



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
for
CLASS-SIZE SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMS
for
LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED

SUPPORTED WITH FUNDS UNDER THE
DISLOCATED WORKER TRAINING
NATIONAL EMERGENCY GRANT PROGRAM

ISSUED BY
WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS OF PROVIDENCE/CRANSTON
PROVIDENCE/CRANSTON WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

ISSUE DATE:	JULY 8, 2013
BIDDERS' CONFERENCE:	JULY 15, 2013
PROPOSALS DUE:	AUGUST 12, 2013

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BACKGROUND

While economic conditions are improving across the country and to some degree here in Rhode Island, there continues to exist a significant number of long-term unemployed individuals who face barriers in returning to work. Over the last several years, this has caused a strain on the capacity of the local workforce investment system to provide the services needed to get these individuals back to work.

Under section 173 of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the U.S. Secretary of Labor is authorized to make available discretionary grants to provide employment-related services for dislocated workers affected by a significant dislocation event. These include plant closures and mass layoffs recognized by the Secretary of Labor who has used this authority to provide assistance to respond to significant nationwide events affecting the U.S. workforce. Significant events are those that create a sudden need for assistance that cannot be accommodated within the ongoing operations of the WIA Dislocated Worker formula program.

In addition to major plant closures and mass layoffs, there have also been widespread smaller layoffs across the country, which when combined with the high numbers of long-term unemployed, has had a significant impact on the workforce investment system's ability to provide crucial training services to improve laid-off workers' employment prospects. These smaller layoffs across the nation have been recognized as having the same impact and are considered a significant dislocation event for purposes of one-time National Emergency Grant (NEG) assistance.

Recently, Rhode Island was awarded an NEG intended to support training and credential attainment to help dislocated workers become reemployed and to help create the most competitive workforce in the world.

The projected impact that this award will have cannot be overstated. Analysis of outcome data collected by the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor suggests that training services significantly improve an individual's ability to obtain employment. Over the past four program years, the entered employment rate for dislocated workers who exited training programs has ranged between 23 and 30 percent higher than the rate for those who did not receive training.

PURPOSE

Workforce Solutions of Providence/Cranston (WSPC) has been designated a local Program Operator for the NEG. Through this Request for Proposals (RFP) and on behalf of the Providence/Cranston Workforce Investment Board, WSPC is soliciting proposals to support training programs that lead to full time employment in high growth, high demand and high paying positions, and in particular those industries that have been recognized and supported by the Governor's Workforce Board RI. Training programs must be targeted to dislocated workers who have been unemployed 27 weeks or longer.

A particular emphasis of this RFP is to solicit proposals that incorporate a delivery strategy of not only occupational skills training but also one that includes a direct connection to work based learning.

GENERAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. Eligible applicants who may submit a proposal include:
 - An employer or group of employers
 - Labor organizations
 - Trade associations
 - Private providers of training services
 - Public providers of training services
 - Industry partnership recognized by the Governor's Workforce Board RI
 - Health Care Industries
 - Bioscience Industries
 - Construction Industries
 - Marine Technology Industries
 - Hospitality/Tourism Industries
 - Information Technology Industries
 - Advanced Manufacturing Industries
 - Defense Industries
2. Eligible participants include those that meet the State of Rhode Island's definition of "dislocated worker" which is 27 weeks or longer. In addition, a priority will be given to long-term unemployed and those individuals who have been profiled as likely to exhaust unemployment insurance benefits.
3. Workforce Solutions of Providence/Cranston will assume responsibilities for the recruitment eligibility determination and assessment of participants for this program. These activities will take place at the Providence netWORKri Office, which is the one-stop career center for the Providence/Cranston Workforce Investment Area. In order to assist that office in screening candidates for entrance into training programs, the applicant will be required to identify the minimum entrance requirements that an individual needs prior to entrance into training.
4. Applicants will be required to provide an outline of the training curriculum, including a list of specific skill sets to be taught in each curriculum component and the length of time for each component.
5. Applicants will be required to identify the nationally and industry recognized and other credentials that will result from this training.

6. Applicants will be required to describe how their proposed program establishes a linkage to employment through such activities as internships or work experience. Other linkages may include a short term on-the-job training (OJT) program for completers of classroom training that includes skills training to enhance rather than duplicate the training received in the classroom. Finally, applicants may describe their plans for direct placement of their graduates into employment to satisfy the employer linkage requirement.

GENERAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. An original and seven (7) copies of completed proposals, as well as an electronic copy, must be submitted no later than 12:00 noon on Monday, August 12, 2013 by mail or in person to:

Susan Almeida
Administrative Secretary
Workforce Solutions of Providence/Cranston
444 Westminster Street
Third Floor
Providence, RI 02903

2. A bidders' conference will be held starting from 9 a.m. to 12 noon on Monday, July 15, 2013 in the Renaissance Room at the Providence netWORKri Office located at One Reservoir Avenue, Providence, RI. At that time the application and expected outcomes will be explained. This bidders' conference also affords applicants an opportunity to ask questions.

Following the bidders' conference, questions and comments may be sent to salmeida@providenceri.com no later than Friday, August 2, 2013. (Please use "RFP" in the subject line.) Answers from questions asked during and following the bidders' conference will be logged in and posted by Friday, August 9, 2013 on the Workforce Solutions of Providence/Cranston website (<http://www.workforcesolutionspc.com>).

3. The period of performance for contracts awarded under this RFP may be as early as October 1, 2013 and not later than June 30, 2015. The program start date may not be later than December 31, 2014 in order that the completion of program performance concludes no later than June 30, 2015.
4. Contracts awarded under this RFP will be cost reimbursement.
5. Proposals received will undergo two reviews. The first is an Initial Review to determine if the proposer:
 - Has submitted the proposal on time;
 - Has included the required number of copies,
 - Has met the financial requirements of submitting their most recent audit and cost allocation plan;

The second review will determine the extent to which the proposal addresses the Scope of Work and the experience and qualifications of the proposer. This review will also address reasonableness of cost. For this review, points will be awarded to each proposal relative to the information provided in the proposal according to the following:

Proposal Scope of Work	Maximum of 60 points
Strength of Employer Linkages/Commitments	Maximum of 30 points
Reasonableness of Cost	Maximum of 10 points

6. The timeline for this RFP is as follows:

DATE	REFERENCE
July 8, 2013	Release of the RFP. Legal notice publication.
July 15, 2013	Bidders' conference
August 2, 2013	All questions must be received by this date
August 9, 2013	Answers to last questions posted
August 12, 2013	Proposals due
August 14-30, 2013	Review of proposals
September 24, 2013	Notification of awards
September 25-30, 2013	Contract development period
October 1, 2013	Earliest start date for programs
December 31, 2014	Latest date for a program start date
June 30, 2015	Last date to meet performance requirements

7. The next section of this RFP contains the Proposal Response Format and it must be used in the applicant's submittal. On the second page of the proposal format is a checklist that you should use in assembling your completed proposal.

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of consistency with the requirements of this RFP. The narrative portion of the proposal must be in single-spaced 12-point font with one inch margins. All pages must be numbered sequentially.

Applicant must submit a separate proposal must be submitted for each occupational skill area for which training is proposed.

Successful bidders must agree to be placed on the state's WIA Eligible Training Provider List.

PROPOSAL RESPONSE FORMAT

PROPOSAL COVER SHEET

Proposal No.

Time/Date Received

PROPOSAL COVER PAGE

1. Name of Applicant Organization: _____

Address: _____

2. Name, Title, E-mail Address and Phone Number of Applicant Contact Person:

3. Applicant's Organizational Structure: *(Please check all that apply)*

☐ Non-Profit

☐ Public Sector

☐ Educational Institution

☐ Trade Association

☐ For-Profit

☐ Private Sector

☐ Employer

☐ Organized Labor

4. Occupational Skill Training Area: *(Please note a separate application is required for each skill area.)*

5. Number of Individuals To Be Trained: _____ Total Amount of Funds Requested: _____

6. Proposed Program Start Date: _____ End Date: _____

7. Internal Revenue Service Employer I.D. Number (F.E.I.N.) _____

8. Organization's R.I. DLT Registration Number: *(Ten digits)* _____

On behalf of the applicant organization, I approve this proposal submitted to Workforce Solutions of Providence/Cranston

Typed Name: _____ Title: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

PROPOSAL COVER SHEET

- ☐ Proposal Cover Sheet
- ☐ Proposal Checklist Page
- ☐ Certifications Page
- ☐ Proposal Summary
- ☐ Proposal Scope of Work
- ☐ Proposal Budget
- ☐ Copy of Most Recent Audit
- ☐ Cost Allocation Plan
- ☐ Certificate of General Liability
- ☐ Employer Letters of Commitment
- ☐ Executive Summary
- ☐ General Requirements

CERTIFICATIONS PAGE

1. DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, INELIGIBILITY AND VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION CERTIFICATION

Lower Tier Covered Transaction

This certification is required by the regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 29 CFR Part 98, Section 98.510, Participant's Responsibilities. The regulations were published as Part VII of the May 26, 1988 Federal Register (pages 19160-19211).

1.a. The Agency attests that neither it, its principals, nor its partners are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded by any federal department or agency from applying for or receiving federal funds.

2. NONDISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATION

This certification is required by regulations implementing WIA Section 188, "Nondiscrimination", and as promulgated in 29 CFR Parts 31 and 32.

2.a. The Agency attests that it:

(1) Shall not exclude any individual from participation in, deny the benefits of, subject to discrimination under, or deny employment in the administration of or in connection with any of its programs/services because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or political affiliation or belief.

(2) Shall not employ participants on the construction, operation, or maintenance of so much of any facility as is used or to be used for sectarian instruction or as a place for religious worship.

(3) Shall not discriminate, with respect to terms and conditions affecting or rights provided to participants in activities supported by funds provided under this Act, against such individuals solely because of their status as such participants.

(4) Shall ensure that participation in programs and activities financially assisted in whole or in part under this Act shall be open to citizens and nationals of the United States, lawfully admitted permanent resident aliens, lawfully admitted refugees and parolees, and other individuals authorized by the U.S. Attorney General to work in the United States.

3. AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATION

3.a. The Agency attests that it is in compliance with all applicable provisions of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and shall make any and all reasonable accommodation to provide access and equity of services to disabled persons applying to or enrolled in any program controlled by this contract.

4. CERTIFICATION REGARDING DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE REQUIREMENTS

4.a. The Agency attests that it will provide a drug free workplace in accordance with 29 CFR Part 98 by:

(1) Publishing a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the grantee's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violation of such prohibition.

(2) Establishing an ongoing drug-free awareness program to inform employees about:

(a) The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace;

(b) The grantee's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;

(c) Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation and employee assistance programs; and

(d) The penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations.

5. CONFLICT OF INTEREST CERTIFICATION

The Agency attests that it and its principals are in compliance with the provisions of the Rhode Island "Conduct of Employee and Code of Ethics Law" (R.I.G.L. 36-14) as well as all applicable federal, state, and municipal ethics guidelines.

6. LOBBYING

The Agency attests that it and its principals must comply with the restrictions on lobbying which are codified in the Department of Labor Regulations at 29CFR Part 93.

The Agency hereby certifies, by signature of its authorized representative affixed below, to all attestations identified above.

Typed Name of Authorized Applicant Representative	Title
Signature of Authorized Applicant Representative	Date

PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Under this program, a total of _____ participants will receive training in the skill area _____ in accordance with the following enrollment schedule.

1. Enrollment Schedule:

Number of training cycles: _____
Total number of participants in each cycle: _____
Total number of participants: _____

Projected Enrollment Plan

CYCLE NO.	START DATE	NO. TO BE ENROLLED
<i>Example:</i>		
<i>Cycle 1</i>	<i>November 1, 2013</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Cycle 2</i>	<i>April 1, 2014</i>	<i>15</i>

2. Training Provider Information:

Name of training provider: _____
Address: _____

Contact person and phone no: _____

3. Location of Training Site:

4. Projected Starting Wage Upon Entrance into Employment: _____

SCOPE OF WORK

1. Recruitment and Assessment

Recruitment and assessment will take place at the Providence netWORKri Office, which is the one-stop career center for the Providence/Cranston Workforce Investment Area. In order to assist that office in screening candidates for the proposed training program, the applicant is asked to identify the minimum entrance requirements that an individual needs prior to entrance into training. Applicants may identify these requirements below.

STANDARD	MINIMUM ENTRANCE LEVEL
Reading Grade Level	
Math Grade Level	
English Language Proficiency Requirement	
Grade Completion Requirement	
Diploma or GED Requirement	
Driver's License Requirement	
Bond Ability Requirement	
Drug Screen Requirement	
Computer Skills Proficiency Requirement	
Work History Requirement	
BCI Check Requirement	
Physical Requirement (s)	
Other:	
Other:	

2. Description of Training/Curriculum

[illegible]

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3. Description of Applicant's Capability

Provide a description of the applicant's qualifications to administer and provide the training requested. Include a description of the qualification of individuals who will be engaged in overseeing the program and delivering the training. (In lieu of a description resumes may be attached.)

Identify the applicant's previous training programs in the identified skill area or related training programs, including performance results with respect to training completions, placement in related employment, credential attainment and job retention.

4. Description of Program Performance

Describe what constitutes successful completion of the skills training program. This may include minimum training participation time, completion of training assignment, test results, as well as the specific competencies, including licensing; each individual must achieve in order to be ready for employment and to obtain nationally and industry-recognized credentials in this occupational area. Describe your plans to assess participants' progress and satisfaction at various timeframes during the training program.

5. Linkages to Employment

Describe how you will provide a linkage to an employment activity for participants of your skills training programs. Such linkages may include placement into an unpaid work experience program or an unpaid internship position that bridges the gap between successful classroom training completion and the acquisition of skills in an actual work setting.

Linkages to employment can also include a short term on-the-job training (OJT) program with an employer who agrees to hire completers of the skills training program and provide hands-on training that enhances rather than duplicates the training received in the classroom. While the applicant will be expected to develop the OJT linkage with the employer, the actual OJT contract that provides a wage reimbursement during the training period will be developed by Workforce Solutions of Providence/Cranston.

In addition to the above linkages, the best employer connection would be direct placement into employment following the skills training program. This type of employer linkage is appropriate when it has been determined that no period of work experience, internship or on-the-job training is needed in order for the participant to successfully enter and retain employment.

Applicants are requested to utilize the format provided in the RFP (*reference is made to page 18*) that identifies those employers who have made a commitment to participate in

one of the linkages described above. Applicants are reminded that proposals will be evaluated and rated on the extent to which they have obtained employer commitments.

6. Budget Guidelines

- The line items, “Staff” and “Fringe Benefits” are to include all staff (including staff who are not full time) of the applicant organization for which funds are being requested. It should correspond to the narrative information that is included in the proposal.
- The line items “Rent” and “Utilities” are to include costs associated with both the applicant’s administrative space as well as space set aside for training.
- The line item “Equipment” should not include the purchase of equipment. Any equipment needed for the program should be procured on a lease or rental basis.
- The line item “Other” should include any other costs not appropriate to the listed line items. If you have a Federally-approved indirect cost rate, the amount should be included in this line item.
- The budget format that begins on the next page must be used.

PROPOSAL BUDGET

TOTAL FUNDS REQUESTED: _____

1. STAFF POSITIONS	HOURLY RATE	ANNUAL HOURS	PERCENTAGE TO CONTRACT	TOTAL AMOUNT
			TOTAL	

2. FRINGE BENEFITS	WAGE BASE	RATE		TOTAL AMOUNT
FICA				
SUTA				
FUTA				
HEALTH				
WORKERS COMP				
RETIREMENT				
			TOTAL	

3. TRAVEL (List Position)	RATE PER MILE	# OF MILES	# OF WEEKS	TOTAL AMOUNT
			TOTAL	

4. RENT (Address & sq ft)	MONTHLY COST	# OF MONTHS	PERCENTAGE TO CONTRACT	TOTAL AMOUNT

			TOTAL	

5. UTILITIES	MONTHLY COST	# OF MONTHS	PERCENTAGE TO CONTRACT	TOTAL AMOUNT
			TOTAL	

6. EQUIPMENT RENTAL	MONTHLY COST	# OF MONTHS	PERCENTAGE TO CONTRACT	TOTAL AMOUNT
			TOTAL	

7. CONSUMABLE SUPPLIES				TOTAL AMOUNT
			TOTAL	

8. OTHER	MONTHLY COST	# OF MONTHS	PERCENTAGE TO CONTRACT	TOTAL AMOUNT
			TOTAL	

TOTAL BUDGET REQUESTED:

INDIVIDUAL TRAINING COST:

(Total cost divided by number of participants)

EMPLOYER LETTER OF COMMITMENT

(THIS FORMAT IS TO BE COMPLETED ON COMPANY LETTERHEAD)

Date:

To:

Subject: *Letter of Commitment to Hire Successful Completers of Training Program*

- ☐ I would like to express my commitment to provide an unpaid work experience opportunity for _____ individuals who participate in the training program.
- ☐ I would like to express my commitment to provide an unpaid internship opportunity for _____ individuals who participate in the training program.
- ☐ I would like to express my commitment to participate in an on-the-job (OJT) program for _____ individuals who successfully complete the following training program.
- ☐ I would like to express my commitment to provide direct employment for _____ individuals who successfully complete the following training program.

Training Provider: _____

Skill Training Area: _____

Name of Employer

Hiring Representative

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(Limited to one page)

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

ADMINISTRATIVE/TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

All contractors must meet a minimum level of administrative capacity in order to contract with the Providence/Cranston Workforce Investment Board. The following administrative / technical elements will apply. In this document “The Board” refers to the Providence/Cranston Workforce Investment Board issuing this RFP.

A. Audit / Financial Statements

The respondent must submit an audit in accordance with the following requirements applicable to the organization:

1. *A Non-Profit entity with federal expenditures of \$500,000 or more:* a single complete copy of the most recent required A-133 audit report with Management Letter, findings, and corrective action, if any.
2. *Non-Profit entity with federal expenditures of less than \$500,000:* a single complete copy of the most recent audited financial statements and current written accounting procedures.
3. *Commercial For-Profit entity and a sub-recipient with federal expenditures of \$500,000 or more:* a single complete copy of either an organization-wide audit conducted in accordance with A-133 or a program-specific financial and compliance audit.
4. *Commercial For-Profit entity with federal expenditures of less than \$500,000:* a single complete copy of the most recent audited/prepared financial statements that comply with GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) and such audit or financial statements identifying no outstanding unresolved findings).

B. Cost Allocation Plan

All applicant organizations must submit with the proposal: A single complete copy of the applicant organization’s approved cost allocation plan. The cost allocation plan is a document that identifies and distributes the cost of services and/or departments or function according to the benefit received. It is a means to substantiate and support how shared costs of a program are charged to a particular cost objective. Formal accounting records to substantiate the charges must support all costs included in the plan including information technology.

C. Allowable Costs / Cost Principles

Sub-recipients must follow federal allowable cost principles which apply to their specific organizations and which are included in the appropriate circulars issued from the Office of Management and Budget.

D. Fidelity Bond

If selected and prior to the initial disbursement of funds, a written statement from the insurer that all persons handling WIA federal funds are covered by a fidelity bond equal to the maximum WIA cash on hand.

E. Fiscal Management / Internal Oversight

Contractors are required to maintain complete and accurate records of all financial expenditures with supporting documentation. These records must be available to The Board's staff. Contractors are required to internally monitor fiscal activities to insure compliance with the WIA legislation and applicable federal cost principles. At a minimum, internal oversight will address the following:

1. That the netWORKri staff has verified eligibility prior to participant program enrollment;
2. Participant attendance and payroll disbursement have been properly documented;
3. Program expenditures are supported by appropriate documentation;
4. Budget allocations and expenditures comply with contracted obligations; and,
5. Accounting records are traceable to the source document and the application of grant funds relating to authorizations, obligations, balances, liabilities, expenditures and income.

F. Internal Program Management Plan

All program activities must be internally monitored on a scheduled basis to ensure compliance with all aspects of the contract, written policies, and the legislation. At a minimum, this monitoring will include:

1. Program service delivery as it relates to the contract, including review and evaluation of the key program elements required under the WIA;
2. Program activity assignments and how they correspond to participant assessments;
3. Effectiveness of work sites including mentoring and supervision;
4. Participant attendance;
5. Frequency of case management sessions and documentation; and,
6. Review of performance outcomes as outlined in the contract.

G. Nepotism

No individual may be placed in a WIA employment activity if a member of that person's immediate family is directly supervised by or directly supervises that individual.

H. Partner Agreements

Respondents partnering with other agencies and employers must complete signed Partner Agreements detailing services to be provided. The signed agreements must be included with the proposal. If a partner agreement is developed and supported by WIA funds; costs must be included in the line item budget of the WIA proposal. If WIA funds are used to support Partner Agreements, the Contractor will be responsible for insuring that the partner(s) deliver(s) the services as outlined in the agreement and applicable performance goals are achieved. In addition, the Contractor must insure all funds expended by the partner(s) are in compliance with federal regulations and applicable OMB guidelines. Disallowed costs by the partner(s) agency will be the liability of the Contractor. If a Partner Agreement is amended or cancelled, written notice must be submitted the Board prior to finalization. If WIA funds are affected, a modification to the contract must be approved and completed. NOTE: If a Partner Agreement supported by WIA funds is not included in the original proposal submission and it is determined at a later date that specific services are needed, a competitive procurement process must be initiated. A sub-contractor agreement must be completed and staff of the Board must approve the sub-contract. A competitive procurement process also is required if a Partner Agreement is terminated at any time prior to the end of the contract period and a new partner is identified to deliver those services.

I. Types of Contracts

Contracts awarded as a result of this RFP will be cost reimbursement.

J. RFP Amendments

Contradictions, errors, misinformation, etc., discovered in the RFP may require an amendment. Any amendment to this RFP subsequent to the Bidder's Conference will be published on the Board's website at www.workforcesolutionspc.com.

K. Stand Alone

All proposals must be written to "stand alone"; as if no other proposals were submitted. Each proposal submitted must be written in such manner that if only one was funded, that one could still be successful without additional funding. However, if more than one proposal from a single respondent is funded, the Board reserves the right to identify and eliminate duplicative costs and/or other elements during contract negotiations.

L. Limitations

This RFP does not commit the Board to award a contract or to pay for any of the costs in the preparation of a proposal. The Board reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this request or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP, if it is in the best interest of the Board to do so. In addition, the Board reserves the right to waive any and all requirements of the RFP. The Board reserves the right not to fund any proposal solely due to the submission of the lowest cost or receipt of the highest ranking. All contract awards are subject to the availability of Federal and State funds and the execution of a contract that is acceptable to both the selected respondent and the Board.

M. Notification of Award / Negotiations

Respondents will receive written notification as to the status of their proposal. Those respondents not selected may submit a written request for information regarding the reasons to:

Jim Glover
Director of Operations
Workforce Solutions of Providence/Cranston
444 Westminster Street
Third Floor
Providence, RI 02903

Requests must be postmarked within fourteen (14) days of the date of notification.

In all cases, available funding will be used as the initial benchmark for negotiations. Contractors will be required to submit complete and accurate information for contract components, including any revisions, additions or modifications required by the Board. Programs may only begin after the execution of a signed contract.

N. Protest/Appeals Process Procedures

Any respondent who has submitted a response to this RFP may appeal an award announcement. The process for appealing an award is as follows:

All protest, appeal or complaints must be submitted in writing to the Board within five (5) working days of the award announcement addressed to individual identified in the preceding paragraph "M" for review and to determine merit. In order for an appeal to be found to have merit it must show that any substantial portion of the RFP process or Federal procurement guidelines was violated. Only appeals that cite the specific section(s) of the RFP that have been violated will be considered.

If protests, appeals or complaints are found to have merit, the appeal will be evaluated by the Board. The decision made by the full Board will be final. Appeals received after the established deadline will not be accepted. Appeals may not dispute a particular score received by the petitioning agency, or the scores assigned to a competing agency. The scores awarded are final and are not subject to question by an appealing agency.