



New Hampshire

Department of Education

New Hampshire Department of Education
Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation
21 South Fruit Street Suite 20
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

November 10, 2022

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP VR-2023**

Vendor Management Project-2nd Release

Vocational Rehabilitation

State of New Hampshire
Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation
Vendor Management Project

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SECTION 1 – Overview and Schedule

A. Executive Summary

The NH Department of Education (NHED), Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (VRNH), is seeking proposals from qualified entities to design and develop a comprehensive system for vendor management for the bureau. The contract should also include training and implementation documents, checklists, policies, procedures, and instructions for VR staff to implement the program for the bureau.

The Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation is an organization that assists individuals with disabilities in obtaining services and training to obtain and maintain employment in a career pathway. The VRNH process has many stages that involve vendor management. For instance, the bureau may need to find new neuropsychologists to provide evaluations; may need to assist an individual with transportation to attend career training; may need to obtain an evaluation to determine appropriate vehicle modifications required for independent transportation; and may need job development and employment services to assist in the development of a chosen career pathway with a community rehabilitation program (CRP).

Services provided to VRNH participants need to have an appropriate onboarding process for new vendors, method to evaluate effectiveness and various components to ensure quality assurance. The goal of the request is to have a comprehensive vendor management system to engage new vendors, measure existing vendors, establish performance metrics, and allow for continuous improvement within the system.

A comprehensive system and manual will be developed for the VRNH to execute the management system and three accompanying manuals will be developed: 1) for vendors interested in providing services to the bureau, 2) for the VRNH administration to execute the system, and 3) for VR staff to provide the services through the approved vendors to customers. Policy, if required, will be provided to execute any part of the system and the manuals will contain any procedure and forms necessary to fully provide services.

All program components and documents should be fully accessible and adhere to all ADA requirements.

It is the intent of the Department to award one contract through September 30, 2024, effective upon Governor & Council approval to ensure quality assurance with vendor management.

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B. Schedule

EVENT	DATE	LOCAL TIME
RFP Released to Proposers	11/8/22	
Zoom Vendor Conference https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4910339952 Meeting ID: 491 033 9952 One tap mobile +16465189805,,4910339952# US (New York) +16465588656,,4910339952# US (New York)	11/18/22	9:30 AM- 11:00AM (EST)
Proposer Inquiry Period Ends	11/28/22	4:30 PM
Final Agency Responses to Proposer Inquiries	12/2/22	4:30 PM
Proposers Submit Proposals	1/6/23	4:30 PM
Review and Scoring of Proposals	1/9/23	
Estimated Notification of Selection and Begin Contract Negotiations	1/13/23	
Estimated Date of Approval of Final Contract/Work Begins (Governor & Executive Council Approval)	Late February/Early March 2023	

C. Definitions

Community Rehabilitation Program Provider (CRP): Agencies or individuals approved to provide employment services to participants of the bureau of vocational rehabilitation

Pre-employment Transition Services: Services provided to students with disability in the following target areas:

- Job exploration counseling
- Work readiness training
- Work-based learning experiences
- Counseling on postsecondary opportunities
- Self-advocacy

Progressive employment: A model for career and job success that consists of short-term placement opportunities that allow the job seeker to try out a new work scenario, build valuable skills and experience and show an employer what they can do. With job seeker input, placement options that are geared to current skill level are made available. Work placement opportunities can include informational interviews; company tours; job shadowing and short-term placements.

Students with Disability: Individuals aged 14 to 21 who are enrolled in a secondary or post-secondary educational program.

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Supported Employment Services: Support services, including customized employment, and other appropriate services needed to assist an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability obtain and maintain employment.

SECTION 2 –Agency Overview

The New Hampshire Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation assists eligible New Hampshire citizens with disabilities to secure suitable employment and financial and personal independence by providing appropriate individualized rehabilitation services necessary. At least 15% of the Bureau’s federal funds must be set-aside to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services to Students with Disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation services.

Vendors are critical partners in assisting the bureau in helping individuals obtain and maintain employment. From the time an individual is referred for services until their case is closed successfully, various vendors provide crucial services to guide the individuals towards success. The bureau is seeking the development of a comprehensive system of vendor management to ensure quality assurance from the start of the process until the end that includes performance metrics for some vendors and procedures and forms to accompany each process.

Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) providers are integral to assisting individuals with disabilities achieve equal opportunities and reach their highest level of economic and social independence. CRP’s provide job development, placement, retention, and support services for individuals with disabilities. VR Counselors refer individuals to CRP services at the appropriate time to assist the participant in obtaining and maintaining employment.

Vocational Rehabilitation is a joint State/Federal program that seeks to empower people to make informed choices, build viable careers, and live more independently in the community.

SECTION 3 – Proposed Scope of Work

The bureau is seeking four components to accomplish the vendor management system in NH. The selected contractor must address solutions to all four areas in the proposal submitted. The four areas are:

1. Project management of all contract deliverables
2. Content writer for forms, processes, manuals, training curriculum
3. Case management solution for managing the vendors. It should be noted that the bureau has the AWARE case management system (Alliance Enterprises) in place to manage all customer cases and it would be advantageous to determine how this system could be utilized for this purpose.

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4. Training for VRNH staff and vendors on all new aspects of the comprehensive vendor management system.

The comprehensive vendor management system will include the following required deliverables:

- Three manuals to execute the management system (administration, vendors and VRNH staff/rehabilitation technicians/counselors)
- Policy drafts if any areas require an addition or change to current agency policy
- Procedure drafts for any areas requiring an addition or change to a current agency procedure
- Forms to accompany any deliverables for vendors or staff
- Checklists to accompany any procedures for administration, vendors, or staff
- Identify and document the background check procedure for vendors
- Presentation of options to manage all the vendors inside or outside of the bureau's case management system
- Develop metrics for performance for all vendors, particularly Community Rehabilitation Programs that would be shared as a "report card" with participants and VRNH Counselors
- Develop quality assurance measures (performance monitoring) for CRP services and reports to ensure these criteria are met prior to payment for services.
- Develop a vendor outcome tracking system
- Develop clearly defined CRP incentive program based on incentive menu established by VRNH
- Develop a rigorous complaint and disciplinary action program for vendors and CRP's that includes investigation, documentation, actions to be taken and resolution processes.
- Procedures for:
 - Becoming a State of NH/VRNH vendor (provider enrollment)
 - A background check process for all vendors
 - Purchasing threshold requirements
 - Purchasing restrictions
 - How the ordering/receiving of goods or services will be documented for customers
 - Delineation of purchase types
 - Payment to vendors process with a common invoice development,
 - Complaint procedure and resolutions process
 - This list is not all encompassing.
- Development of an updated service agreement with renewal criteria, timelines
- Develop training to accompany all deliverables to be provided to vendors, administration, and VRNH staff.

For further information view VRNH services on the website at: <https://www.education.nh.gov/who-we-are/deputy-commissioner/bureau-of-vocational-rehabilitation>

SECTION 4 – Bidder Requirements

4.1 The bidder shall have extensive experience and expert knowledge in the field of systems designs, vendor management, developing and writing policy, procedures, and training manuals.

4.2 Applicants must demonstrate they have provided similar services to another organization or entity.

4.3 The bidder shall provide examples of projects that were completed of comparable scope. VRNH will only consider bids from bidders that demonstrate in their proposals that they have background knowledge and experience in developing the comprehensive system of vendor management VRNH is seeking with this project.

4.4 If awarded the contract, bidders will need to register with the New Hampshire Secretary of State’s office and be in good standing. They must also carry comprehensive general liability insurance against all claims of bodily injury, death, or property damage of at least \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate. Worker’s compensation insurance documentations will also be provided.

SECTION 5 – Process for Submitting a Proposal

A. Proposal Submission, Deadline, and Location Instructions

Proposals submitted in response to this RFP must be received by VRNH no later than the time and date specified in the Schedule section herein. Proposals shall be submitted electronically to the email addresses below. Proposals must be addressed to:

State of New Hampshire
Department of Education
Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation
Attn: Lisa Hinson-Hatz---Lisa.K.Hatz@doe.nh.gov
Bill Gaffney--- William.G.Gaffney@doe.nh.gov

Proposals must be clearly marked as follows:

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
RESPONSE TO RFP VR 2023
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Late submissions will not be accepted and will be returned to the Proposer unopened. Delivery of the Proposals shall be at the Proposer’s expense. The time of receipt shall be considered when a

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Proposal has been officially documented by the Agency, in accordance with its established policies, as having been received at the location designated above. The Agency accepts no responsibility for mislabeled mail or mail that is not delivered or is undeliverable for whatever reason. Any damage that may occur due to shipping shall be the Proposer's responsibility.

B. Proposal Inquiries

All inquiries concerning this RFP, including but not limited to, requests for clarifications, questions, and any changes to the RFP, shall be submitted via email to the following RFP designated Point of Contact:

Lisa Hinson-Hatz Lisa.K.Hatz@doe.nh.gov
Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 20
Concord, NH 03301

All questions will be collected and posted on both the Department of Administrative Services website as well as the Department of Education website according to the schedule. Individual responses to questions will not be received.

Inquiries must be received by the Agency's RFP Point of Contact no later than the conclusion of the Proposer Inquiry Period (see Schedule of Events section, herein). Inquiries received later than the conclusion of the Proposer Inquiry Period shall not be considered properly submitted and may not be considered.

The Agency intends to issue official responses to properly submitted inquiries on or before the date specified in the Schedule section, herein; however, this date is subject to change at the Agency's discretion. The Agency may consolidate and/or paraphrase questions for sufficiency and clarity.

The Agency may, at its discretion, amend this RFP on its own initiative or in response to issues raised by inquiries, as it deems appropriate. All questions and responses will be posted on the New Hampshire Department of Education website (www.education.nh.gov). Oral statements, representations, clarifications, or modifications concerning the RFP shall not be binding upon the Agency. Official responses by the Agency will be made only in writing by the process described above.

C. Restriction of Contact with Agency Employees

From the date of release of this RFP until an award is made and announced regarding the selection of a Proposer, all communication with personnel employed by or under contract with the Agency regarding this RFP is forbidden unless first approved by the RFP Point of Contact listed in the Proposal Inquiries section, herein. Agency employees have been directed not to hold conferences and/or discussions concerning this RFP with any potential contractor during the selection process,

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unless otherwise authorized by the RFP Point of Contact. Proposers may be disqualified for violating this restriction on communications.

D. Validity of Proposal

Proposals must be valid for one hundred and eighty (180) days following the deadline for submission of Proposals in Schedule of Events, or until the Effective Date of any resulting Contract, whichever is later.

SECTION 6 - Content and Requirements for a Proposal

Proposals shall follow the format and provide the required information set forth below:

1. Cover Letter of interest and general description of recommended approaches, scope of work, processes, and deliverables for the project. Glossary of Common Terms, to include any technical terms and acronyms
2. Company Profile/Background, overview of the company including:
 - a. Number of years in business
 - b. Number of employees
 - c. Location(s)
 - d. Expertise
3. Key Personnel
4. References (minimum 3) with examples of similar work
5. Project Summary
6. Implementation Plan including tentative schedule
7. Budget Proposal for a two-year contract (state fiscal years). Costs should be broken down by line item so the Department can determine costs for all aspects of the program and service provision. Examples of costs could include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Personnel costs
 - b. Material costs (binders, shipping, etc.)
 - c. Travel costs
 - d. Other Costs

Item	FY23 (3/1/23-6/30/23)	FY24 (7/1/23-9/30/24)	Total
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Project Summary Guidelines

Proposers must include a Project Summary, not to exceed 15 pages (Arial 10 Font), describing the Proposer’s project design and approach for meeting the goals and deliverables outlined above. The Project Summary should include:

- Prior experience showing work with similar entities delivering the required services
- Prior experience working with the development of systems, policies, and procedures
- Work plan and timeline for achieving goals and deliverables outlined above
- Staffing/Project Personnel plan to achieve goals and deliverables outlined above

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- Clear communication plan for the project to achieve defined deliverables and milestones

SECTION 7 – Evaluation of Proposals

A. Criteria for Evaluation and Scoring

Each responsive Proposal will be evaluated and considered with regard to the following criteria:

If the Agency, determines to make an award, the Agency will issue an “intent to negotiate” notice to a Proposer based on these evaluations. Should the Agency be unable to reach agreement with the selected Proposer during Contract discussions, the Agency may then undertake Contract discussions with the second preferred Proposer and so on, or the Agency may reject all proposals, cancel this RFP, or solicit new Proposals under a new acquisition process.

The Agency will use a scoring scale of 100 points. All proposals scoring at or above 75 will be evaluated for potential funding based on the amount of proposal received.

TECHNICAL SCORING	POINTS
APPROACH - Statement outlining the overall approach to be employed by the bidder	15
PROJECT SUMMARY	30
ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITIES - Description of the bidder’s organizational capabilities to deliver the services, including a brief description of their company, a history of their firm’s and/or personal experience in implementing similar projects, including at least once example if a completed project of comparable scope. A description of related experience in the field, and comprehensive résumés for all staff who will work on this project and three references along with your proposal. The bidder must ensure to address all requirements in Section 3 & 4.	30
BUDGET PROPOSAL- The budget will explain how all costs listed in the budget are necessary, reasonable, and allocable to deliver the outcomes specified in the proposal. All expenditures should be clearly connected to an activity related to the services to be provided.	25
TOTAL POTENTIAL TECHNICAL POINTS AWARDED	100

B. PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCESS

Each proposal will be evaluated and considered with regard to the solution and services proposed, qualifications of the contractor and any subcontractors, experience and qualifications of proposed candidates, cost, and the total quality of the proposed solution.

Each proposal will be reviewed and rated by an evaluation team. The Department shall be under no obligation to contact bidders for clarification of their proposals, but it shall reserve the right to do so

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at any time prior to the award of the contract(s). All proposals received by the deadline will be evaluated based section 7. A Criteria for Evaluation and Scoring section outlined in this RFP.

If the State, determines to make an award, the State will issue an Intent to Award Notice to a contractor based on these evaluations. Should the State be unable to reach agreement with the selected bidder during contract discussions, the State may then undertake contract discussions with the second preferred bidder and so on. Such discussions may continue at the sole option of the State, until an agreement is reached, or all proposals are rejected.

Any resulting contract from this RFP will be a non-exclusive contract. The State reserves the right, at its discretion, to retain other contractors to provide any of the services or deliverables identified under this procurement or make an award by item, part or portion of an item, group of items, or total proposal.

C. Final Technical Scoring of Proposals

Following oral interviews in necessary, demonstrations, reference checks (if applicable/appropriate) and/or review of written clarifications of Proposals requested by the Agency, the evaluation team will determine a final score for each Technical Proposal.

D. No Best and Final Offer

The Proposal should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms, which the Proposer can offer. There will be no best and final offer procedure. The Proposer should be prepared to accept this RFP for incorporation into a contract resulting from this RFP. Contract negotiations may incorporate some or all of the Proposal.

E. Rights of the Agency in Accepting and Evaluating Proposals

The Agency reserves the right to:

- Make independent investigations in evaluating Proposals.
- Request additional information to clarify elements of a Proposal.
- Waive minor or immaterial deviations from the RFP requirements, if determined to be in the best interest of the State.
- Omit any planned evaluation step if, in the Agency's view, the step is not needed.
- At its sole discretion, reject any and all Proposals at any time; and
- Open contract discussions with the second highest scoring Proposer and so on, if the Agency is unable to reach an agreement on Contract terms with the higher scoring Proposer(s).

SECTION 8 – Terms and Conditions Related to the RFP Process

A. RFP Addendum

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The Agency reserves the right to amend this RFP at its discretion, prior to the Proposal submission deadline. In the event of an addendum/addenda to this RFP, the Agency, at its sole discretion, may extend the Proposal submission deadline, as it deems appropriate.

B. Non-Collusion

The Proposer's signature on a Proposal submitted in response to this RFP guarantees that the prices, terms and conditions, and Work quoted have been established without collusion with other Proposers and without effort to preclude the Agency from obtaining the best possible competitive Proposal.

C. Property of the Agency

All material received in response to this RFP shall become the property of the State and will not be returned to the Proposer. Upon Contract award, the State reserves the right to use any information presented in any Proposal.

D. Confidentiality of a Proposal

Unless necessary for the approval of a Contract, the substance of a Proposal must remain confidential until the Effective Date of any Contract resulting from this RFP. A Proposer's disclosure or distribution of Proposals other than to the Agency will be grounds for disqualification.

E. Public Disclosure

Pursuant to RSA 21-G:37, all responses to this RFP shall be considered confidential until the award of a Contract. At the time of receipt of Proposals, the Agency will post the number of responses received with no further information. No later than five (5) business days prior to submission of a Contract to the Governor & Executive Council pursuant to this RFP, the Agency will post the name and rank or score of each Proposer. In the event that the Contract does not require Governor & Executive Council approval, the Agency shall disclose the rank or score of the Proposals at least 5 business days before final approval of the Contract.

The content of each Proposer's Proposal shall become public information upon the award of any resulting Contract. Any information submitted as part of a response to this Request for Proposal (RFP) may be subject to public disclosure under RSA 91-A. In addition, in accordance with RSA 9-F:1, any Contract entered into as a result of this RFP will be made accessible to the public online via the website Transparent NH (<http://www.nh.gov/transparentnh/>). Accordingly, business financial information and proprietary information such as trade secrets, business and financials models and forecasts, and proprietary formulas may be exempt from public disclosure under RSA 91-A:5, IV.

If you believe any information being submitted in response to this Request for Proposal, Bid or Information should be kept confidential as financial or proprietary information; you must

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specifically identify that information in a letter to the agency, and must mark/stamp each page of the materials that you claim must be exempt from disclosure as “CONFIDENTIAL”. A designation by the Proposer of information it believes exempt does not have the effect of making such information exempt. The Agency will determine the information it believes is properly exempted from disclosure.

Marking of the entire Proposal or entire sections of the Proposal (e.g., pricing) as confidential will neither be accepted nor honored. Notwithstanding any provision of this RFP to the contrary, Proposer pricing will be subject to disclosure upon approval of the Contract. The Agency will endeavor to maintain the confidentiality of portions of the Proposal that are clearly and properly marked confidential.

If a request is made to the Agency to view portions of a Proposal that the Proposer has properly and clearly marked confidential, the Agency will notify the Proposer of the request and of the date the Agency plans to release the records. By submitting a Proposal, Proposers agree that unless the Proposer obtains a court order, at its sole expense, enjoining the release of the requested information, the Agency may release the requested information on the date specified in the Agency’s notice without any liability to the Proposers.

F. Non-Commitment

Notwithstanding any other provision of this RFP, this RFP does not commit the Agency to award a Contract. The Agency reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to reject any and all Proposals, or any portions thereof, at any time; to cancel this RFP; and to solicit new Proposals under a new acquisition process.

G. Proposal Preparation Cost

By submitting a Proposal, a Proposer agrees that in no event shall the Agency be either responsible for or held liable for any costs incurred by a Proposer in the preparation of or in connection with the Proposal, or for Work performed prior to the Effective Date of a resulting Contract.

H. Ethical Requirements

From the time this RFP is published until a contract is awarded, no bidder shall offer or give, directly or indirectly, any gift, expense reimbursement, or honorarium, as defined by RSA 15-B, to any elected official, public official, public employee, constitutional official, or family member of any such official or employee who will or has selected, evaluated, or awarded an RFP, or similar submission. Any bidder that violates RSA 21-G:38 shall be subject to prosecution for an offense under RSA 640:2. Any bidder who has been convicted of an offense based on conduct in violation of this section, which has not been annulled, or who is subject to a pending criminal charge for such an offense, shall be disqualified from bidding on the RFP, or similar request for submission and every

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such bidder shall be disqualified from bidding on any RFP or similar request for submission issued by any state agency. A bidder that was disqualified under this section because of a pending criminal charge which is subsequently dismissed, results in an acquittal, or is annulled, may notify the department of administrative services, which shall note that information on the list maintained on the State's internal intranet system, except in the case of annulment, the information, shall be deleted from the list.

I. Challenges on Form or Process of the RFP

Any challenges regarding the validity or legality of the form and procedures of this RFP, including but not limited to the evaluation and scoring of Proposals, shall be brought to the attention of the Agency at least ten (10) business days prior to the Proposal Submission Deadline. By submitting a Proposal, the Proposer is deemed to have waived any challenges to the form or procedures set forth in this RFP.

SECTION 9 – Contract Terms and Award

A. Non-Exclusive Contract

Any resulting Contract from this RFP will be a non-exclusive Contract. The State reserves the right, at its discretion, to retain other contractors to provide any of the Services or Deliverables identified under this procurement or make an award by item, part or portion of an item, group of items, or total Proposal.

B. Award

If the State decides to award a Contract as a result of this RFP process, any award is contingent upon approval of the Contract by the Governor and Executive Council of the State of New Hampshire and upon continued appropriation of funding for the Contract.

C. Standard Contract Terms

The Agency will require the successful Proposer to execute a Firm Fixed Price/Not to Exceed Contract using the Standard Terms and Conditions of the State of New Hampshire, which is attached as Appendix A.

The Agency may consider modifications of this form during negotiations. To the extent that a Proposer believes that exceptions to the standard form contract will be necessary for the Proposer to enter into the Agreement, the Proposer should note those issues during the Proposer Inquiry Period.

The Agency will review requested exceptions and accept, reject, or note that it is open to negotiation of the proposed exception at its sole discretion. If the Agency accepts a Proposer's exception the Agency will, at the conclusion of the inquiry period, provide notice to all potential proposers of the exceptions which have been accepted and indicate that exception is available to all potential

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proposers. Any exceptions to the standard form contract that are not raised during the proposer inquiry period are waived. In no event is a Proposer to submit its own standard contract terms and conditions as a replacement for the State's terms in response to this solicitation.