



# Central Western Maine Workforce Development Board

*Serving Androscoggin, Franklin, Kennebec, Oxford, and Somerset Counties*

## **Request for Application (RFA)** **Community-Based Organization (CBO) partnership**

Submit Responses to:

Central Western Maine Workforce Development Board  
87 Winthrop Street, Suite 400  
Augusta, ME 04330

Release Date: August 7, 2023

Applications Due: September 5, 2023

## **REQUEST FOR APPLICATION**

### RFA Issuer Information

The issuer of this Request for Application (RFA) is the Central Western Maine Workforce Development Board (CWMWDB) d/b/a Central Western Maine Workforce Initiatives, which serves the five counties of Androscoggin, Franklin, Kennebec, Oxford, and Somerset in the State of Maine.

The Central Western Maine Workforce Initiatives is a non-profit 501(c)3 workforce development organization serving governmental and private interests whose mission is to champion a workforce and learning system that allows the 5-county region to produce a vibrant economy, and lifelong employment and training opportunities for its residents.

The CWMWDB website is located at [www.cwmwdb.org](http://www.cwmwdb.org). The website will be a mode of communication between the CWMWDB and potential applicants. Interested applicants can email questions to [workforce@cwmwdb.org](mailto:workforce@cwmwdb.org). All questions with answers will be posted on the web site during the application period.

### Procurement Timeline

Release Date: August 7, 2023  
Question Deadline: August 18, 2023  
Question Responses Posted to website: August 21, 2023  
Application Deadline: September 5, 2023

### Terms and Acronyms

QUEST: Quality jobs, Equity, Strategy, and Training

CBO: Community-based Organization, meaning a public or private nonprofit organization of demonstrated effectiveness that— (A) is representative of a community or significant segments of a community; and (B) provides educational, supportive, or related services to individuals in the community.

WIOA: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

DWG: Dislocated Worker Grant

TEGL: Training and Guidance Letter

CWMWDB Region: Counties of Kennebec, Somerset, Franklin, Oxford, and Androscoggin

### Purpose of RFA

The purpose of this RFA is to develop partnerships with community-based organizations (CBO) that will be paid to use their staff and resources to create a referral pipeline of participants eligible for WIOA grants, in particular the QUEST grant. CWMWDB will select one CBO from each of the five counties served by CWMWDB. Funds will be dispersed on a quarterly basis beginning October 1, 2023.

### Background

Even as the overall economy continues to rebound from the pandemic, the emerging new economy is not benefitting all industries or populations equally. Many of the workers most negatively impacted by the pandemic continue to face persistent challenges with finding quality jobs amidst the ongoing economic effects of the COVID-19 crisis. Historically marginalized individuals, including African Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, Latinos or Hispanics, and people with disabilities, as well as young adults aged 20 to 24 years, part-time workers, and people without high school diplomas, experienced the most significant employment hardships during the first year of the pandemic. Nearly all of these groups have not regained their pre-pandemic employment rates and continue to experience the most significant employment barriers. The QUEST Dislocated Worker Grant (DWG) will support those individuals who have suffered the most as a result of the pandemic to have equitable access to work at safe, well-paying employment, which further builds their own and the community's resilience.

The Central Western Maine Workforce Development Board is seeking partnerships with community-based organizations who can refer potential participants to its latest grant, QUEST, and other WIOA programs. The QUEST grant priority populations include low-wage workers, women, racial and ethnic minorities, discouraged workers, justice involved/currently incarcerated individual, and those in recovery. The grant requires that outreach methods are culturally competent and incorporate the importance of racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic experiences of the communities and individuals involved. Partnership organizations should focus on the grant's priority sectors: Green Energy, Caring Economy, and Infrastructure.

### Disclaimers and General Provisions

- This RFA does not commit the CWMWDB to award a contract.
- The CWMWDB reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received, and to accept or reject portions of proposals received.
- The final contract award amount will be \$28,800.
- All data, material, and documentation originated and prepared by the applicant shall belong exclusively to the CWMWDB and be subject to disclosure under public records and/or the Freedom of Information Act.
- Applicants selected must have a familiarity with QUEST DWG, WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker, and WIOA Youth grants. TEGs can be found on the CWMWDB website.
- To be eligible to receive funds, CBO's must be a 501c3 nonprofit or have a fiscal sponsor.

### Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be a Maine community-based organization that serves residents of at least one of the five counties served by CWMWDB. When considering an applicant, the CWMWDB will consider the applicant's reputation in the non-profit community, the depth of the applicant's understanding of and experience with WIOA programs, and the applicant's demonstrated ability to provide services to the populations targeted by WIOA programs.

### Deliverables

- Develop staff training around priority populations, eligibility requirements, and priority sectors for the Quest grant and other WIOA programs to ensure qualified referrals.
- Create outreach plan that targets at least one of the priority populations.
- Develop staff training to ensure outreach is culturally and linguistically appropriate.
- Work with EMDC to utilize a referral system that ensures appropriate information is delivered to the appropriate personnel.
- Generate at least 45 qualified referrals to net 15 registered participants with at least 40% qualifying for the Quest grant.
- Ensure that most referrals have an interest in the sectors targeted in the QUEST application: Green Energy, Caring Economy, and Infrastructure.
- Develop a budget that outlines staff salaries, associated costs and the timeframe for the proposal. Work can begin July 1, 2023 and must conclude by December 31, 2024
- Provide quarterly report of outreach activities and the number of referrals made to EMDC, noting the priority population and employment interest of each referral.

### Applicant Narrative

CBO applicants should use the application attached with the RFA. Applications can also be found on the CWMWDB website. Each section should be no more than 300 words. Electronic and mail-in proposals will be accepted. Complete proposals can be mailed to the address on Page 1 or emailed to [workforce@cwmwdb.org](mailto:workforce@cwmwdb.org) by 5:00pm on September 5, 2023. No proposals will be accepted after this date and time.

1. **Background of organization**  
Provide a synopsis of your organization that identifies its history of being a Maine community-based organization that serves residents of at least one of the five counties served by CWMWDB. Address your organization's reputation in the non-profit community, the depth of its understanding of and experience with WIOA programs, and its demonstrated ability to provide services to the populations targeted by WIOA programs.
2. **Cost Allocation**  
Provide an explanation of how your organization will utilize funds (\$28,800) to carry out the goals of this proposal, including estimated number of hours per staff member, rate per hour for each staff member, number of months staff will focus on this work, and any other associated costs. Work can begin October 1, 2023 and must conclude by December 31, 2024.
3. **Meeting Deliverables**  
Explain, in depth, how you intend to meet the deliverables outlined in this RFA.

### Format

Applications must use:

- a. Single space;
- b. Times New Roman Font;

- c. Size twelve (12) font;
- d. Maximum of five hundred words (500) per section.

Evaluation and Award

The CWMWDB will evaluate each eligible applicant’s written proposal based on the criteria of Proposal Narrative mentioned above. Each proposal will be independently evaluated by two or more qualified individuals. Decisions shall be made on or about June 23, 2023.

<b>Section X – Response Narratives</b>	
1. Background of organization	45
2. Cost Estimate	10
3. Expected Delivery and Timeframe	45
<b>TOTAL EVALUTAION POINTS</b>	<b>100</b>

Award of the contract resulting from this RFA will be based upon the most responsive applicant whose proposal will be the most advantageous to the CWMWDB in terms of factors specified in this RFA.

The CWMWDB reserves the right to

- ✓ reject any or all offers and discontinue this RFA process without obligation or liability to any potential applicant;

A proposal may be deemed “non-responsive” if any of the required information is not provided, and/or the proposal is not received by the stated day/time. CWMWDB reserves the right to cancel this RFA at any time, for any reason.