

Employment & Training Centers, Inc.
Request for Proposals
Audit and Accounting Services

Introduction

Employment & Training Centers, Inc. (ETC) solicits qualified individuals or firms to provide audit and accounting services, including tax preparation.

Firm selection will be based on firm qualifications, scheduling availability, and price quotations.

ETC will engage the successful bidder to conduct a financial statement audit beginning in April 2018.

About Us

ETC is a privately-held, for-profit Texas corporation. The majority of ETC's revenue is derived from cost-reimbursement government contracting. ETC receives an annual financial statement audit which complies with OMB Circular A-133 (Single Audit Act). ETC's fiscal year-end is December 31.

ETC provides workforce development services under the Workforce Solutions name. We receive about \$6,500,000 annually in WIA, SNAP, TANF and Wagner-Peyser funds.

ETC has two wholly-owned subsidiaries, each of which is a single-member LLC. One focuses on consulting services to the education industry; the other provides staffing services.

Because ETC operates in the government contracting industry, we comply with government procurement requirements.

What We Are Looking For

ETC will engage the services of a qualified CPA firm to conduct a financial statement audit as well as a single audit in accordance with OMB Circular A-133. We will also require the preparation of Federal income tax and Texas state franchise tax returns.

General Requirements

ETC is soliciting a locally-based individual or firm, or firm with a substantial local presence.

ETC is soliciting individuals or firms with extensive experience with private, for profit organizations as well as with clients who perform government contracting, preferably in the workforce development industry.

Individuals or firms responding to this Request will demonstrate:

- Knowledge of requirements and application of the federal OMB cost and administrative circulars and the Texas Uniform Grant Management Standards
- Knowledge of requirements for auditing public funds
- Experience in conducting financial audits and reviews, including of public funds
- Knowledge and experience in auditing or reviewing organizations operating with federal workforce dollars
- One or more principals with a license to practice as a Certified Public Accountant in the state of Texas.
- If proposal is submitted by a firm, the firm must have a current firm license and be registered with the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy.

Audit work will be performed during April 2018. The completed audit report must be submitted to our contracting agency before June 30, 2018.

Pre-Bid Conference

ETC will hold a pre-bid conference for prospective proposers on Wednesday, January 24, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. in our offices at 3355 West Alabama Street, Suite 350, Houston, Texas 77098. For our planning purposes, please RSVP to steven@ETChouston.com by noon on Tuesday, January 23, 2018. At this conference, proposers will have an opportunity to review our most recent audited financial statements and ask questions in an open forum.

How to Respond

The following information is required as part of the proposal in the order listed below.

1. A proposal narrative detailing your company's experience and approach to auditing. In the narrative, discuss the following:
 - Name the principal(s) and manager(s) in your organization who will be assigned to this audit and the related tax return preparation and provide their length of service with the organization, titles, and a brief description of their areas of responsibilities.
 - List the project team you would assign to ETC and describe the members' qualifications and work experience, particularly their experience in auditing federal programs, including workforce programs. Describe their professional credentials.
 - List clients you have worked for in the past five years that gives your organization comparable experience to that required for this project. Provide reference information for these clients so we may contact them.
 - List professional organizations to which principals, members of the proposed ETC project team, or the firm belong.
 - List any other certifications and recognitions the individuals or firm have received.

2. Completed assurances and certification forms (The forms are provided. Note that each form requires the respondent to provide information at the end including your signature.)

Evaluation and Conditions of Bid

Selection and Evaluation

ETC will review and evaluate proposals on the basis of:

- Qualifications of personnel and availability of staffing to furnish the full range of services sought by ETC (35 points)
- Experience performing like or similar financial monitoring (35 points)
- Financial terms (30 points)

After receiving and reviewing proposals we may request bidders to make oral presentations.

After scoring proposals, ETC will notify all bidders of results of the review process in writing. The ETC Board of Directors will select the successful bidder and negotiate the terms of the engagement.

Notification and protest process. All bidders will be notified in writing of (1) the receipt of their proposals at ETC and the status of these proposals in the review process, (2) the final outcome of the proposal review process.

Bidders who believe that they have been treated unfairly in the proposal review process or that there is a violation of federal law or regulation may file a protest. The following procedures govern the filing of all protests.

A protest may be filed after ETC notifies bidders of the selection or non-selection. The protest must be filed in writing and sent to: Roberto Gonzalez, Board Chairman, Employment & Training Centers, Inc., 3355 West Alabama St., Suite 350, Houston, Texas 77098, 713.439.7530, within five business days. The protest will be addressed by the ETC Board.

Performance Period

ETC will execute an engagement letter prepared by the successful bidder under this Request to begin during April 2018 for the 2017 financial statements. ETC may renew the agreement for up to **four** additional audit years depending on the contractor's successful performance.

Conditions

1. ETC may accept or reject any or all responses under this request.
2. ETC is not obligated to contract with any respondent to this request.
3. ETC will not pay for any expenses incurred prior to the execution date of a contract, nor any expenses incurred after the termination date of the contract.

4. Consortiums, joint ventures, or teams submitting a proposal will not be considered responsive to the request unless they have demonstrated in the proposal narrative that all contractual responsibility rests solely with a lead contractor.
5. Lead contractors assume full responsibility for ensuring that work which is subcontracted is complete and delivered on-time.
6. Materials submitted to ETC as a part of this proposal are considered public information unless otherwise noted in the proposal itself as trade secret or proprietary information. ETC is not responsible for the return of creative examples of work submitted.
8. ETC will negotiate any contract approved as a result of this Request and may alter any part of a proposal in negotiating the contract.
9. No employee, member of a Board of Directors, or representative of a bidder who submits a proposal under this Request may have any contact outside of the formal review process with any employee of ETC, or any member of the ETC Board of Directors for purposes of discussing or lobbying on behalf of Bidder's proposal. This contact includes written correspondence, telephone calls, personal meetings, email messages, or other kinds of personal contact. ETC will reject proposals of those bidders who violate this condition.
10. No employee, member of a Board of Directors or other governing body, or representative of a bidder who submits a proposal under this Request may offer any favor, gratuity, inducement, or anything of monetary value to any employee of ETC, or any member of the ETC Board of Directors for purposes of influencing the evaluation of a proposal submitted under this Request. ETC will reject proposals of those bidders who violate this condition.

Assurances and Certifications

Please complete and sign the following forms and attach them to your proposal: (1) certification for debarment, (2) certification for lobbying, (3) certification for a drug-free work place, (4) certification for Texas Corporate Franchise Tax, (5) certification for state assessments, and (6) general assurances and certifications.

Conflict of Interest Questionnaire

Although ETC is not directly bound by Chapter 176 of the Texas Local Government Code, we adhere to the spirit by requesting vendors and consultants contracting or seeking to contract with ETC to file a conflict of interest questionnaire (CIQ) if they have an employment or other business relationship with an ETC officer or an officer's close family member. The CIQ must be completed and filed with the bid/proposal response if an employment or business relationship defined in the law exists.

We have attached the questionnaire. You may also obtain the form and read more about it at http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/whatsnew/conflict_forms.htm. ETC's Board of Directors and management staff are listed at www.ETChouston.com.

Submission Requirements

Deadline

The deadline for receiving responses to this request is **12:00 noon Central Standard Time on Wednesday, February 14, 2018**. Late proposals will not be accepted. There will be no exceptions.

Submitting a Proposal

Bidders may email, deliver, or mail their responses.

For printed proposals: (1) Format using a 12-point font and 1.5 line spacing, (2) Staple or bind hard copies in the upper left hand corner, and (3) provide **three** copies of your response.

For proposals on digital media: (1) Use a flash drive, (2) Provide your proposal in Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format (do NOT password protect files), and (3) include one set of signed original proposal submission documents (all declarations, assurances and certifications pages with original signatures). ETC is not responsible for unreadable digital media.

For electronically submitted proposals: (1) Provide your proposal in Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format (do NOT password protect files), (2) Do not send materials in zip files—our email server will not accept those files, and (3) Provide scanned images of signed declarations, assurances, and certifications.

- ✓ **Email** responses to Steven@ETChouston.com no later than **12:00 noon Central Standard Time on Wednesday, February 14, 2018**. Place **“Proposal Response”** in the subject line.
- ✓ **Deliver** responses by hand to ETC offices at 3355 West Alabama Street, Suite 350, Houston, Texas 77098 from **8:00 AM to 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday, but no later than 12:00 noon Central Standard Time on Wednesday, February 14, 2014**. Address your submission to Steven Zeffert, Employment & Training Centers, Inc. **Mark “RFP Response – Do Not Open in Mailroom” on the outside of the envelope.**
- ✓ **Mail** responses to Steven Zeffert, Employment & Training Centers, Inc., 3355 West Alabama Street, Suite 350, Houston, Texas 77098. Be sure your submission is **postmarked no later than Friday, February 9, 2018**. **Mark “RFP Response – Do Not Open in Mailroom” on the outside of the envelope.**

After the deadline, ETC will notify each bidder by email of our receipt of its proposal.

Contact Information

Steven Zeffert
Director of Finance & Administration
Employment & Training Centers, Inc.

3355 West Alabama St., Suite 350
713.595.2436 voice
713.595.2453 fax
Steven@ETCHouston.com
www.ETChouston.com

Attachments

All required attachments are in one document:

- Certification regarding debarment
- Certification regarding lobbying
- Certification regarding drug-free workplace
- State assessments certification
- State franchise tax certification
- Assurances and Certifications
- Conflict of Interest questionnaire (CIQ)