



**MINNESOTA RURAL CAREER COUNSELING COORDINATORS
STATE FISCAL YEARS 2016 AND 2017**

Report to the Legislature
As required by Laws of Minnesota, 2015
Omnibus Jobs Bill, Article 1, Section 2, Subd. 3(I)

January 15, 2016
Contact: Annie Welch
Acting Director, Dislocated Worker/Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs
Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

As of January 15, 2016, DEED staff have launched the Rural Career Counseling coordinators program. DEED consulted with the Workforce Service Areas to determine a method of distributing funds. In order to comply with Minnesota Management and Budget Office of Grants Management policy and because no entity was named in statute as the recipient of this funding (as with direct appropriations), DEED issued a request for proposals to award funding to organizations within the eligible geographic workforce service areas.

Attached to this report are the request for proposals and the evaluation form used by DEED and MDE staff to make funding decisions.

DEED received seven proposals and selected five organizations to hire and support coordinators. Each will receive \$190,000 over two years to support the coordinator(s). All of the workforce service areas that do not represent metropolitan areas or a single city will be touched by the coordinators. The selected organizations are as follows:

- Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program, to serve Workforce Service Areas 1 and 2;
- Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training to serve Workforce Service Areas 3 and 4;
- Stearns Benton Employment and Training Center, to serve Workforce Service Areas 5 and 17;
- Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council, to serve Workforce Service Areas 6 and 7;
- Southeastern Minnesota Private Industry Council, Workforce Development Inc., to serve Workforce Service Areas 8 and 18.

DEED anticipates a thorough report of all activities, coordination, and the reports articulated in law for the next year, due January 15 of 2017.

MINNESOTA RURAL CAREER COUNSELING COORDINATORS
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS - STATE FISCAL YEARS 2016 AND 2017

APPLICATION INFORMATION AND MATERIALS

IMPORTANT DATES

RFP Release: Monday, September 28, 2015

Proposals Due: No later than 4:00 p.m. Friday, October 16, 2015
Accepted in one PDF document (not scanned) sent to
Annie Welch at Annie.Welch@state.mn.us

Review and Selection: Monday, October 19 – Friday, October 23, 2015

Notification to Applicants: Thursday, October 29, 2015

Contract Start Date: No later than December 1, 2015

Contract End Date: June 30, 2017

LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Upon request, these materials will be made available in alternative formats. For TDD, contact Minnesota Relay at 711 or 800/627-3529.

Prospective responders who have any questions regarding this request for proposals may email:

Annie Welch

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

Annie.Welch@state.mn.us

All questions must be received no later than Monday, October 12, 2015. The initial Q&A will be posted no later than Friday, October 2, 2015 and updated weekly on DEED's Contract Opportunity web page, which can be found at the following web address:

<http://mn.gov/deed/about/contracts/>

Other personnel are **NOT** authorized to discuss this request for proposal with responders, before the proposal submission deadline. Contact regarding this RFP with any personnel not listed above could result in disqualification.

MINNESOTA RURAL CAREER COUNSELING COORDINATORS REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS - STATE FISCAL YEARS 2016 AND 2017

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Workforce Development Division is soliciting applications for grant funding for Rural Career Counseling Coordinator positions to serve within the geographic local workforce development areas. As Minnesota continues to implement the [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014](#)¹ (WIOA), the individuals filling these positions will play an integral role in regional planning.

FUNDS AVAILABLE

Under 2015 Omnibus Jobs Bill, Article 1, Section 2, Subd. 3(l), DEED announces the availability of \$475,000² each year for the 2016 and 2017 fiscal years. Entities may apply for up to \$95,000 per year, for a total award of \$190,000 over two years, to support the RC3 roles.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AND OVERARCHING GOALS

According to 2015 Minnesota Statutes 116L.667, Section 9 Rural Career Counseling Coordinators. Subdivision 1. Requirement:

Each workforce development area outside of the seven county metropolitan area must have a career counseling coordinator who is responsible for improving coordination and communication of workforce development programs and services within the workforce service area, with other workforce service areas and coordinators, and with administering agencies.

One coordinator may serve up to two of the local areas.

According to 2015 Minnesota Statutes 116L.667, Section 9 Rural Career Counseling Coordinators Subdivision.

Subdivision 2. Responsibilities:

A career counseling coordinator is responsible for:

- (1) understanding the needs of existing, new, and prospective service area businesses in regard to workforce development programs, resources, and other services;
- (2) connecting job seekers, secondary and higher education institutions, employers, and other stakeholders and partners;
- (3) providing services to job seekers including career counseling, training, and work experience opportunities;
- (4) assessing and compiling information about all workforce development programs and services offered in the assigned workforce service area, including adult basic education programs and programs and services at higher education institutions and kindergarten through grade 12 schools;
- (5) making recommendations to the commissioner regarding ways to improve career counseling coordination, possible program changes, and new workforce programs or initiatives;
- (6) sharing best practices and collaborating with other career counseling coordinators to promote and enable state-level coordination among workforce development programs and administering

¹ For more information on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, please visit <http://www.doleta.gov/WIOA/>

² The full appropriation is in the amount of \$500,000, but will require monitoring and oversight and will therefore be treated similarly to pass-through grants, per 116J.035, subd. 7.

agencies including, but not limited to, the Departments of Employment and Economic Development, Education, and Labor and Industry, and the Office of Higher Education; (7) promoting available workforce development and career counseling programs and resources in the workforce service area.

According to 2015 Minnesota Statutes 116L.667, Section 9 Rural Career Counseling Coordinators Subdivision 3. Reporting consolidation:

The workforce council in each of the workforce service areas having a career counseling coordinator shall submit an annual report to the commissioner that includes, but is not limited to, a narrative of and the number of businesses, job seekers, and other stakeholders served by the career counseling coordinator function, an accounting of workforce development and career counseling programs and services offered in the assigned workforce service area, and any recommendations for changes to workforce development efforts in the workforce service area. Beginning January 15, 2016, and each year thereafter, the commissioner shall consolidate the reports and submit the consolidated report to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over economic development and workforce policy and finance.

As a part of Responsibilities section (6) and Subdivision 3 Reporting Consolidation referenced above, the RC3 must:

- Identify the region's targeted industry sectors and occupations in demand;
- Describe how sector strategies are being developed and led by an industry representative;
- Describe how Career Pathway models have been or are being developed to better inform job seekers, businesses and training providers on how to align systems and promote opportunities within the region's targeted sectors;
- Describe how a marketing approach for Career Pathway models is being developed in partnership with DEED communication staff to ensure a consistent message across the state;
- Describe how efforts related to compiling data on programs and services will/have supported the development of the WIOA regional plans; and
- Report on the selected collective impact phases, best practices and recommendations for continued improvements that will advance the region's plan.

OTHER APPLICABLE LEGISLATION: RURAL CAREER COUNSELING COORDINATORS

2015 House File No. 3, Article 1, Section 2, Subdivision 3(l)

\$500,000 each year is for rural career counseling coordinator positions in the workforce service areas and for the purposes specified in Minnesota Statutes, section 116L.667. The commissioner, in consultation with local workforce investment boards and local elected officials in each of the service areas receiving funds, shall develop a method of distributing funds to provide equitable services across workforce service areas.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible grantee organizations include but are not limited to local government units, nonprofit organizations, community action agencies, business organizations, business associations, or labor organizations.

PROPOSAL DATES

Provide a single electronic proposal in PDF (not scanned), to Annie.Welch@state.mn.us no later than 4:00 p.m. on Friday, October 16, 2015.

ALLOWABLE COSTS

DEED will not reimburse expenses incurred prior to the start date of the contract, per Minnesota Statutes Section 16A.15, subdivision 3 and Section 16C.05, subdivision 2.

DURATION OF FUNDING AND PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

Proposals funded under this program are intended to cover a nineteen month period. DEED expects the completed contracts to be in place no later than December 1, 2015. Contracts beginning on that date will operate through June 30, 2017.

EXEMPTIONS AND DETAILS

This request does not obligate DEED to complete the work contemplated in this notice. The State reserves the right to cancel this solicitation. All expenses incurred in responding to this notice are solely the responsibility of the responder/applicant. Each week, DEED staff will post responses to frequently asked questions on DEED's website by way of the Contract Opportunities page:

<http://mn.gov/deed/about/contracts/>.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

All responses received by the due date and time (4:00 p.m. on Friday, October 16) will be reviewed by the State. Proposals will first be reviewed for responsiveness to determine if the minimum requirements have been met. Proposals that fail to meet minimum requirements will not advance to the next phase of the evaluation. DEED will award grants to applicants that provide the highest return in public benefits for the public costs incurred and meet all of the statutory requirements.

To fulfill this requirement of reviewing applications in an objective and fair manner, the following factors will be evaluated and scored on a 100 point scale.

EVALUATION FACTORS

1. 80 percent – Work Plan

Response demonstrates understanding of the intent of the position and:

- a. The organization's experience in multi-sector partnerships, with both public and private entities;
- b. The specific skills and experience required of the person serving in the position of the Rural Career Counseling Coordinator;
- c. How the position will be supported by the sponsoring agency and the regional governance group;
- d. Additional resources that will be leveraged, if any, in support of the position; and

- e. How the sponsoring agency will use the work of the RC3 to further the development or implementation of the region's plan.
 - f. Overall quality of the work plan and the plan to meet the goals laid out under the legislation.
 - g. Preference will go to organizations with experience in the public workforce system.
- 2. 10 percent – Budget
 - 3. 10 percent – Eligibility for funding is based on Fiscal Capacity

AWARD NOTIFICATION

DEED will notify final funding decisions no later than Thursday, October 29, 2015. DEED will make award decisions based on organizational capacity, budget, and quality of the work plan. The Commissioner of DEED will make all final funding decisions, based on a panel of expert review and recommendations.

GRANT REQUIREMENTS

All grant agreements entered into with DEED require both state and federal tax identification numbers and a valid DUNS number issued by Dun & Bradstreet. Applicants must also comply with all state and federal requirements including worker's compensation, affirmative action, data privacy, Equal Employment Opportunity and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), among other requirements. Applicants must be prepared to comply with project evaluation requirements. Grant recipients new to DEED-funded grants must complete a master grant agreement before DEED will disburse any funds.

PROGRAM REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Grantees must submit quarterly progress reports including the outcomes listed in the approved work plan and budget. DEED program staff will send out a quarterly progress report template to those awarded.

FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Grantees must prepare and submit monthly Reimbursement Payment Request (RPR) forms or Financial Status Report (FSR) to a grant administrator within DEED. RPRs or FSRs must accurately reflect expenditures and obligations consistent with position performance.

MONITORING

The commissioner shall monitor the activities and outcomes of programs and services funded by legislative appropriations and administered by the department on a pass-through basis. Unless amounts are otherwise appropriated for administrative costs, the commissioner may retain up to five percent of the amount appropriated to the department for grants to pass-through entities. Amounts retained are deposited to a special revenue account and are appropriated to the commissioner for costs incurred in administering and monitoring the pass-through grants.

MINNESOTA RURAL CAREER COUNSELING COORDINATORS REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS - STATE FISCAL YEARS 2016 AND 2017

[APPLICATION COVER SHEET \(FORM 1\)](#)

Complete the name and address of the applicant agency and/or fiscal agent as well as the name and address of the contact person for the project. Include both federal and state Tax ID numbers. Indicate the total level of funding requested. Be sure to include an authorized signature and date on the application.

[APPLICATION NARRATIVE \(LIMIT: FOUR PAGES\)](#)

The Application Narrative may not exceed four single-sided pages in length, with one inch margins, double-spaced, using Calibri size 12 font. This component should address the overarching goals laid out on page 2 of the RFP, along with the following:

- The organization's experience in multi-sector partnerships, with both public and private entities;
- The specific skills and experience required of the person serving in the position of the Rural Career Counseling Coordinator;
- How the position will be supported by the sponsoring agency and the regional governance group;
- Additional resources that will be leveraged, if any, in support of the position; and
- How the sponsoring agency will utilize the work of the RC3 to further the development or implementation of the region's plan.

[BUDGET INFORMATION SUMMARY \(FORM 2\)](#)

Complete the Budget Information Summary. A maximum of five percent of funding may be used for administrative costs. Please attach a concise budget backup detailing the breakdown of activities that the individual filling the role of the RC3 will carry out.

[FISCAL CAPACITY CHECKLIST \(FORM 3\)](#)

The Fiscal Capacity Checklist is a standardized form that is used to determine the basic financial capacity of grant applicants. This information meets state grants management requirements as established in Minnesota Statutes 16B.97 and 16B.98.

**MINNESOTA RURAL CAREER COUNSELING COORDINATORS
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS - STATE FISCAL YEARS 2016 AND 2017**

FORM 1 – APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Applicant Agency and Address: Please use the legal name and provide the full address. This is the fiscal agent with whom the grant agreement will be executed.	
Director Name:	
Telephone:	
Email:	
Address of Director (if different from above):	
Federal Tax ID: (required)	Minnesota Tax ID: (required)
DUNS Number: (required)	
Project Information	
Project Name:	Rural Career Counseling Coordinator
Workforce Development Area(s) Served:	
Project Start Date:	December 1, 2015
Project End Date:	June 30, 2017
Total Amount of Funding Requested:	(may not exceed \$190,000 over two years)

I certify that the information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and that I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the applicant.

Authorized Signature	Title	Date

FORM 2: BUDGET INFORMATION SUMMARY

Please complete this quarterly budget table in cumulative fashion.

Cost Category	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
Qtr start/end:	12/1/15 – 3/31/16	4/1/16 – 6/30/16	7/1/16 – 9/30/16	10/1/16 – 12/31/16	1/1/17 – 3/31/17	4/1/17 – 6/30/17
Administration (no more than 5%)						
RC3 Staff Time						
Related costs (travel, office, etc.)						
TOTAL						

FORM 3: FISCAL CAPACITY CHECKLIST

This form is to be used in order to determine the financial capacity of grant applicants. The creation and implementation of this form is in response to the best practices stated in the Office of Legislative Auditor's report "State Grants to Nonprofit Organizations," January 2007.

SECTION A: APPLICANT INFORMATION		
1. Organization Name and Address	2. Employer Identification Number:	3. Number of Employees: Full Time: Part Time:
		4. If applicable, when did the applicant receive 501(c) status? (MM/DD/YYYY)
5a. Is the applicant affiliated with or managed by any other organizations (e.g. regional or national offices)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, provide details:	6a. Total revenue in most recent accounting period (12 months):	
5b. Does the applicant receive management or financial assistance from any other organizations? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, provide details:	6b. How many different funding sources does the total revenue come from?	
7. Does the applicant have written policies and procedures for the following business processes? a. Accounting <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure If yes, please attach a copy of the table of contents. b. Purchasing <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure If yes, please attach a copy of the table of contents. c. Payroll <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure If yes, please attach a copy of the table of contents.		
SECTION B: ACCOUNTING SYSTEM		
1. Has a federal or state agency issued an official opinion regarding the adequacy of the applicant's accounting system for the collection, identification, and allocation of costs for grants? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
a. If yes, provide the name and address of the reviewing agency:	b. Attach a copy of the latest governmental review and any subsequent documents.	
2. Which of the following best describes the accounting system? <input type="checkbox"/> Manual <input type="checkbox"/> Automated <input type="checkbox"/> Combination		
3. Does the accounting system identify the deposits and expenditures of program funds for each and every grant separately? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure		
4. If the applicant has multiple programs within a grant, does the accounting system record the expenditures for each and every program separately by budget line items? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable		
5. Are times studies conducted for an employee(s) who receives funding from multiple sources? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/> No, Multiple Sources		
6. Does the accounting system have a way to identify over-spending of grant funds? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure		

SECTION C: FUND CONTROL	
1. Is a separate bank account maintained for grant funds? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure	
2. If grant funds are mixed with other funds, can the grant expenses be easily identified? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	
3. Are the officials of the organization bonded? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure	
SECTION D: FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	
1. Did an independent certified public accountant (CPA) ever examine the organization's financial statements? If yes, attach a copy of the management letter from the most recent audit. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure	
SECTION E: CERTIFICATION	
I certify that the above information is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge.	
1. Authorized Signature:	2. Date:
3. Title:	

This form was adapted from an Accounting System and Financial Capability Report Form used by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education, August 2011.

**SFY 2016-2017 MINNESOTA RURAL CAREER COUNSELING COORDINATORS PROGRAM
PROPOSAL EVALUATION FORM**

APPLICANT ORGANIZATION:		TOTAL SCORE: _____/100		
AMOUNT REQUESTED: \$190,000 (NOTE IF DIFFERENT)				
WORKFORCE SERVICE AREA(S) TO SERVE:				
FISCAL CAPACITY: 10 POINTS POSSIBLE		SCORE: _____		
DOES THE ORGANIZATION HAVE THE FISCAL CAPACITY TO HOST A COORDINATOR?	Yes.	Unsure.	No.	
	10-9-8	7-6-5-4	3-2-1-0	
Comments:				
BUDGET NARRATIVE: 10 POINTS POSSIBLE		SCORE: _____		
DOES THE BUDGET REFLECT THE WORK AND SUPPORT OF THE COORDINATOR?	Yes.	Unsure.	No.	
	10-9-8	7-6-5-4	3-2-1-0	
Comments:				
WORK PLAN: 80 POINTS POSSIBLE		SCORE: _____		
<i>Please rate the following, as reflected in the proposal's work plan:</i>		Excellent.	Average.	Poor.
The organization's experience in multi-sector partnerships, with both public and private entities		15 - 11	10 - 6	5 - 0
The specific skills and experience required of the person serving in the position of the Rural Career Counseling Coordinator		10-9-8	7-6-5-4	3-2-1-0
How the position will be supported by the sponsoring agency and the regional governance group		10-9-8	7-6-5-4	3-2-1-0
Additional resources that will be leveraged, if any, in support of the positions		10-9-8	7-6-5-4	3-2-1-0
How the sponsoring agency will use the work of the Rural Career Counseling Coordinator to further the development or implementation of the region's WIOA plan (see description below)		15 - 11	10 - 6	5 - 0
Overall quality of the work plan and the plan to meet the goals laid out under the legislation		15 - 11	10 - 6	5 - 0
Preference will go to the organizations with experience in the public workforce system		5-4	3	2-1
Comments:				
SUMMARY COMMENTS				
Overall Project/Proposal Strengths				
Overall Project/Proposal Weaknesses				
<p>According to 2015 Minnesota Statutes 116L.667, Section 9 Rural Career Counseling Coordinators Subdivision. Subdivision 2. Responsibilities: A career counseling coordinator is responsible for:</p> <p>(1) understanding the needs of existing, new, and prospective service area businesses in regard to workforce development programs, resources, and other services;</p> <p>(2) connecting job seekers, secondary and higher education institutions, employers, and other stakeholders and partners;</p> <p>(3) providing services to job seekers including career counseling, training, and work experience opportunities;</p> <p>(4) assessing and compiling information about all workforce development programs and services offered in the assigned workforce service area, including adult basic education programs and programs and services at higher education institutions and kindergarten through grade 12 schools;</p> <p>(5) making recommendations to the commissioner regarding ways to improve career counseling coordination, possible program changes, and new workforce programs or initiatives;</p>				

(6) sharing best practices and collaborating with other career counseling coordinators to promote and enable state-level coordination among workforce development programs and administering agencies including, but not limited to, the Departments of Employment and Economic Development, Education, and Labor and Industry, and the Office of Higher Education;

(7) promoting available workforce development and career counseling programs and resources in the workforce service area.

As a part of Responsibilities section (6) and Subdivision 3 Reporting Consolidation referenced above, the RC3 must:

- Identify the region's targeted industry sectors and occupations in demand;
- Describe how sector strategies are being developed and led by an industry representative;
- Describe how Career Pathway models have been or are being developed to better inform job seekers, businesses and training providers on how to align systems and promote opportunities within the region's targeted sectors;
- Describe how a marketing approach for Career Pathway models is being developed in partnership with DEED communication staff to ensure a consistent message across the state;
- **Describe how efforts related to compiling data on programs and services will/have supported the development of the WIOA regional plans;** and
- Report on the selected collective impact phases, best practices and recommendations for continued improvements that will advance the region's plan.