

THE MIDLANDS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA (MWDA)

Request for Proposals (RFP)

For IT SUPPORT

Issue Date: May 1, 2023

**Prepared by: Midlands Workforce Development Board
100 Executive Center Drive, Suite 218
Columbia, SC 29210
803-744-1670**

**Submit to:
Tammy Beagen
Interim Workforce Development Director
Midlands Workforce Development Board
tbeagen@midlandsworkforce.org**

***Deadline for submission:
May 31, 2023
5:00 pm
Late proposals will not be considered.***

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Part I.

Project Objective

The Midlands Workforce Development Board (MWDB) is accepting proposals to provide Information Technology (IT) Support Services for the staff and public Resource Rooms in its three (3) SC Works Midlands Centers: Richland, Lexington and Fairfield counties. Additionally, the MWDB is accepting proposals to provide IT Support Services to the staff computers in the Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG) Administrative building.

Description of the Existing Technical Environment

The SC Works Midlands Centers are located in Fairfield, Lexington and Richland counties. Network resources are provided directly by the MWDB at the Lexington and Richland Centers while network resources are provided by the county government in Fairfield. Network resources include, but are not limited to, broadband Internet access, printing/scanning/faxing capabilities, and free Public WiFi (during normal business hours).

The CMCOG Administrative building is located at 236 Stoneridge Drive in Columbia, SC. The network resources are provided directly by the Central Midlands Council of Governments. The network resources include, but are not limited to, broadband Internet access, wireless internet access in the building, and printing/scanning/faxing capabilities.

Lexington & Richland-

Each location consists of a local area network (LAN) for the SC Works Center Staff, partners, as well as networked classroom space and a Resource Center segment for Public use. Each network connects to the Internet via wired broadband service through Segra Communications. The LANs are provided by a hosted firewall and router. The LANs between the 2 offices are connected via Virtual Private Network (VPN) connections. Both locations share a full function Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) Private Branch Exchange (PBX) on site with Interactive Voice Response (IVR) menus, voicemail, voicemail attachment sent via email and Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) trunk service to a local provider.

There are approximately 125 desktop computers distributed throughout the Centers on the Resource Center networks and 20 laptops distributed across the Staff networks. All Staff laptops are configured to allow the user to move from one Center to the next and still be capable of seamlessly accessing domain resources like the file server. Each computer is capable of being securely accessed remotely for routine maintenance, troubleshooting, and user assistance through a variety of different methods which includes Windows Remote Desktop, Windows Quick Assist, etc. All computers have Microsoft Office Suite products and have a variety of software used to aid customers including, but not limited to, Adobe Reader/Flash, Google Chrome, Mavis Beacon typing software, and ZoomText Magnifier/Reader for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible computers (1 per center).

Each Center has at least one multi-function printer. Secure Wi-Fi access is provided for employers and other partners operating in the center. Wireless internet is provided for the public.

Fairfield -

Resource Center services are provided Fairfield County and include broadband Internet access and printing/scanning/faxing capabilities. Staff members connect their PCs to the county-provided, network resources like the Internet and printer. The current provider is TruVista Communications. Public-use Resource PCs are connected to the internet via a secure network with one using a wireless network access.

Central Midlands Council of Governments -

The office utilizes approximately 150 staff computers in the building through a local area network (LAN). Each network connects to the Internet via wired broadband service through Spirit Communications. The LANs are provided by a hosted firewall and router that is shared with the two SC Works Centers and another departmental office. The office is also served by Segra's telephone service.

Each computer is capable of being securely accessed remotely for routine maintenance, troubleshooting, and user assistance through a variety of different methods which includes Windows Remote Desktop, Windows QuickAssist, etc. All computers have Microsoft Office Suite products and have a variety of software used to aid customers including, but not limited to, Adobe Reader/Flash, MicroSoft Office Suite products and Google Chrome.

The office has at least one shared printer and multi-function printer. Secure Wi-Fi access is provided for staff and visitors in the office.

Part II.

Scope of Work

The Midlands Workforce Development Board seeks to establish an ongoing partnership with an external IT support vendor to provide support in the following areas:

1. Day-to-day troubleshooting of hardware and software issues on the Centers', PCs, and network. This support should extend to peripheral devices such as monitors, keyboards, mice, UPS units, printers, desktop scanners, etc.
2. 24/7 monitoring of key systems with automated failure notification.
3. Daily (8:00 am-5:00 pm) help desk coverage for key systems with 1-hour reply time and 24-hour target response time (or better)
4. Daily (8:00 am-5:00 pm) for laptops and PCs with 1-hour reply time and 24-hour target response time (or better).
5. Timely repair of failures or malfunctions on all systems, including malware infections, intrusion detection, and other security breaches
6. Timely assistance with changes and reconfigurations on all systems, including implementation of security best practices.
7. Timely assistance interacting with external software or hardware vendors to install, configure, troubleshoot, or repair systems.
8. Logging and reporting of requests for assistance, ideally including an online support ticket portal.
9. Comprehensive patch management for covered equipment, including OS patches and application patches.
10. Regular maintenance for servers, PCs, switches, and other network equipment, including regular review of system logs to identify security and maintenance issues.
11. Regularly scheduled on-site presence by support engineers.
12. Deployment of replacement PCs and laptops, including installation of OS updates, application software, and network and peripheral device configuration.
13. Assistance with developing specifications for new equipment and software or identifying appropriate hardware or software solutions, including preparing quotes for purchase.
14. Record-keeping and administration for maintenance and support contracts and license management for server and network-related software, including timely notification of pending contract renewals.
15. Development and maintenance of administrative documentation for systems and applications.
16. Input and advice on implementation of new capabilities and systems, including cloud-based options.
17. Input and advice on security best practices.
18. Input and advice on preparation of annual IT plans and budgets, including budgetary estimates for specific recommendations and proposals.
19. Assistance maintaining continuous operations during a disaster recovery scenario.

Part III.

Invitation to Propose - General Information

Sealed proposals for IT Services for three (3) SC Works Centers within the Midlands Area- Fairfield, Lexington and Richland and the Central Midlands Council of Governments main office- will be received by the Midlands Workforce Development Board (MWDB), until 5:00 pm on Wednesday, May 1, 2023. The proposals will be opened publicly and scheduled for review by a Review Panel. The winning proposal will be selected by the Midlands Workforce Development Board.

Key Events and Dates

Request for Proposals Issued	May 1, 2023
Deadline for Receipt of Questions	May 15, 2023
Deadline for Receipt of Proposals by MWDB	May 31, 2023; 5:00 pm
Formal Review Process of Proposals Begins	week of June 5, 2023
Written Notification to Successful Bidder	by June 19, 2023
Contract/Budget Negotiations	June 19 - 30, 2023
Final Contract Issued	Upon completion of negotiations

1. Proposals will be considered as specified herein or attached hereto under the terms and conditions of this proposal.
2. Proposals must be made in the official name of the firm or individual under which business is conducted (showing official business address) and must be signed by a person duly authorized to legally bind the person, partnership, company, or corporation submitting the proposal.
3. Proposers are to include all applicable requested information and may include any additional information they wish to be considered.
4. Proposals will be received by the Midlands Workforce Development Board (MWDB) until 5:00 pm on May 31, 2023.
5. **An electronic copy in .pdf format must be received by Tammy Beagen, Interim Workforce Development Director, at tbeagen@midlandsworkforce.org. It is incumbent upon the Proposer to confirm that the transmission is received. If preferred by the proposer, an original and four (4) copies may ALSO be delivered to the Midlands Workforce Development Board. See delivery options and information below:**

PRIMARY: E-mail to: tbeagen@midlandsworkforce.org

Other supplemental options:

Mail proposals to:

Tammy Beagen, Interim Workforce Development Director
Midlands Workforce Development Board
100 Executive Center Drive, Suite 218
Columbia, SC 29210

Hand deliver or Express mail to:

Tammy Beagen, Interim Workforce Development Director
Midlands Workforce Development Board
100 Executive Center Drive, Suite 218
Columbia, SC 29210

The proposal envelope should be marked with the RFP name and number and the proposer's name. Proposals received after the time established for receiving proposals will not be considered.

6. The Based upon funding availability, the Workforce Development Board may extend a grant beyond the initial period of award, if it appears in the best interest of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and is agreeable with the grantee. The extension may be less than, but will not exceed three additional years.
7. Prohibition of Gratuities: It shall be unethical for any person to offer, or give, or agree to give any MWDB employee or former MWDB employee, or for any MWDB employee or former MWDB employee to solicit, demand, accept, or agree to accept from another person, a gratuity or an offer of employment in connection with any decision, approval, disapproval, recommendation, or preparation of any part of a RFP, influencing the content of any specification or procurement standard, rendering of advice, investigation, auditing, or in any other advisory capacity in any proceeding or application, request for ruling, determination, claim or controversy, or other particular matter, pertaining to any program requirement or a contract or subcontract, or to any solicitation or proposal therefore.
8. Questions that may arise must be submitted to mwdb@midlandsworkforce.org. Questions must be submitted in writing and received by **May 15, 2023**. After this date, no further questions will be addressed. Responses to questions will be posted on the website at www.midlandsworkforce.org by May 19.
9. All proposals must be complete and carefully worded and must convey all of the information requested, in order to be considered responsive. If the proposal fails to conform to the essential requirements of the Request for Proposal, MWDB will be the judge as to whether that variance is significant enough to consider the proposal non-responsive and therefore not to be considered.
10. MWDB reserves the right to waive any irregularities, or to reject any or all proposals. MWDB also reserves the right to determine which proposal is, in the MWDB's judgment, the lowest responsive and responsible proposal.
11. Proposers must comply with all applicable governmental and local agency requirements.
12. No Proposer may withdraw his/her proposal after the time established for receiving proposals or before the award and execution of the contract, unless the award is delayed for a period exceeding ninety (90) calendar days.
13. Unless stated otherwise herein, the basic and governing language of the contract resulting from this solicitation shall be comprised of the RFP documents, including any attachments and amendments and the successful firm's signed Statement. In the event of a conflict between the two documents, this RFP shall govern.

PART IV.

Proposal Content and Format

The format for proposals must follow the following outline. At a minimum, the information requested in each area must be referenced in the proposal. Additional information on each subject area is welcome.

1. Give the names of the persons who will be authorized to make representations for your firm, their titles, addresses, and telephone numbers.
2. Relevant Experience and Qualifications of the Firm as it relates to the work outlined in this request for proposal.
3. History of your firm, the number of years it has been in business, and its current ownership arrangement.
4. Describe the manner in which the firm will accomplish the scope of work and provide the services solicited.
5. Provide a budget. The price quoted should be inclusive.
6. Identify any sub-proposers that may be used in performance of this contract. Indicate that all sub-proposers will be subject to all requirements of the RFP.
7. State whether or not your firm has been involved in any litigation within the past five (5) years, arising out of your performance. Explain fully if it has been involved in any litigation.
8. Names, addresses, e-mails addresses and telephone numbers of at least three (3) contact persons/references involved in other similar projects. MWDB reserves the right to contact other persons not specifically listed as references but who may have direct knowledge of the firm's previous work.

PART V.

Instructions to Proposers

PRE-PROPOSAL RESPONSIBILITY. It is the Proposer's responsibility to carefully examine and study the Proposal Document, and other related data identified in the Proposing Documents.

Proposers shall be familiar with all federal, state and local laws and regulations that may affect cost, progress, and performance of work.

AMENDMENTS TO SOLICITATION. This solicitation may be amended at any time prior to opening. All actual and prospective proposers should monitor the following web site for issuance of amendments: www.midlandsworkforce.org. Proposers must indicate in some way through its proposal submission that they received the amendment. If the solicitation is amended, then all terms and conditions which are not modified remain unchanged.

All amendments to and interpretations of the solicitation shall be in writing from the procurement official. The procurement official shall not be legally bound by any amendment or interpretation that is not in writing.

PROPOSER'S QUALIFICATION. Proposers must, upon request of the Midlands Workforce Development Board, furnish satisfactory evidence of their ability to provide services in accordance with the terms and conditions of these specifications. The Midlands Workforce Development Board reserves the right to make the final determination as to the proposer's ability to provide the products and/or services requested herein.

REJECTION/CANCELLATION. This solicitation does not commit the Midlands Workforce Development Board to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal, or to procure or contract for the articles of goods or services. Midlands Workforce Development Board reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to cancel this solicitation in its entirety if it is in the best interest of Midlands Workforce Development Board to do so.

RESPONSIVENESS/IMPROPER OFFERS. Offers for supplies or services other than those specified will not be considered unless authorized by the solicitation.

SUBMITTING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION. Proposers must clearly mark as "confidential" each part of their proposal which they consider to be proprietary information that could be exempt from disclosure under South Carolina's current Freedom of Information Act. Midlands Workforce Development Board reserves the right to determine whether this information should be exempt from disclosure and no legal action may be brought against the Council of Governments or its agents for its determination in this regard. Note: Marking your entire proposal confidential/proprietary is not in conformance with the S. C. Freedom of Information Act.

POLICY ON COMPETITION. The Midlands Workforce Development Board will conduct all procurement transactions in a manner providing full and open competition. The RFP identifies all evaluation factors and their relative importance. All responses will be honored to the maximum extent practical. Technical evaluations will be made of all proposals received. Awards will be made to the responsible firm whose proposal is most advantageous to the Midlands Workforce Development Board staff will carry out procurement review responsibilities with complete impartiality and without preferential treatment to any response.

All prospective respondents shall follow the formal point of contact as set out herein and shall not lobby individual board members, officers, or employees of MWDB. Failure to follow these guidelines will be grounds for disqualification.

APPEAL AND PROTEST POLICY. Offerors dissatisfied with decisions regarding contract award and/or other aspects of the procurement process can appeal to the Midlands Workforce Development Board Executive Committee. The protest must be filed in writing with the Workforce Development Director within one week of the announcement of contract awards. (If the protestor wishes to appear before the Committee, it must be so specified in writing.) The Committee will review the protest and grant its decision within 30 days of the receipt of the written protest. The decisions of the Executive Committee are final.

DEBARMENTS/SUSPENSION. By submission of a response to this solicitation, proposers are certifying they are not suspended or debarred from doing business with any other governmental entity.

INDEMNIFICATION. The Midlands Workforce Development Board, its officers, agents, and employees shall be held harmless from liability from any claims, damages, and actions of any nature arising from the use of any materials furnished by the proposer, provided that such liability is not attributable to negligence on the part of the Midlands Workforce Development Board or failure of the Midlands Workforce Development Board to use the materials in the manner outlined by the proposer in descriptive literature or specifications submitted with the proposal.

PROPOSER PERSONNEL. The Proposer shall enforce strict discipline and good order among the Proposer's employees and other persons carrying out the Contract. The Proposer shall not permit employment of unfit person or persons not skilled in tasks assigned to them. By submission of this proposal, the proposer does hereby agree:

- a) to certify its compliance with the requirements of Chapter 14 of Title 8 of the S.C. Code of Laws regarding Unauthorized Aliens and Public Employment;
- b) to provide MWDB with any documents required to establish such compliance upon request; and
- c) to register, participate and require agreement from sub-proposers and sub-subproposers to register and participate in the federal work authorization program to verify the employment authorization of all new employees, or to employ only workers who supply the documents required pursuant to S.C. Code 8-14-20(B)(2).

Part VI.

General Contract Clauses

FORCE MAJEURE. The proposer shall not be liable for any excess costs if the failure to perform the contract arises out of causes beyond the control and without the fault or negligence of the proposer. Such causes may include, but are not restricted to acts of God or of the public enemy, acts of the government in either its sovereign or contractual capacity, fires, floods, epidemics, quarantine restrictions, strikes, freight embargoes, and unusually severe weather but in every case the failure to perform must be beyond the control and without the fault or negligence of the proposer. If the failure to perform is caused by default of a subproposer, and if such default arises out of the causes beyond the control of both the proposer and subproposer, and without the fault or negligence of either of them, the proposer shall not be liable for any excess costs for failure to perform, unless the supplies or services to be furnished by the subproposer were obtainable from other sources in sufficient time to permit the proposer to meet required delivery schedule.

SAVE HARMLESS. The successful proposal shall indemnify and save harmless the Midlands Workforce Development Board and all officers, agents, and employees, from all suits or claims of any character brought by reason of infringing on any patent, trademark or copyright. Proposer

shall have no liability to the Midlands Workforce Development Board if such patent, trade mark or copyright infringement or claim is based upon the proposer's use of material furnished to the proposer by the Midlands Workforce Development Board.

S. C. LAW CLAUSE. Upon award of a contract under this Statement, the person, partnership, association, or corporation to whom the award is made must comply with the Laws of South Carolina which require such person or entity to be authorized and/or licensed to do business with the State of South Carolina and/or its individual counties. By submission of this signed Proposal, the proposer agrees to subject himself to the jurisdiction and process of the courts of the State of South Carolina as to all matters and disputes arising or to arise under the contract and the performance thereof, including any questions as to the liability for taxes, licenses, or fees levied by the State and/or its individual counties.

TERMINATION. Subject to the conditions below, the contract may be terminated for any reason by the Midlands Workforce Development Board providing a thirty (30) day advance notice in writing is given to the proposer.

FOR CONVENIENCE. In the event that this contract is terminated or canceled upon request and for the convenience of the Midlands Workforce Development Board without the thirty (30) days advance written notice, then the Midlands Workforce Development Board may negotiate reasonable termination costs, if applicable.

FOR CAUSE. Termination by the Midlands Workforce Development Board for cause, default or negligence on the part of the contract shall be excluded from the foregoing conditions; termination costs, if any, shall not apply. The thirty (30) days advance notice requirement is waived and the default clause in this Proposal shall apply.

ASSIGNMENT. No contract or its provisions may be assigned, sublet, or transferred without the written consent of the Midlands Workforce Development Board.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION. The successful proposer will take affirmative action in complying with all federal and state requirements concerning fair employment and employment of the disabled, and concerning the treatment of all employees, without regard or discrimination by reason of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or physical disability.

CONTRACT AMENDMENTS, MODIFICATION AND CHANGE ORDERS. Any change orders, alterations, amendments or other modification hereunder shall not be effective unless reduced to writing and approved by the Midlands Workforce Development Board and the proposer.

TYPE OF CONTRACT. Midlands Workforce Development Board intends to sign a contract with one firm for the complete set of services included in this Request for Proposal.

COMPLIANCE WITH CODES, ORDINANCES, INDUSTRY STANDARDS. During the term of this contract, it shall be the firm's responsibility to ensure compliance with all applicable provisions of laws, codes, ordinances, rules and regulations, tariffs, and industry standards.

Part VII.

Review Committee Briefing

The chairperson of the evaluation panel will address each of the following areas with the review panel before the evaluation process begins.

- A. Conflict of Interest-Does any member of the panel have conflict of interest by sitting on the evaluation panel? The following are examples of conflicts of interest: (1) Part ownership in or employment with a company; (2) Family member works for or has part ownership in company; and/or (3) any other reason a member of the evaluation panel cannot give an impartial decision.
- B. Independent Evaluation-Each member of the evaluation panel must score each and every proposal independently. Members may not confer with each other in determining a score and no two proposals can be compared to each other for the purposes of determining scores.
- C. Rating Structure-The evaluation points for each award criteria will be assigned before evaluation process begins.
- D. Documentation of Scoring-Each member of the evaluation panel must support their reasoning with appropriate documentation and explanation.
- E. Oral Presentation-The panel may feel that an oral presentation is necessary to reach final decision.
- F. Protest Hearing-All decisions made by the panel are subject to protest. Each member and/or the whole panel may be called upon to explain or defend each rating.
- G. Confidentiality-Anything discussed during the whole evaluation process is to be considered confidential.

Part VIII.

Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria and weight value will form the basis upon which the Review Committee will evaluate proposals. Proposals receiving the minimum score to be considered (70) will be discussed by the review committee to determine best fit for the area's needs. The committee will make a recommendation of funding to the Midlands Workforce Development Board.

- Program Design/Response to Scope of Work/Approach (35 Points) - Candidate presents a clear picture of the manner in which services requested will be delivered.
- Offeror's Experience and Qualifications (30 Points) – Candidate has successfully completed similar projects and the staff has qualifications necessary to undertake this project.
- Cost (30 Points) – The price is reasonable and commensurate with the value offered by the proposer.
- Responsiveness of the Proposal (5 Points) – The information is presented in a clear, logical manner and is well organized.

Review Committee reserves the right to interview any and all proposers. Proposers should make themselves available for interview, if requested.

Response Cover Page

OFFEROR:

Organization Name: _____

Federal ID#: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Contact Person: _____

CERTIFICATION:

The information contained in this proposal fairly represents the Agency, Organization, or Business and its proposed operating plans and budget for the specified activity. I acknowledge that I have read and understand the requirements of the Request for Proposal and that the Agency, Organization, or Business is prepared to implement the activity as specified in this proposal. I certify that I am authorized to sign this application. This request is firm for a period of at least 60 days from the closing date for submission.

Signatory Official Name/Title

Signatory Official Signature (No stamps)

Date