

**Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development
Request for Proposals (RFP)
December 2023**



Project and Organizational Overview

The Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development (LPED) is a public-private partnership between the City of Lincoln and the business community. LPED is charged with fulfilling Lincoln's economic development goals, which include workforce development.

The purpose of this RFP is to find a partner to develop a new, user-friendly, and interactive website for career pathways, plus corresponding printable materials and graphics.

The interactive website and handouts will primarily be used by:

- Students
- Job Seekers
- Workforce Development Practitioners & Educators
 - Such as case managers, school counselors, career advisors, academic advisors, supportive service providers, Skilled and Technical Sciences teachers, EmployLNK agencies and other nonprofits working with target populations
- Employers (such as HR and the management team)

The audience will use the website and handouts to:

- Gain knowledge about potential career progression paths
- Gain knowledge about the secondary, postsecondary and adult industry-focused education programs available in the area
- Gain knowledge about work-based learning

Organization Background and Project History

In January 2023, the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce and LPED, in partnership with the consulting firm, Broad Ripple Strategies, released the Lincoln Economic Vitality Strategy. The Lincoln Economic Vitality Strategy identifies high-level objectives for the coming years along with clearly defined tactics to achieve them. Talent Development and Alignment was identified as a primary objective and developing a coordinated Career Pathway System for Lincoln's talent ecosystem was stated as a key initiative.

As stated in the Lincoln Economic Vitality Strategy, "Formalizing a Career Pathway System is an efficient and customer-centered way to connect industry-focused secondary, postsecondary, and adult education programs with career and academic advising personnel, supportive services providers, and other key stakeholders to prepare students for good jobs and long-term careers."

LPED leads a Lincoln Career Pathways working group to develop a Lincoln Career Pathways System that includes partners from the American Job Center of Lancaster and Saunders Counties, Southeast Community College, Lincoln Public Schools, City of Lincoln, and the Nebraska Department of Labor.

The working group identified four pathways to focus on first; these pathways will include the following occupations:

- Production (manufacturing)
- Registered Nurse (healthcare)
- Programing (information technology)
- Truck Driving (transportation and logistics)

LPED and the Lincoln Manufacturing Council (LMC) have received funding from the American Rescue Plan State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund from the City of Lincoln to improve and expand LMC's programming and support workforce development and job training, including funds to develop a career pathways website and printed materials.

Project Deliverables

The following project deliverables are listed in priority order. Additionally, we will accept proposals from bidders interested in one or several components of this project who are willing to collaborate with other bidders as needed to create a cohesive final product.

1. Creation of a Lincoln Career Pathways website
 - a. Initial development will include four highly interactive career progression pathway pages (and the ability to add additional career pathways in the future).
 - i. Each career pathway page will show the possible progression options through the careers listed in the pathway.
 - ii. Each career pathway page will include or link to other pages with information about:
 1. The potential wages someone could earn and the projected demand for the listed occupations
 2. Secondary, postsecondary and adult industry-focused education and training programs available to upskill between occupations listed within each pathways
 3. Potential financial assistance available for the education and training programs listed
 - b. In addition to the specific career pathway pages, initial development will also include:
 - i. A landing page
 - ii. Pages providing information to job seekers, students, workforce development practitioners and educators, such as:
 1. How to best use this resource

2. Links to interest and skill assessments
 3. Financial assistance for education and training programs
 4. Skill building advice & resources
 5. Internship & apprenticeship best practices
 6. Resume and application best practices
 7. Advice for targeted populations (e.g. students, individuals with a justice barrier, immigrants and refugees, etc.)
 8. Accessing additional help
- iii. Pages providing information to employers, such as:
 1. Work-based learning (e.g. internships and apprenticeships) best practices
 2. Advice for connecting with students and teachers
 3. How to use the career pathways system internally for employee retention and upskilling
- c. The website should include the flexibility and capability for future features including integrated interest and skill assessments and integrated job opportunities from NWorks.
 - d. The website should be easily translated into other languages to increase accessibility for non-English speakers.
 - e. The flow for students, job seekers and workforce development practitioners may be as follows: welcome > assessments > career pathways > see example jobs (NWorks) > education and training program finder > financial assistance > building skills > advice for resume & applications > additional help.
 - f. We will discuss the website hosting platform and website maintenance.
2. Production of printable materials that communicates the career pathways and education and training programs available.
 3. Production of graphics to be used within the website, on printable materials and in marketing materials.

Target Audiences

Students - Including postsecondary and high school students, some of whom are participating in a career pathway at The Career Academy (TCA), Southeast Nebraska Career Academy Partnership (SENCAP) or other focus program.

- **Goal:** Students will have a better understanding of potential career pathways
- **Goal:** Students will understand how/where to start in a pathway
- **Goal:** Students will have a better understanding of what to do now to prepare for careers, such as internships

- **Goal:** If in high school, students will have a better understanding of the high school classes and dual credit options that would prepare them for the jobs within the pathway

Job Seekers - Including general community members, some of whom have barriers to employment (e.g. English Language Learners, formerly incarcerated individuals, etc.)

- **Goal:** Job seekers will have a better understanding of potential career pathways
- **Goal:** Job seekers will understand how/where to start in a pathway as well as what to do/where to go next for a pathway they are already in

Workforce Development Practitioners & Educators - Including case managers, school counselors, career advisors, academic advisors, supportive service providers, Skilled and Technical Sciences teachers, EmployLNK agencies and other nonprofits working with target populations

- **Goal:** Workforce development practitioners will have a better understanding of potential career pathways and can use it to shape the advice they provide their clients or students
- **Goal:** Workforce development practitioners will show their clients or students how to use the pathway system

Employers - Including employers in Lincoln and surrounding areas.

- **Goal:** Employers will have a better understanding of work-based learning, how to connect with students and teachers, and how to use the career pathways system internally for employee retention and upskilling

Similar Examples

Other communities and states have career pathway systems in place. Here are a few examples that include elements similar to our career pathway system vision:

- Careers in Colorado (Colorado): <https://www.mycoloradojourney.com/industries>
- NCcareers.org (North Carolina): <https://nccareers.org/>
- My Next Move (San Diego, CA): <https://workforce.org/my-next-move/>
- OC Pathways (Orange County, CA): <https://ocpathways.com/career-tools/> and <https://ocpathways.com/oc-pathways-grids/>

Budget

We will select the best-fit proposal(s). This project is funded by a grant, so we are restricted to our proposed budget.

Project Timeline

Targeted launch timeframe is early May 2024 for the initial website development (including four pathways), printable materials and graphics.

Procurement Timeline

Monday, December 4, 2023	RFP Released
Monday, December 11	Deadline for potential bidders to submit Letters of Interest (LOI) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LOI should be emailed to Allison Hatch - May be brief but must include statement of interest and contact information - A LOI is requested and encouraged but not required to submit a proposal
Wednesday, December 13 at 3:00 pm	Optional Zoom conversation for potential bidders: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86147236834?pwd=zxjE1HKxtN5kuMdpr1mlRsPpdaoALV.1
Thursday, December 14 at 10:30 am	Optional Zoom conversation for potential bidders: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88071699270?pwd=J02U40OaEw9fbRggXU6A3pXzkUbiv3.1
Friday, December 15 End of Day (EOD)	Deadline for potential bidders to ask questions
Wednesday, December 20	LPED will share answers to questions received <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Answers will be provided to contacts included in LOI's
Friday, January 19, 2024 EOD	Deadline to submit proposals
Tuesday, January 22 – Friday, February 2	Proposals evaluated
Monday, February 5	Selected proposal(s) announced

Evaluation Criteria

1. Creative web design, graphic design and/or print production capabilities
 - a. At LPED, we have access to a team of marketing, social media and design staff. When we outsource our marketing and design work, we are looking for a creativity and focus on our unique needs that might be beyond the capacity of our team. This project will require skills in marketing, social media and web design that work together to complete all goals.
2. Ability to meet goals of project
 - a. This is an impactful and unique project pulling in influence and expertise from a wide variety of stakeholders. The ideal candidate will understand our goals and the purpose behind this project with a drive to create an accessible, informative, and engaging final product that creatively meets the needs outlined in this RFP.
3. Ability to duplicate career pathway pages for future career pathways
 - a. This career pathway system will continue to expand beyond the first four career pathways included in this RFP. The ideal candidate will have a plan for incorporating flexibility into the website to allow for additional career pathways in the future, which may not fit exactly like the initial four pathways.
4. Budget
 - a. Funds for this project are limited and have strict guidelines to stay in line with the ARPA grant proposal; contractors will need to be able to stay within these boundaries.

5. Measurement of website metrics
 - a. We would like to be able to track website traffic and engagement so we can report the statistics to prove that this investment has been successful and see how to better engage our audience. This can include page views, average time on site, repeat and new visitors, social media tracking and traffic sources.
6. Experience with target subjects
 - a. Demonstrating care for our mission and interest in workforce development is a plus, as is an interest in developing the employment ecosystem for Lincoln, NE. Experience working with workforce development organizations and/or educational programs is also a plus.
7. Ability to produce resources inclusive of English Language Learners
 - a. Because the target audience is wide-ranging and includes immigrant and refugee communities and other English Language Learners, the final products will need to be inclusive of these individuals.

Submission Requirements

Please include the following information in your proposal:

- An overview of your company, the team members who will be working on the project, and an overview of your company's prior experience
- Statements addressing each of the Evaluation Criteria listed above
- Specify which deliverables are included in the proposal (i.e. website, print materials or graphic design)
- If bidding on the website deliverable, include:
 - Description or visual of how you plan to display the career pathway and related information (e.g. occupation wages, demand, education and training opportunities, financial assistance, etc.) and how the page(s) will be interactive
 - A plan to train LPED staff to update and make changes to the website internally
 - A plan or cost estimate for making revisions to the website during the development process and after project completion
 - An estimate of cost to continue expanding the number of career pathways beyond the first four pathways listed in this RFP
 - An estimate of cost for providing maintenance and/or hosting, if interested
- If not bidding on all three deliverables, description of how you plan to work with other contractors to accomplish a cohesive product
- Description or visual of how you plan to display the career pathway and related information (e.g. occupation wages, demand, education and training Proposed budget breakdown for each deliverable included in proposal
- Proposed timeline for development of each component
- Examples of previous work with similar projects
- Two references that can speak to previous or current work

Principal Point of Contact

Allison Hatch | Director of Workforce Development
Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development
(402) 436-2365 | ahatch@selectlincoln.org

Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development Procurement & Contract Procedures

LPED's goal is to acquire commodities and services of the best quality. Commodity purchases and or services up to \$10,000 do not need bids; if the commodities and or services are over \$10,000, LPED will obtain at least three bids or proposals. LPED will try to purchase commodities and or services locally, if possible. All construction projects with a cost over \$2,000 will follow bidding procedure and include proper information for applying Davis Bacon Wage rates. No employee, officer, or agent will participate in the selection, award, or administration of the resulting contract if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest.