of Labor (DOL), the St. Lawrence County Department of Social

Services (DSS), St. Lawrence County Office for the Aging, the St. Lawrence County Veterans Department (Veterans Dept.), the St. Lawrence County Youth Bureau, the St. Lawrence-Lewis Board of Cooperative and Educational Services (BOCES), and the State University of New York at Canton (SUNY Canton). Partner staff have collaborated in the development of this RFP's specifications and may serve on the Website Development Committee referred to below. The successful proposer must collaborate with the Partners' IT staffs to ensure that the two-way links between the Website and the Partners' websites are established and/or updated and meet the technical requirements of all parties.

Website Development Committee: The Website Development Committee (the "Committee") referenced in the "Selection Process and Award of Contract" below will be from among WDB staff, staff of the One-Stop, Partners, and WDB members. The Committee will review all the proposals that are submitted on time and that comply with all other the technical requirements of this RFP. The Committee will then make a recommendation to the WDB's Executive Committee for final decision on who the WDB should select as its preferred vendor and any special conditions and/or specifications that should be negotiated with the vendor (see next paragraph).

Workforce Development Board: The WDB is a 24-member volunteer board, appointed by the SLC Board of Legislators whom the BOL has charged with general oversight of the County's workforce development system. The WDB's Executive Committee approved this RFP at its February 24, 2016 meeting and is authorized to make the final selection of the preferred vendor. The Executive Committee will make its choice based on the recommendations by and its communications with the Website Development Committee.

Background Information for Current Website:

- One-Stop/WDB Website address: <http://www.slconestop.com>
- Website hosted by: Haenel Communications Technologies (Canton, NY)
- County website address: <http://www.stlawco.org>

Budget for This Project

Proposers are put on notice that the One-Stop/WDB's budget for this project does not exceed \$4,000.00. This ceiling includes the cost of acquiring the required software for maintaining, managing, and upgrading the Website, whether the proposer includes this cost in its proposal or whether the WDB is responsible for acquiring the necessary software separately. Please include ongoing website hosting fees, annual maintenance fees or other recurring costs.

If the proposer's all-in cost proposal exceeds \$4,000.00, the WDB reserves the right to negotiate reductions in the scope of work based on the schedule of values that the proposers must submit with their proposals.

Contents of Proposal Response:

In order to help review each submission, St. Lawrence County requires that your Proposal Response be organized according to the following format.

1. Title Page
2. Letter of Introduction
3. Table of Contents
4. Description of capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the RFP
5. Cost Proposal. In addition to a lump sum proposal, you are required to include a detailed schedule of values for the work involved (see attached schedule of values).
6. Staff Assignment to the Project. Please provide resumes of staff you will assign to the project if your firm is selected.
7. Experience in Website Development. In particular, projects of similar size and scope in the Government and Educational areas. Experience in developing websites for other One-Stops and/or Workforce Development Boards is a plus.
8. References
9. Other Information (Optional)

Statement of Needs:

DESIRED OUTCOMES

The One-Stop/WDB Website is often the first point of contact the public has with the County's workforce development system. Currently the Website is static and sometimes confusing to users. It is difficult to maintain and update. And, it does not fully integrate the changes required by WIOA into the content available to the public.

The purpose of this RFP is to find an outside vendor who can help transform the site into an interactive, user-friendly marketing and information tool. Another purpose is to make the site compliant with WIOA. The goal is to improve its organization, usability, and visual appeal for internal and external users, and especially for job seekers and employers.

We seek to provide online content that is fast to download, easy to navigate, and simple to search, again especially for job seekers and employers. It should be mobile-friendly with a diversity of browsers, operating systems, connection speeds, and monitors and be easily indexed by major search engines and spiders. The design should build the One-Stop's overall image by providing consistent graphics, navigation, and written content. The site should be easy to update and maintain by WDB staff, including those who are not technologically savvy.

In keeping with this last outcome, it is important to stress that the vendor must assist the One-Stop/WDB to select and acquire website management and maintenance software that prioritizes ease of maintenance and revision by One-Stop/WDB staff and which is commercially available, inexpensive, and regularly updated

and whose use can be mastered easily by ordinary people, i.e., the current staff. The Website should be designed with this specification in mind and must include hands-on training of designated One-Stop/WDB staff in its installation, use, updating, and trouble-shooting. In other words, while the successful proposer may play a support and technical assistance role in the on-going evolution of the Website, one of the core goals of this RFP is to assure that most of the website management, maintenance, and amendment is done by internal staff.

Cross-reference information should be hyperlinked from page to page within the website, with the homepage link always visible. The site should have the capability to maintain an archive of existing and past records such as meeting minutes, agendas, news releases, newsletters, etc. It should support streaming audio and video, including real-time streaming. It should also support – even though it will not initially include – links to and interaction with social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

We are also seeking a cohesive solution to integrating with the various Partners' websites (see Partners listing in "Parties with an Interest in the Website" section above). Partners' sites should not be restricted from using unique design features on their sites. Individual Partners will maintain their own content. Again, updating and maintaining the sites and linking content to the Website should be simple for non-technical staff to do.

The site must be structured so that various audiences – especially job seekers and employers, but also One-Stop/WDB staff, Partners, WDB members and advisors, County, State, federal officials, media and the general public – can easily look up vital information.

Designated One-Stop/WDB staff should be able to monitor and update content to maintain quality control. They must have the ability to review and approve or disapprove of content before it is uploaded to the Website.

One-Stop/WDB and Partner staff must have continual and easy access to technical support provided in a customer-friendly manner. Training opportunities for staff must be provided.

As noted earlier, the Website will not be housed on an in-house server. Nonetheless, the WDB does NOT automatically expect that the vendor will provide the necessary server space for the site. The WDB is prepared to procure server space for the Website separate from this RFP if necessary. However, the WDB will accept proposals that include the provision of server space by or through the vendor, provided that it is separately priced and separable from the other required design, installation, and training services tasks.

The proposed contract should include a Service Level Agreement from both the developer (if the supporting software breaks) and the hosting company (if the service or network breaks).

In the same way, even though this RFP above said that "the vendor must assist the One-Stop/WDB to select and acquire website management and maintenance software," the WDB will accept proposals that include the provision of the required management and maintenance software by or through the vendor, provided that it is separately priced and separable from the other required design, installation, and training services tasks.

Finally, vendors should understand that they are **NOT** expected to draft most of the informational text for the Website. One-Stop and/or WDB staff will in most cases draft the text. However, the vendor must be prepared to edit such text as needed so that it can be incorporated into the Website as necessary.

PROJECTED WEBSITE REQUIREMENTS:

Note: the following requirements are subject to change based on a collaboration between the WDB and the successful vendor. The WDB expects that the vendor will help redesign and reorganize the Website. The specifications described below are meant to be a starting point for the vendor and not to be complete or final.

The firm selected under this RFP will work with One-Stop/WDB staff to design and implement a revised Website whose general principles of organization shall include, but not be limited to, that it:

- Supports the mission and goals of the One-Stop, its Partners, and the WDB;
- Provides an uncluttered home page and otherwise easy and convenient navigation to One-Stop/WDB staff, Partners, WDB members and advisors, County, State, federal officials, media and the general public, but **especially job seekers and employers**;
- Provides easy maintenance and updating of data by One-Stop/WDB staff using commercially available, inexpensive, regularly updated software whose use can be mastered easily by ordinary people; and
- Has a consistent appearance throughout the site.

Prospective vendors must **first** define the software they propose that the One-Stop/WDB should use to manage, maintain, and upgrade the Website. Vendors shall also specify whether they propose to provide this software as part of their proposals. If they do propose to provide the software, the total installed cost of the software must be distinguished from the rest of the services to be provided and must be quoted separately. Even if they do not propose to furnish the software as part of their proposal, the proposals must provide the One-Stop/WDB with all the information it may need about the software (in sufficient detail) that the proposers recommend that the One-Stop/WDB should use so that the One-Stop/WDB can quickly determine its cost to acquire and keep in effect the required software.

Then the vendors must, at a minimum:

- Maintain but reorganize many of the features of the existing One-Stop/WDB website, though the graphical design may be modified; these include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - On the Home (Welcome) page:
 - Reorganize the Welcome Page “real estate” to make better use of it and to highlight links to job seekers and employers and military veterans;
 - The One-Stop logo and the WIOA identifier (American Job Center) must remain the same, though their sizes may be varied; please note that the

WIOA identifier may be changed by the federal government as part of its compliance with WIOA; the design of the Website must make it easy for WDB staff to insert new logos when required;

- A modified toolbar that includes all the key "categories" of the current site;
- Eliminate the page's mission statement; its inclusion on the WDB's category page is sufficient;
- If there's enough real estate, keep the One-Stop's picture;
- Room on the Welcome page needs to be found for the Summer Youth Program;
- Make the links to the Partners at the bottom of the page "live";
- Structure the calendar of events on the Welcome page so that entries on it automatically delete when the last date of an entry has come and gone; integrate the Welcome page's entries with the Calendar category page so that entries on the latter automatically appear on the Welcome page no less than two weeks before the first event in the notice and delete the day after the last event in the notice; and
- Make the page visually more appealing.

○ On the Subsidiary (Category) Pages

- Most of the textual content on these pages will be provided by the One-Stop/WDB staff and must be completely revised;
 - Vendor's overall responsibility is to make sure that the final texts are grammatically correct and that their layouts are as graphically appealing and easy to read as the nature of the information allows;
 - Some parts of the category pages may be structured as question and answer sequences.
 - The job seekers sections will be more complete and interactive. The vendor will work with staff to make the "Financial Assistance" section more focused on both classroom and on-job-training. New sections on the Summer Program and on Youth work experience and internships will be added. A section focusing on vets will be added. A section for testimonials from job seekers who have found work through the One-Stop may also be added; and
 - The employer category will also be upgraded. OJT will be rewritten. Customized and classroom training will be added. A section for testimonials from employers who have found work through the One-Stop may also be added.
- Create a navigational structure, which allows visitors to quickly and unambiguously locate desired data starting from the home page, without resorting to search boxes or site maps.
 - Upgrade the search feature.
 - Provide a counter and propose and incorporate a traffic analysis system that will allow the One-Stop/WDB to identify usage patterns on which future Website modifications can be based.

- Create pages that are printable and designed to load quickly and consistently using a variety of connectivity platforms.
- Develop a site map.
- Provide documentation and a style guide at the end of the design work.
- Comply with all requirements (accessibility for disabled).
- Perform rigorous testing of the revised site.
- Provide training on using templates (if any) and create written standard operating procedures for managing, maintaining, and upgrading the Website.
- Provide a breakdown of unit cost (schedule of values).
- Provide both backup and security protocols, train staff on how to implement them, and advise the One-Stop/WDB on providers of such services.

Additional features of the Website will include (but aren't limited to) the following:

- Public access to all of the features on the website should not be dependent on a specific browser, i.e., the web interface should be browser agnostic and works with commonly used browsers found on Windows, Android, Linux and Mac computer systems.
- Pages and features must be compatible with limited bandwidth access by the public. In other words, the One-Stop/WDB is concerned with public access being hindered by a digital divide.
- Web interface options should accommodate individuals with disabilities in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA):
- All text, graphics, video, source code, and editorial content used in connection with the website design will become the sole property of the WDB and may be used for any purpose, including, but not limited to, posting, disclosure, reproduction, publication, broadcast, and transmission. Additionally, the WDB may use any concepts, ideas, or techniques contained within the designed website for any reason or purpose whatsoever including, but not limited to, developing and marketing services or applications using such data.
- The Website must not require plug-ins as a default.
- The contractor shall covenant that any material published or technologies used in the project will not violate or infringe on any copyright, trademark, patent, statutory, common law or proprietary rights of others, or contain anything libelous or harmful.

- Mobile-friendly.

All costs of preparing the proposal response to this RFP and participation in the overall process will be borne by the Offerer, and not the One-Stop or the WDB.

Selection Process and Award of Contract:

- A. The Website Development Committee will review and evaluate the proposals submitted in response to this Request for Proposals. Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the information provided with the proposal, past performances, recommendations, and the Proposer’s ability to perform and understanding of the work to be performed..
- B. After the initial review, interviews will be scheduled with selected finalists. The number of finalists will be at the discretion of the Website Development Committee. Decisions of the Committee regarding finalist selection are final. It is anticipated that the number of finalists will range from 2-4 firms.
- C. Additional information regarding the One-Stop/WDB’s expectation of firms in regards to the interviews will be provided to finalists.
- D. Firms will be expected to bring the key members of the team they propose for the project to the interview. **Since the individuals assigned to the project have a tremendous impact on the final product, we are making this requirement mandatory.** The intent of the interview is to find out which firm and project team is best for the project, not to listen to a sales pitch.
- E. The finalists will be ranked by the members of the Website Development Committee utilizing a scoring matrix that will be based on the following criteria:
 - **40%** - Cost Proposal
 - **30%** - Approach of the Proposer to provide services identified in the “Contents of Proposals Response” and the “Statement of Needs” of this RFP.
 - **20%** - Availability of skilled staff, and references and/or portfolio information for Key Staff.
 - **10%** - Firm’s experience in similar projects related to web design, with an emphasis on experience with projects of similar size and scope in the Government and Educational areas.
- F. After the proposals have been evaluated the Committee will make a recommendation to the St. Lawrence County Workforce Development Board’s Executive Committee to authorize contract negotiations with the firm best qualified based on the Committee’s evaluation. If contract terms deemed fair and reasonable by the WDB’s Executive Committee cannot be agreed upon with this firm, the negotiations will be formally terminated with the selected firm. The WDB reserves the right for its Executive Committee to negotiate with the second most qualified firm. This process will continue until an agreement is reached or until the list of qualified finalists is exhausted.

Timeline

The following timeline is subject to change by the WDB.

<u>EVENT</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>
Issue RFP	February 26, 2016	
Clarification Questions Due	March 7, 2016	2:00 p.m. (local time)
Pre-Proposal Conference Call*	March 10, 2016	2:00 p.m. (local time)
Deadline for receipt of RFP responses**	March 25, 2016	4:00 p.m. (local time)

Initial Website Design Committee Review	April 4, 2016
Vendor Interviews***	Week of April 25, 2016
Final Website Design Committee Review	April 25, 2016
Authorization of WDB Executive Committee	April 27, 2016
Last Date for Contract Start	May 2, 2016
Last Date for Initial Site Production	May 23, 2016
Last Date for Completion of the Work	June 13, 2016

* Contact Jenn Free by March 5, 2016 via email at jfree@stlawco.org with the names, email addresses and phone numbers of those vendors representatives who would like to participate in the conference call.

**Proposals will not be publicly opened. Cost information will not be released since award will be made on best value analysis.

***Select Respondents will be invited to give a formal presentation with time for a question and answer period. The session will last approximately one (1) hour.

Receipt of Proposals:

A. Proposals must be received no later than 4:00 PM on March 25, 2016. Please address all proposals to:

St. Lawrence County Workforce Development Board
Assistant to the Executive Director
80 State Highway 310, Suite 8
Canton, NY 13617

B. **One hard copy of a Proposal must be submitted.** It must be clearly marked **ORIGINAL** and must be executed by an authorized member of the firm submitting the Proposal. A copy of the original must also be provided electronically to both the Purchasing Agent and the Executive Director of the Workforce Development Board (at JFree@stlawco.org) so that the One-Stop/WDB may made copies of it for distribution to all the Committee and Executive Committee members.

C. The WDB reserves the right to reject any or all proposals in whole or in part.

Contact Person:

All questions related to this RFP should be submitted in writing on or before March 7, 2016 to:

Tom Plastino
Executive Director
St. Lawrence County Board Workforce Development Board
80 State Highway 310
Canton, NY 13617
Email: tplastino@slcida.com

**SCHEDULE OF VALUES
Request for Proposals**

Vendor Name: _____

Funds Requested

	Total
Website redesign Cost	
Website Management Software Cost	
Training of staff on software program	
Preparation of Standard Operating Procedures on website maintenance, management, and modification	
Hosting charge (per year)	
Assistance in choosing the website software (if vendor doesn't provide as part of its proposal)	
Total Cost of Work	
<u>Costs for Extra Work</u>	
<u>Key Individual Name</u> <u>Hourly Rate</u>	