

## **REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS AND QUOTATIONS (RFQQ)**

RFQQ Title: Industry Skills Cohort Trainings

RFQQ #053024: Industry Skills Cohort Training

Release Date: May 30, 2024  
Proposals Due: September 30, 2024

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# REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS AND QUOTATIONS (RFQQ)

## Purpose

In Snohomish County, employers across high-demand industries are seeking qualified jobseekers to fill positions that will lead to living wage employment. In many cases, the skills needed to enter these occupations can be learned in focused cohort training lasting from 2-24 weeks. There are thousands of local jobseekers ready to reskill or upskill successfully in these occupations with a combination of accessible training opportunities and individualized wrap-around support.

The purpose of this Request for Qualifications and Quotations (RFQQ) is:

- To build a strong pool of training providers that Workforce Snohomish can work with over the next three years to deliver occupational training focused on skills needed in local, high-demand industries.
- Facilitate stronger connections between workforce development investments, employers, and training participants to improve outcomes, including entry and retention in living wage jobs.

When employers identify a need, we want to be prepared to quickly respond by funding and coordinating with training providers identified through this RFQQ. Having a selected group of training providers allows Workforce Snohomish, as the fiscal agent, to be nimble and timely in our response when a training need is identified. This RFQQ is designed to identify the dynamic, employer-driven training we will fund to support the technical skill development of individuals seeking opportunities to enter or advance in the industry pathways identified below.

## Scope of Work

### Overview

Workforce Snohomish is seeking qualified organizations or entities to provide training that will prepare individuals to enter living-wage employment in one or more of the below industries:

- Aerospace and Advanced Manufacturing
- Life Sciences
- Transportation & Construction, encompassing Infrastructure Development and Climate Change
- Information and Communication Technology
- Healthcare and Social Assistance

Proposed occupational training programs must align with occupations listed on the Snohomish County [Occupation in Demand](#) List. This RFQQ is designed for training providers to submit multiple programs in a single response. Proposed programs may include on-ramp (or prevocational) programs that prepare participants to successfully enter post-secondary education programs, apprenticeships and short-term training, leading to employment.

Ideal respondents will demonstrate previous success with providing training to WIOA Title I eligible individuals; Black, Indigenous, Asian, Pacific Islander and Latine populations and other communities of color; refugees; individuals impacted by poverty; individuals with disabilities; ex-offenders; individuals who are English language learners, individuals with low levels of literacy and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; long-term unemployed; veterans and military spouses; dislocated workers; out-of-school (opportunity) youth; and/or additional populations facing systemic [barriers to employment](#).

### Cohorts

This RFQQ is specific to entities that will train cohorts, or groups of individuals who all move through

training simultaneously. Workforce Snohomish will not prescribe cohort size. We invite respondents to propose appropriately sized cohorts for the training they offer. Please be sure to describe the training location and format, including virtual and/or in-person.

### Recruitment and Community Outreach

Training contracts will be primarily funded by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I funds through the Department of Labor. Additional funding streams may be included based on project priorities and funding availability. All individuals to be trained must be eligible for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I services, meaning they meet requirements that demonstrate they face significant barriers to employment. Please see Workforce Snohomish's [WIOA Eligibility, Registration and Enrollment Policy](#) for specific WIOA Title I eligibility information and additional WIOA-related policies located at [Workforce Snohomish Policies](#). If other (non-WIOA) funding sources are utilized to support cohort training, different eligibility requirements may be utilized.

Selected training providers will collaborate with Snohomish County WIOA Title I service providers and Workforce Snohomish's team on planning, logistics, and communications support for recruitment. While selected training providers will work with WIOA providers to recruit and enroll WIOA Title I eligible participants, respondents must propose a solid outreach and recruitment plan with the understanding that recruitment is not the WIOA providers' sole responsibility.

### Skill Development

Selected training providers are required to provide tangible, measurable skill development in one or more areas directly related to reskill-upskill, employer-driven, in-demand occupation(s) and/or pathway(s) connected to the training. Training providers must provide industry-recognized certification or documented credential attainment for the occupation or pathway. If proposing an on-ramp or prevocational program, bidders should articulate how the proposed program(s) lead to employment, apprenticeship, training leading to a credential (post-secondary or industry-recognized).

### Supportive Services

Selected training providers will partner with local WIOA Title I service providers to ensure individuals are supported in removing barriers to training completion and subsequent employment. Additional supportive services (academic tutoring, job clubs, etc.) may be proposed in the optional section of the narrative.

### Employer Connections

The intent of the RFQQ is to measurably increase the supply of skilled workers to fill jobs that are in demand in Snohomish County. We invite organizations to submit additional costs associated with strengthening the connections between employers, training participants and workforce development investments, with the intent that this can be sustained past the life of the contracting period. If required, please detail additional expenses of working collaboratively with Workforce Snohomish and WIOA subrecipients to achieve and/or strengthen employer-engaged training programs, such as:

- Curriculum modification: This may include embedding contextualized instruction to occupational training programs for English Language Learners; updating modules to address emerging technologies; modifying or integrating industry certifications; etc.
- Staff or faculty time to work collaboratively with Workforce Snohomish's Business Engagement team and WIOA providers to support employer engagement and program awareness; cultivate internships or on-the-job training opportunities for participants, career awareness/exposures, and/or establish conditional hiring commitments and processes with employers.

Please ensure that non-direct service and funding requests are justified in optional narrative response.

Funding to support these requests is subject to availability, allowability and contract negotiation. Please detail non-direct expenses, if applicable in the optional field of the narrative as directed.

## Funding

Proposals submitted for this RFQQ will help guide Workforce Snohomish's training investments in Snohomish County over the next three years. For this reason, we are not setting an upper limit on the total amount of funding that may be awarded or the maximum amount allowed per proposal. Workforce Snohomish will assess proposals submitted for this RFQQ to determine reasonable participant costs for training associated with the employer-engagement priorities outlined above.

We recognize there is no single cost for training across industries and that associated costs will vary depending on several factors, including but not limited to the level of effort needed to achieve desired outcomes for participants, the duration of training, cohort size, and delivery format. Workforce Snohomish will evaluate proposed budgets based on reasonable cost comparisons, supporting budget narratives, and reasonableness to accomplish quality outcomes with the amount requested. We request that respondents propose their best-practice models for training and the costs associated with these models on a "per cohort" and/or "per participant" basis. Respondents' budgets should reflect costs for one full cohort based on the proposed training model, per proposed program.

Funds through this RFQQ may be used to cover the cost of staff wages and benefits, administrative operating expenses, and direct participant costs. Non-direct participant costs requested are subject to review for allowability and availability of funds. Use of federal funds must be compliant with federal, WIOA and state regulations, and Workforce Snohomish Policies. Detailed information about allowable uses of federal funds can be found in the [Electronic Code of Federal Regulations \(eCFR\)](#), Subpart E – Cost Principles.

Workforce Snohomish may or may not award contracts as a result of this RFQQ, depending on the qualifications and quotations received and other considerations that may arise.

## Period of Performance

Cohort training resulting from this RFQQ will occur between July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2027. Workforce Snohomish's intent is to build a pool of cohort training providers through a single procurement process so Workforce Snohomish can be timely and responsive to employer-driven reskill and upskill training needs as they arise over the next three years. Based on current and future identified employer needs, we anticipate funding multiple providers and multiple training cohorts resulting from this RFQQ during this time.

Workforce Snohomish will contact all respondents within 30 business days following proposal submission to indicate proposal acceptance to approved cohort training list. The timeline and next steps will be negotiated with approved training providers based on local need, training provider capacity, funding availability, and any additional required factors. We understand there may be changes to cost, schedule, and training provider capacity over the course of the three years of the performance period. These factors may be revisited and amended as appropriate over time and through contract negotiations.

Workforce Snohomish reserves the right at its sole discretion to renew or not renew any contract resulting from this RFQQ, in accordance with WIOA regulations and depending on contractor performance, availability of funds, and the Future Workforce Alliance's strategic direction.

## RFQQ Timeline

RFQQ Release	May 24, 2024
Due Date for Questions	September 12, 2024, 5:00 PM PDT
Proposals Due	September 30, 2024, 5:00 PM PDT
Evaluation of Submitted Proposals	June 4, 2024 - October 30, 2024
Informational Interviews (if held)	Within 15 business days of proposal submission
Respondent Notifications	Within 30 business days of proposal submission
Contract Negotiation	Variable
Contract Start Date	Variable

### Submission Requirements

All proposals must be submitted by email as a single PDF document to [rfp@workforcesnohomish.org](mailto:rfp@workforcesnohomish.org) no later than September 30, 2024, 5:00 PM PDT. Please include the RFQQ number in the email subject line. Proposals received after 5:00 PM PDT on the due date will be automatically disqualified from consideration. Respondents will receive email confirmation of proposal receipt.

The maximum length of proposal narrative is eight (8) pages for a single program. Organizations proposing multiple programs in response to this RFQQ may include an additional one (1) page per program. Required attachments are not included in the page maximum. Workforce Snohomish will be unable to evaluate proposals with narratives that exceed the page limit. Proposals must include all information and attachments listed below to be considered responsive to this RFQQ and evaluated. Please do not include embedded links to additional information or materials, unless specifically requested.

# RFQQ Proposal

**Proposal Narrative:** Please number and label proposal narrative information as shown below.

1. Respondent Information:
  - a. Organization or entity name
  - b. Street address and mailing address
  - c. Contact person name, title, email address and phone number
  - d. Website address
  - e. Type of organization (non-profit, for profit, independent contractor, sole proprietorship, etc.)
  - f. Washington State Business License # / UBI # (please state if you do not have a WA UBI #)
  - g. Federal Tax ID # (please state if you do not have a Federal Tax ID #)
  - h. DUNS # (please state if you do not have a DUNS #)
2. Experience Providing Proposed Training: Briefly describe your experience providing training and the related services described in the Scope of Work. Please list the occupational skills training program(s) that you are proposing under this RFQQ. If submitting multiple programs for consideration, please describe each program briefly in your subsequent responses.
3. Training Program Design and Plan: Describe the proposed training program(s) design and model, including, but not limited to a) training structure and curriculum, b) maximum participants per training cohort, c) schedule and duration, d) method of delivery (e.g. virtual, in-person, etc.), e) location of training (e.g. physical address, flexible location, online, etc.), f) training completion rates and outcome(s).
4. Occupation and Demand: State the exact occupation(s) the proposed training leads to and targeted industry of employment. Please provide program CIP code (Classification of Instructional Program) if applicable. Workforce Snohomish will verify each program's inclusion on the occupation in demand list for Snohomish County and Washington State Eligible Training Provider list in its review process, as required.
5. Skills, Certifications, Credentials: Describe the industry-wide technical or industry/occupational skills that will be attained through the proposed training, as well as any certifications and/or credentials participants will earn.
6. Employer Connections: Describe how you connect successful trainees to jobs upon completion of training, and employer validation and support of the training model and content. Cite employer commitments or partnerships, if applicable. If required, please detail your plan and any support needed to strengthen connections with employers to support training completer outcomes and/or alignment with identified industry skill and/or credential demands.
7. Outreach and Recruitment: Describe your plan for direct outreach and recruitment of participants, including your plan to partner with local WIOA providers to recruit and enroll individuals who meet WIOA Title 1 eligibility requirements - those facing high barriers to employment.
8. Other Related Experience: If applicable, describe any other special experience, skills, knowledge, or abilities your organization can offer.

Funds through this RFQQ are intended to cover the direct participant costs only. If other costs are needed to support intended outcomes, respondents must identify those costs and provide a narrative, under

optional question number nine (#9). Inclusion of non-direct participant costs (e.g. tutoring, curriculum development, employer engagement and outreach capacity, etc.) are subject to review for allowability and availability of funds.

9. Optional: Are there any other supports, add-ons, or additional services your organization could provide beyond the proposed training program if additional funding is available? If so, please explain and provide the dollar amount required.

**Program Budget:**

Please include a complete budget with a budget narrative for each program submitted. No specific budget form has been provided; however, bidders should include the following line items in the remitted budget(s).

- a. Personnel
- b. Fringe Benefits
- c. Travel
- d. Supplies
- e. Contractual
- f. Participant Costs: As applicable, include tuition, fees, and other required costs.
- g. Other
- h. Total Direct Charges
- i. Indirect Charges (if applicable)
- j. TOTALS (sum of h and i)

For all line items, please write a brief narrative to explain the costs you are proposing, how they are calculated and support the proposed program(s). Bidders **must remit** a separate budget and budget narrative for each program proposed.

Important Note: Please ensure that you provide the total estimated cost of the cohort training broken out by line item, as applicable to your proposed program(s). Clearly detail the cost per training cohort and/or per participant and state the minimum and maximum number of participants per cohort in the proposed model(s). Please ensure that if there are any additional costs a trainee must pay to participate that are not included in your proposed structure (e.g. tools, books, etc.) are described in line item “f” Participant Costs.

Please note that budget(s) and corresponding narrative should be included as **Attachment A** to your proposal and **does not count** toward page limit.

Required Attachments:

*Attachment A: Budget and Budget Narrative*



## Technical Review

Workforce Snohomish will review proposals for the following submission requirements:

1) Proposal Narrative does not exceed the maximum page limit; 2) all requested responses are included in the Proposal Narrative; 3) all requested Attachments are included; and 4) proposal does not include materials that were not requested.

Respondents whose proposals do not meet submission requirements will receive an email notification from Workforce Snohomish that describes how their proposal did not meet submission requirements. The respondent will have the opportunity to modify their proposal and re-submit it within three (3) business days. The email notification from Workforce Snohomish will state the date and time by which proposals must be re-submitted to be included in the proposal evaluation process.

Workforce Snohomish will also check if respondents are debarred or suspended from receiving federal funds by using the U.S. Government's System for Award Management ([www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov)). Respondents found to be debarred or suspended from receiving federal funds will receive an email notification from Workforce Snohomish stating this finding and that they are ineligible for funding through this RFQQ. Additional, required verifications may be performed as required by fund source.

### Inquiries

Please email all inquiries to [rfp@workforcesnohomish.org](mailto:rfp@workforcesnohomish.org) with the RFQQ number in the email subject line. Questions must be received by September 30, 2024, 5:00 PM PDT. All questions and Workforce Snohomish's responses will be posted at <https://workforcesnohomish.org/bids/>.

This RFQQ is posted on [Workforce Snohomish's website](#). Information obtained from other sources is not official and should not be relied upon.

### Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria	Possible Points
Experience and expertise providing services described in the scope of work	10
Strength and feasibility of cohort training model and design	15
Alignment of proposed program(s) to supporting communities facing systemic barriers to employment	20
Alignment of proposed training with Snohomish County occupational demand and alignment of skills, certifications or credentials provided to participants	15
Strength of employer connections or feasibility of plan to strengthen employer connections to benefit participant outcomes	20
Plan to support potential participant outreach and recruitment in partnership with WIOA providers.	5
Proposed cost of services is reasonable and justified by the line-item budget narrative and the per cohort and/or per participant cost is clear for each submitted program	15
Total	100 points

## **Evaluation & Selection Process**

All proposals that meet submission requirements will be assessed by an Evaluation Committee, who will review and score proposals using the evaluation criteria. The goal is to create a pool of qualified training providers for multiple cohort training opportunities over the next three years.

The Evaluation Committee may decide to request virtual informational interviews with some or all respondents before finalizing their recommendation for potential funding. Up to twenty points for interviews may be added to overall scores. If held, informational interviews are expected to occur within 15 business days of proposal submission.

Workforce Snohomish may select respondents for contracts based on the initial information in their proposal, without modification. However, Workforce Snohomish reserves the right to first conduct additional interviews, request further information from the respondent or references, conduct a site visit and risk assessment, complete a Workforce Snohomish management review of the evaluation process, and/or make mutually agreed upon changes through contract negotiation.

This RFQQ does not commit Workforce Snohomish to award contracts. Formal notification to award contracts and the actual execution of contracts are subject to the results of negotiations between selected respondents and Workforce Snohomish.

### **Notification to Respondents**

All respondents that submit a proposal will be notified by email of Workforce Snohomish's decision regarding their proposal.

### **Public Records**

All data, material, and documentation originated and prepared by respondents pursuant to this RFQQ shall belong exclusively to Workforce Snohomish and Future Workforce Alliance and may be subject to public disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Respondents must disclose any potential or apparent conflict of interest in undertaking this project or services as part of their proposal. A conflict of interest exists whenever an individual or organization could benefit directly or indirectly from access to information or from a decision over which they may have influence and includes a perceived conflict of interest where someone might reasonably perceive there to be such benefit and influence.

### **Limitations & General Provisions**

Any contract awarded through this RFQQ will be funded with WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) funds. Any changes in WIOA regulations and guidance, funding level, or the Future Workforce Alliance's strategic direction may result in a change in this project or services. In such instances, Workforce Snohomish or the Future Workforce Alliance will not be held liable for content in submitted proposals or this RFQQ.

The entire cost for the preparation and delivery of proposals or any related communications shall be at the expense of respondents.

Respondents must not be debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, or declared ineligible for receiving federal funds or participation in this project or services. Proposals from respondents identified by Workforce Snohomish as debarred, suspended or otherwise ineligible will not be evaluated.