



**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
DEVELOPMENT OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR RESEARCH
AND ANALYSIS OF SILICON VALLEY TECHNOLOGY SUB-SECTORS**

PERFORMANCE PERIOD: April 12, 2010 to April 30, 2010

DATE RFQ ISSUED: March 12, 2010

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NOVA Workforce Board on behalf of work2future,
San Mateo Co. and Santa Cruz Co. Workforce Boards
(408) 730-7832

PROPOSALS DUE: March 26, 2010 5:00 p.m.

SUBMIT TO: NOVA
Attention: Luther Jackson
505 W. Olive Avenue, Suite 550
Sunnyvale, CA 94086
[ljackson@novaworks.org]

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
DEVELOPMENT OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR RESEARCH AND
ANALYSIS OF SILICON VALLEY
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Workforce Board of the North Valley Job Training Consortium (NOVA), working on behalf of the work2future, San Mateo Co. and Santa Cruz Co. workforce investment boards (WIBs), is issuing a Request for Qualifications (“RFQ”) for technical assistance in the preparation of a Request for Proposals (“RFP”) to provide consulting and research services for a major study of the technology sector in Silicon Valley from a workforce development perspective. The RFP process will hereinafter be referred to as the “RFP project” or the “project.” Accordingly, NOVA is inviting consultants and other qualified parties to respond to this RFQ. It is the intent of NOVA to enter into a vendor relationship with a qualified consultant - or consultants - capable of providing the services described within this RFQ. Included in this RFQ are a scope of services and tasks and other information describing this opportunity. The performance period is April 12, 2010 through April 30, 2010.

The consultant(s) selected through this RFQ will not be eligible to bid on the RFP project. All RFQ bidders must sign a statement in Enclosure I at the end of this document confirming their understanding that they will be ineligible to bid on the RFP project if they are a successful respondent(s) to this RFQ.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The NOVA, work2future, San Mateo Co. and Santa Cruz Co. workforce boards are nonprofit, federally funded employment and training agencies that provide customer-focused workforce development services. The agencies work closely with local businesses, educators and job seekers to ensure that our programs provide opportunities that build the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to address the workforce needs of Silicon Valley.

NOVA is directed by the NOVA Workforce Board (<http://www.novawb.org>), which works on behalf of a seven-city consortium composed of Cupertino, Los Altos, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Santa Clara and Sunnyvale. NOVA is administered by the City of Sunnyvale as a City department. It is the lead agency regarding this RFQ procurement process.

work2future, housed within the City of San Jose Office of Economic Development, functions as the local administrative arm of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA). work2future (www.work2future.biz) operates three One-Stop Career Centers in the cities of San Jose, Campbell and Gilroy. It also provides workforce development services for the cities of Los Gatos, Morgan Hill, Los Altos Hills, Saratoga, Monte Sereno, and the unincorporated areas of Santa Clara County.

The Workforce Investment Board of San Mateo County oversees the PeninsulaWorks One-Stop

Career System. The Board (www.co.sanmateo.ca.us/portal/site/wib) reports directly to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors and has the authority to recommend broader policy-oriented approaches to local workforce development.

The Workforce Investment Board, Santa Cruz County (www.santacruzwb.com) works on behalf of the business and education communities, local government and residents of Santa Cruz County. It is dedicated to helping county job seekers access the tools they need to manage their careers and to helping local employers find the skilled workers they need to compete and succeed.

Over the last several years, regional cyclical and structural economic shocks have jolted Silicon Valley's technology-based job seekers and employers and have created significant challenges in workforce efforts to effectively connect job seekers with employers seeking qualified applicants. In addition to high unemployment rates, the Silicon Valley economy has been characterized by wild and dynamic swings.

The economic volatility is not merely confined to a region or an industry. Over the last few years, many technology companies have laid off employees in one business unit while almost simultaneously hiring in another. This churning poses unique challenges for workforce career counselors and their dislocated customers who are trying to match their skills and attributes with new jobs and careers in growth sectors.

Similarly, traditional labor market information - which career advisors have used to direct job seekers in their search process - is increasingly less valuable to job seekers because technology-based economic and job growth does not often fit neatly into broad sectoral categories such as software, computer hardware, internet and information services and other media and broadcasting. Within the sectors, there are various sub-sectors with their own distinct growth trends. Within computer networking, for example, there are sub-sectors focused on Internet security as well as load balancing, used to spread a workload evenly across a network.

Further, lines are blurring between traditional industry sectors and occupational titles. Software engineers are found within computer networking, biotechnology, automotive, agricultural and food manufacturing companies.

Faced with these challenges, NOVA, on behalf of its partner workforce boards, is seeking the services of a consultant to provide technical assistance leading to the production of a Request for Proposals for one or more consultants/researchers to identify and analyze technology niches – or sub-sectors – in order for the agencies and community stakeholders to gain a more sophisticated understanding of the Silicon Valley technology ecosystem. The ultimate goal of the research process is to empower job seekers with labor market guidance that is precise, current, relevant and actionable.

The desired outcomes for a sub-sectoral strategy could include one or more of the following: improved regional economic competitiveness, an expanded pool of trained job applicants and more relevant, actionable labor market intelligence for job seekers.

Therefore, the audience for this research will be workforce investment boards, employers, industry associations, job seekers, unions and other worker associations, academics, media and economic development organizations.

3.0 SUMMARY OF PROJECT

The successful bidder in this RFQ process shall produce the following deliverables associated with the RFP project:

- Scope (general examples below are intended to be a starting point for consultant consideration and are not meant to be prescriptive)
 - Clear and precise RFP specifications that will ultimately yield research:
 - addressing the technology taxonomy - identifying and analyzing those technology niches - or sub-sectors - that are currently prominent in Silicon Valley.
 - determining which sub-sectors are currently growing and which are currently shrinking and which are likely to grow and shrink over an appropriate future time frame.
 - identifying the sub-sectors with competitive advantages and clearly articulating the precise nature of those advantages.
 - highlighting those sub-sectors where strategic workforce development and other investments could unleash heretofore untapped growth opportunities. Are there companies whose growth has stalled because of a lack of appropriately skilled employees? Can the Silicon Valley WIBs and community stakeholders play a role in expanding the training capacity for those particular occupations?
 - promoting research sustainability through developing appropriate tools, methodologies and technology sector relationships which will enable the workforce agencies to periodically refresh information regarding sub-sectoral trends.
 - explaining the current and future life cycles of products, processes and services within key sub-sectors. What activities are likely to remain in Silicon Valley? Could workforce or other regional investments affect the amount of project/process/service work performed locally?
 - identifying the Silicon Valley-based jobs that are likely to remain or grow and discussing the skill and education levels and career paths associated with those jobs.
 - identifying areas where workforce boards should consider developing implementation strategies.
- Length of response period for potential bidders after RFP release
- Performance period and recommended project milestones and benchmarks
- Budget strategies

- Including a budget range or fixed amount?
- Determining budget amount for a research project of this scope.
- Scoring/selection criteria and process
- Consultant qualifications and strategies for assembling a cross-sectoral and multi-disciplinary team.
 - The workforce boards would like to explore the option of hiring a team of consulting and research specialists with collective experience in for-profit corporate, non-profit economic development, academic and other appropriate sectors.
 - Consider a bidders' conference to facilitate goal?
 - Incentivizing collaborative effort through the RFP process?
- Outreach strategies for identifying potential bidders
- Research project deliverables in addition to a research paper

Deliverables for this RFQ process will include an administrative RFP draft and a final RFP draft.

The successful RFQ consultant(s) will be a member of the RFP project selection committee that evaluates RFP project responses and will be prohibited from assisting potential RFP bidders.

NOVA will allow the consultant(s) access to agency staff and job seeker and business customers, as appropriate and necessary for the scope of work. Pursuant to the Workforce Investment Act, the consultant(s) selected will sign a confidentiality agreement relative to nondisclosure of confidential information.

4.0 QUALIFICATIONS

Proposers under this RFQ should have prior experience with the development of RFPs for research regarding the technology sector and workforce issues. The proposer(s) should have existing regional networks and resources to draw on to achieve RFQ objectives and should have a demonstrated knowledge of local workforce issues.

Due to conflict of interest concerns, the consultant(s) selected through this RFQ will not be eligible to bid on the RFP discussed in Section 3.0.

5.0 ESTIMATED BUDGET RANGE AND TIMELINE

The estimated budget for the completion of this project is a maximum of \$15,000, though NOVA is not obligated to spend the entire amount on one selected consultant. The actual amount paid to the consultant will vary depending on the final scope of each task assigned. NOVA may choose to select more than one consultant for the project.

The RFP administrative draft will be due by 5 p.m. on Friday, April 23, 2010. The final draft will be due by 5 p.m. on Friday, April 30, 2010. The consultant(s) will provide interim updates to NOVA staff as per mutual agreement. NOVA staff and a community stakeholder advisory committee will review the administrative draft and share comments with the RFQ consultant.

6.0 RFQ SUBMITTAL AND REQUESTED INFORMATION

Submittals should include:

- a) *Introduction*: provide a brief letter of introduction on the consultant's letterhead transmitting all RFQ information;
- b) *Experience*: provide a profile of experiences that the consultant has had, including the consultant's experience with similar projects;
- c) *References*: provide information and references on public and private sector work relating to development of RFPs and workforce-related research and analysis in the technology sector;
- d) *Proposed fees and costs*: provide proposed total cost along with a listing of fees for members of the consulting team who would be involved in the project, including any support personnel. Also, please include a statement of willingness (or unwillingness) to undertake designated tasks for a flat fee for the project, i.e. "all inclusive" fee for all services.
- e) *Enclosure I*: provide this document with an original signature(s).

7.0 RECEIPT OF PROPOSALS

Responses must be received in the offices of NOVA, 505 W. Olive Avenue, Suite 550, Sunnyvale, CA 94086 by 5:00 p.m., March 26, 2010. NOVA is not responsible for proposals that are delivered through U.S. Mail or any delivery service. Electronic mail submissions are acceptable. If e-mailing a proposal, send to Luther Jackson at ljackson@novaworks.org. Proposals not received by the due date and time will be rejected. E-mailed proposals must be followed by a mailed original signature page – along with Enclosure I - within one week following the proposal due date.

8.0 SELECTION PROCESS

NOVA will conduct a selection process to determine the best and most appropriate consultant to meet its needs, as follows:

- a) NOVA shall call for an RFQ from all interested and qualified consultants.
- b) NOVA staff shall screen all responses. Screening criteria may include, without limitation:
 - Professional qualifications of the consultant;
 - Experience on projects of similar size and scope;
 - Capability of the consultant to deliver timely and high quality services;
 - Reference checks on previous projects; and
 - Professional fee schedule.

c) NOVA shall interview selected candidates and enter into contract negotiations with the consultant (s) deemed best and most appropriate. The parties will seek agreement on services and fees. If negotiations are not successful, NOVA may enter into negotiations with other candidates—in its sole discretion—and seek to reach agreement. This RFQ does not commit NOVA to pay for any direct and/or indirect costs incurred in the preparation and presentation of a response. All finalists shall pay their own costs incurred in preparing for, traveling to, and attending the interviews.

9.0 PRINCIPALS AND REJECTION STATEMENT

Consultants are advised that NOVA will only deal with principals or their designated agents with regard to this RFQ. Furthermore, it is to be understood by principals and their agents that NOVA is not obligated to accept any RFQ response (or proposal) or to negotiate with any respondents and NOVA reserves the right to accept the response which will best serve its interests. Additionally, NOVA reserves the right to negotiate simultaneously with more than one consultant if, in NOVA's sole opinion, it believes that simultaneously negotiating with more than one consultant is in the best interests of NOVA.

10.0 OWNERSHIP OF SUBMITTED MATERIALS

All responses and related materials received by NOVA becomes its property and may be returned only at the NOVA's option. This clause also pertains to all findings, documents, survey responses and any other materials generated or produced during the evaluation process.

11.0 INSPECTION

As part of the review process, NOVA reserves the right to obtain any and all information associated with this RFQ, including, but not limited to: inspecting service sites and/or equipment; contacting any individuals, agencies or employers listed in a proposal; or contacting other sources who are knowledgeable of the bidder's performance, qualifications and or financial solvency.

12.0 ACCEPTANCE OF QUALIFICATIONS

This RFQ does not commit NOVA to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal to this request, or to procure or contract for services or supplies. NOVA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses received as a result of this request, to negotiate with all qualified sources, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFQ if it is in the best interest of NOVA to do so. Should a failed competition (only one responsive proposal is received) result from this RFQ, NOVA has the option to re-compete the procurement or enter into a sole source procurement, whichever is appropriate. NOVA may require the offerors selected to participate in negotiations, and to submit such price, technical, or other revisions of their proposals as may result from negotiations.

13.0 TYPE OF CONTRACT

NOVA reserves the right to utilize the most appropriate contract methodology, including performance-based and/or cost reimbursement. As NOVA's fiscal agent is the City of Sunnyvale, the contract will be issued in the name of the City of Sunnyvale.

14.0 CONTRACT AWARD

NOVA may award a contract based upon offers received without discussion of such offers with the offeror. Each offer should be submitted in the most favorable terms from a price and technical standpoint. However, NOVA reserves the right to request additional data or oral discussion/presentation in support of written proposals.

Prior to any contract negotiations, the applicant/agency must be prepared to submit the following as applicable:

- State and federal ID numbers
- Local business license
- Proof of insurance
- Signatory authorization
- Affirmative action plan
- Grievance procedures
- Audit report for the past fiscal year

15.0 INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

If awarded the contract, the Contractor must comply with the City of Sunnyvale's insurance requirements, as follows:

The Contractor shall procure and maintain during the term of an agreement, insurance, in compliance with the sections below unless expressly waived, in writing, by the City. On or before commencement of the contract, Contractor shall furnish City with certificates showing the type, amount, class of operations covered, effective dates and dates of expiration of insurance coverage. Endorsements naming City as Additional Insured shall be submitted with the insurance certificates.

- **WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND EMPLOYER'S LIABILITY INSURANCE** – statutory coverage as required by the State of California.
- **GENERAL LIABILITY INSURANCE** with the following minimum limits: Bodily injury, \$500,000 per occurrence, \$1,000,000 in the aggregate; property damage, \$100,000 per occurrence, \$250,000 in the aggregate; or a Combined Single Limit (CSL) policy with aggregate limits in the amount of \$1,000,000.
- **AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY INSURANCE** with the following minimum limits: Bodily injury,

\$100,000 per occurrence, \$300,000 in the aggregate; property damage, \$50,000 per occurrence, \$50,000 in the aggregate.

- The liability and automobile insurance policies shall name the City as an additional insured only to the extent of the indemnification contained herein and shall provide at least thirty (30) days prior written notice to City of cancellation of the policy or reduction in the coverage.
- Evidence of self-insurance from the Contractor which meets the above requirements will be accepted by the City.

16.0 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Any questions or requests for technical assistance should be directed to: Luther Jackson, Economic Stimulus Manager, (408) 730-7832, ljackson@novaworks.org.

17.0 SERVICES DESIGNED FOR THOSE WITH DISABILITIES

All NOVA programs must comply with applicable Federal Laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which require that no otherwise qualified individual shall solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving WIA funds. All WIA programs are required to make reasonable accommodation to ensure that individuals with disabilities are able to participate. This includes a barrier-free environment and, where reasonable, may include the provision of assisting devices and/or staff accommodations; i.e., Braille instruction, tape recorded lectures, sign language, etc. Individual programs will be assessed as to their enhancement of the total WIA accessibility.

18.0 CONTROLLING LEGISLATION

Programs to be provided under this RFQ are legislated through the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and its accompanying rules and regulations.

ENCLOSURE I

**BIDDER'S STATEMENT REGARDING PARTICIPATION IN RFP PROJECT
REFERENCED IN THIS RFQ DOCUMENT**

Should I (we) be the successful respondent(s) to this RFQ, I (we) hereby acknowledge that it is my (our) understanding that I (we) shall be ineligible to bid on the RFP project referenced in this document. Further, I (we) understand that should NOVA select me (us) to perform the work outlined in this RFQ, I (we) will be a member of the RFP project selection committee that evaluates RFP responses and I (we) will be prohibited from assisting potential RFP bidders.

Signature (s)

Date

Print name (s)